

# Team Coordination Training

## 2015 Refresher

### Participant Reference

***Review & discuss the key risk factors from this patrol that may impact our judgment and decision-making.***

## Learning Objectives

- Participants will understand the importance of crew complement as it relates to mission activities (Mission analysis).
- Participants will understand the need to fully assess the health and/or limitations of the crew. (Leadership, Assertiveness, Mission Analysis)
- Participants will understand the need to remain alert to all conditions during the mission both operational and crew related. (Communication and situational awareness).
- Participants will understand that the Coxswain AND the Crew are responsible to ensure that all crewmembers are well and fit for duty. (Assertiveness and communication).
- Participants will understand that the mission needs to be staffed with the right team with the right responsibilities and ability/temperament to handle the assigned tasks. (Leadership, Mission Analysis)
- Participants must understand that when conditions change, especially due to injury or apparent illness, the GAR must be quickly re-examined and a safe decision made. (Assertiveness and adaptability)
- Participants must understand that incident reporting (when appropriate) should always be considered during any mission. (Mission Analysis, Situational Awareness)

**Participants will identify at least three examples of good decision making by this crew and others.**

**Participants will identify at least three examples of poor decision making by this crew & others.**

## The Patrol

### Mission:

- Facility: 35 foot trawler with single inboard diesel engine
- Weather: clear skies, temperature 83 degrees and sunny with scattered clouds, winds 6-8 knots from the east, seas 2-3 foot swells
- CREW

Coxswain Winthrop 20+ years total boating experience, 15 years as Coxswain, age 78. Winthrop is also a mentor

Crew #1, Joyce 10 years total experience boating but only 5 patrols as crew age 65

Crew #2, Morgan 18 years total experience boating, 5 years as crew and now a coxswain in training, age 50

Note: All three of them have boated together for years both formally on Auxiliary patrols and privately as friends. All three also knew that each of the others were all on some form of prescription medication. All three for blood pressure, Morgan for cholesterol, and Winthrop a mild heart condition, although nothing that would seriously impair their functioning as competent crew or coxswain on a mission.

Crew #3, Bonnie 3 years boating, crew trainee, third time on an Auxiliary vessel under orders, first time with this vessel and crew, and first time on a vessel this large with the second deck and upper helm station, Age 24.

- Venue: Any body of water, Any-town USA

**Scenario:** - Routine MDA/Training patrol

It was planned that the patrol would begin at 1200 hours and would end no later than 1730 hours. Winthrop, the coxswain and vessel owner, was fussy about his boat and was very particular about letting other people operate his vessel. Because the mission involved coxswain training for Morgan, and because Winthrop was the certified mentor for the signoffs, it was evident Winthrop was very concerned that Morgan would be at the helm for part of the mission and he went into great detail about how he wanted the facility operated. Knowing Winthrop, Morgan did not expect much helm time, but he knew he would be directing all other activities of the mission as the coxswain in training. Bonnie would also be getting her training for crew.

The mission was discussed in detail shore-side with all three crew present. Morgan encouraged Bonnie's input as they all discussed the GAR scoring. The plan was to have several anchor evolutions, a couple of SAR expanding square and parallel search pattern practices and at least one navigation exercise. The Coast Guard boat station was called to report the beginning of the training patrol. Winthrop provided the station with a cell phone number, and reported the initial GAR score of 18. Winthrop completed the final safety and vessel briefings and the crew got underway.

The mission went more or less as planned, although Winthrop was hovering over Morgan and watching very closely whenever he had the helm. Not long after Morgan had the helm, coxswain Winthrop indicated they would not do all of the planned exercises because he was not sure of their capabilities. During the training, everyone on board fulfilled his or her crew roles with no significant problems, although Bonnie remained a bit nervous and stayed on the main deck the entire cruise. Coxswain Winthrop never left the upper helm station. Morgan noticed that Winthrop was not issuing his instructions as clearly and energetically as he usually did and he had to ask him to repeat the orders on a couple occasions.

At 1700 hours, the coxswain said to the crew, "Let's call it a day and return to port". The weather remained un-changed that afternoon and Winthrop had taken the helm for the return to port. Morgan noted that Winthrop seemed a bit distracted as he was bringing the facility into the channel to the marina. At one point, Joyce noticed that Winthrop was staring straight ahead and that the vessel was angling across the buoy line and heading out of the channel. It was at this moment she called to him, "Winthrop you are cutting through the buoys. Is that right?" There was no immediate response. She shouted louder, "Winthrop, you're going out of the channel!" At this time Morgan, who was standing near the helm station observing his mentor, realized the significance of what was going on. He touched the coxswains arm and asked, "What's going on? Shouldn't you turn"? There was no response. "Turn to starboard!" he shouted. "Are you OK?" he asked Winthrop. Again, there was no response. Morgan reached past Winthrop and turned the wheel to starboard. As the bow swung back toward the center of the channel, Winthrop finally responded as if coming out of a fog, "OK . . . yeah, . . . I've got it".

Once back in the center of the channel, Winthrop headed for the marina entrance. When asked if he was OK, Winthrop repeated that he was fine and continued into the

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port. However, he didn't say another word unless spoken to, which was quite out of character for the usually talkative Coxswain. Even Bonnie noticing the quiet, thought his face seemed a bit pale. She mentioned this to Joyce, who asked Winthrop again if he felt OK; His reply was "I am OK."

The always-talkative Winthrop was silent as he negotiated the vessel down the channel toward the slip. Usually, Winthrop excelled at close quarter handling of his heavy trawler. This time, however, he fumbled; he dinged the post at the end of the slip and had to hit hard reverse to slow the vessel down before it hit the dock. A little concerned Morgan again asked Winthrop how he was feeling. Sounding annoyed, he replied with, "I feel fine".

After docking, the crew made the facility secured for the day, but with few instructions or "corrections" in the line adjustments from the usually very meticulous Winthrop. Joyce called the USCG boat station to secure the patrol. The crew helped Winthrop with boat cleanup and as they were about to leave, asked if he needed any more help or maybe even a ride home. Coxswain's reply was "I am fine, see you later." The crewmembers were still a little concerned and after leaving the dock area, watched Winthrop from the parking lot to be sure he got to his car all right. Winthrop sat in his car for a long time before starting it. After he was on his way, the rest of the crewmembers went home.

Later that evening Morgan heard from Winthrop's wife. She told him that Winthrop had gone to the hospital and had been admitted. It was suspected that he had suffered a "mini stroke" earlier in the day.

## **Participants**

**Participants will identify at least three examples of good decision making by this crew and others.**

**Participants will identify at least 3 examples of poor decision making by this crew & others.**

**Participants will be able to suggest alternative actions to avoid high-risk situations**

**Discuss at least 3 errors, and 3 good decisions made by this crew during the mission.**

**\* A facilitator led general discussion of what was done well, and what mistakes were made should be conducted at this point. Remember the basic elements of Team Coordination Training and use those elements to guide your analysis.**

## **Review of TCT Basics**

A short summary of the key points of Team Coordination Training is provided to assist with your analysis of the case. This information is accessible to all members on the Coast Guard's TCT website:

<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg3/cg3pcx/training/tct/default.asp>.

A Team Coordination Training student guide is available on the Coast Guard site at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg3/cg3pcx/training/tct/intro.pdf>

## **Mission Analysis**

Always conduct a risk assessment prior to a patrol, no matter how routine you believe the mission to be. Every mission is unique: contingency planning based on experience should include complexity of mission, environmental factors, crew fitness factors and any other circumstance that could impact the mission & your safety.

## **Situational Awareness**

We must know what is going on around us to make good decisions. Plans are critical to success, that is for sure...but we must be ready to change those plans, use contingency plans if necessary, based on what we encounter during the mission. Stressful situations, complacency and boredom will inhibit our situational awareness and increase the likelihood of poor decision-making.

## **Adaptability**

Adaptability is the ability to react to changes in conditions, crew fitness, equipment failures, etc. and is based on the "situational awareness" we mentioned above. How flexible are we? How receptive are we to different opinions? Leaders do not necessarily have "all the answers". Leaders do take advantage of everyone's ideas and experience and remain adaptable to new conditions and challenges.

## **Communication**

Communication takes many forms. We have verbal and non-verbal (facial expressions, etc.) communication that everyone uses to convey thoughts and ideas. The key of course is to ensure that the person or persons we communicate with have a clear understanding of what we wish to convey. This involves closing the "feedback" loop. We can ask for feedback, or we can observe behavior to be sure the message was received. The key is a two-way expression, either verbally or non-verbally, that confirms the communication process was completed.

## **Leadership**

Leadership is not about giving orders. Leaders do find ways to obtain the willing participation of others towards accomplishing a goal. That goal, in this case, must be consistent with the Coast Guard's core values as well as consistent with the mission at hand. Since we cannot "order" anyone to do anything, we must strive to achieve the respect, confidence and loyalty of those entrusted to our care...all Auxiliarists have this opportunity to lead, regardless of their position.

## **Assertiveness**

The Coast Guard values people who are assertive, but not aggressive. The difference between these two characteristics is sometimes hard to see. The aggressive person seeks to bully his/her way through situations for their own ego or self-image....while an assertive person cares about the “mission” more than themselves and their ego. They always communicate their concerns but they also try to get a reasonable resolution when ideas are in conflict without stepping on top of those who may disagree.

## **Decision Making**

Making good decisions is really at the heart of TCT. How do we ensure that we act or perform in a manner that maximizes mission success and minimizes risk to ourselves, our crew, the public, etc.? The other elements of TCT all play a role in improving those decisions. We define a problem or condition, seek information about that problem, analyze that information, identify alternatives and select one or a range of alternatives. Then we measure our success or failure in order to adjust our course of action. This process can take us 20 seconds in the case of routine decisions, or 20 months in the case of large complex problems. The process is the same ... the depth of analysis and level of importance is always changing. Thank you for your participation in the 2015 Team Coordination Training Refresher. Please share your thoughts about this training and the format with us!

## **To all participating crews, some final questions:**

Did your GAR scores take into account the inexperience of the new crew (Bonnie) and that both Bonnie and Morgan would be training. This is certainly not high risk, but it would add some complexity to the mission.

Did you ever consider rethinking the GAR score at any time while reading the scenario? Think back to the last few times you were out on patrol; on how many of them did you or anyone on the crew say “we should rethink the GAR”?

What about reporting this incident? Considering Winthrop’s repeated responses, that he was “OK” would this even have been considered an “incident”?

Send your comments to:

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Thank You

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