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NEW DIVISION CHIEF

By Bruce Pugh DVC-OE

Welcome to the November edition of Up Top in Operations. I am the newly appointed Division Chief for Operations Programs and Educational Outreach. My division is part of the Operations Department and we are responsible for four areas.

- ♥ The publication of this news letter.
- ♥ Building and maintaining the Operations Department web site at <http://www.auxodept.org/>.
- ♥ We prepare the Operations Workshop, as required.
- ♥ We help promote safety through education and through recommendations for operational and procedural changes across all areas of Auxiliary operations.

Just a little more background of "who's on first", here are the other Division Chiefs within the Operations Department.

- ♥ Surface Operation- Gary Taylor,
- ♥ Telecommunications- Bill Scholz,
- ♥ Aids to Navigation- Frank Larkin,
- ♥ Air Operations- Byron Moe.

A full organization chart for the Operations Department can be found on our Operations website above. The Operations Department reports to David Hand, Directorate Commodore for Operations and Marine Safety.

Our primary focus is to develop, enhance, and support safe and effective programs and initiatives that help the Auxiliary provide operational support to the boating public and to the United States Coast Guard. To that end, I am looking for ways to improve the delivery of any current or new programs relating to safe effective operations and would appreciate suggestions you may have in this regard. Please send me an e-mail at DVC_OE@yahoo.com.

Now for the DVC-OE trivia questions of the month. You see in front of you 2 yellow lights in a vertical line. What are these lights called? What

are you approaching? What part of the vessel are you approaching (aft, forward, port, starboard). Where are you?

OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT SECRET RESOURCE

By Hank Demler, BC-OEE

If you haven't yet discovered the WebLink index on the Operations Department web site, this resource is a secret. One accesses the resource by a left click on the red words, "WebLink index" in the left column of the Operations Department Home Page.



The WebLink index is an alphabetical index of just about any manual, form or other item related to activities that come under the auspices of the Operations Department. All items are cross-indexed by possible alternative names and are alphabetized like a book index. The page has no eye-catching icons but, for people more used to books than computers, it is easy to use and will be an attractive reference.

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**SECRET
RESOURCE**

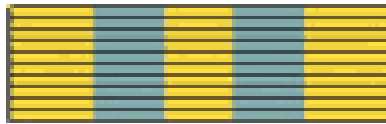
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New pilots will find a series of weather links for their browsing as well as necessary financial reimbursement forms, the Air Observer Syllabus and a host of other flight information. Those new to the Boat Crew Program can link to any manual, financial references, or the site where one registers for electronic fund transfers. In addition, one can find general Operations Department information, including links to the archives of the newsletter, workshops, and Marine Domain Awareness information.

If you haven't yet bookmarked this page, consider doing so and use it to find what you need. From "Action MDA" to "Workshop, Operations (Archives)," more than 180 links take you to wherever you want to go!

**ANSWERS TO
DVC-OE QUIZ**

- ♥ Yellow lights are towing lights
- ♥ You are approaching a vessel pushing another vessel ahead
- ♥ You are approaching from dead astern
- ♥ You are on Inland waters.



**OFF SEASON
FITNESS - START
NOW !**

By James Mc Carty BC-OEI

For large areas of the country, the winds are blowing colder and the holiday season is approaching; this change of season often signals a halt to most surface operations. For most of us, surface operations will just have to wait until the Spring, right?...but, there is something we can do right now to make sure that next year is our best year ever in operations. The AARP reports that after age twenty, our bodies can lose up to one half pound of muscle mass per year, and that by age sixty, we could lose twenty five percent of our muscle mass...not a pleasant thought is it? The good news is that this loss can be reversed by a prudent regimen of exercise.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary Seamanship Manual provides the physical fitness standards required for all crewmembers; the table in Chapter 3 clearly defines those standards for both men and women from "under 30" to "60+" years of age.

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These fitness standards are designed to *"insure that our members have sufficient strength, flexibility and endurance to safely perform duties during normal and adverse conditions"*.

(COMDTINST M16114.5B)

So why not take advantage of the off season to prepare our bodies for next year's patrol season? Here are a few simple rules to follow from the National Institute on Aging that can help all of us, at any age. (Source "Exercise, Getting Fit for Life", NIA)

Endurance: Start slowly. Your goal is 30 minutes per day of exercise, like walking, that requires you to breathe a little harder. If you can't do 30 minutes at one time, break it up into two or three segments that totals 30 minutes. The rule of thumb is... if you can talk while you exercise, then you are OK. (Take a walking buddy with you to make the time go faster.)

Muscles: Use them! Again, walking can strengthen your legs and hips which will improve your balance.

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OFF SEASON FITNESS

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Practice standing on one foot, then the other to further improve your balance; you can have a support bar or chair, etc. within reach for added security. Weight training, **under a doctor's supervision**, has also proven to halt the loss of muscle mass in people of any age.

Stretching: Flexibility can be improved with some stretching exercises. Check with your doctor before deciding what exercises are best for you...the rule of thumb is that you **should not** stretch till it hurts, if it begins to hurt, you are going too far.

As always, your personal health problems and concerns will dictate the regimen you will follow; always check with your physician before changing your current routine. The benefits of regular exercise, especially during the off season, can insure that you can enjoy many more years of enjoyment and service in the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Why not start that exercise program now?



CREW MEMBERS SHOULD BE "CRITICAL"

By James Mc Carty BC-OEI

Critical thinking sounds like a negative term...no one wants to be "criticized", especially the coxswain or a crewmember on board a facility on patrol. We can be (and often are) critical of our boss, our spouse, our friends, etc. Yet...much of our Team Coordination Training is based on "critical thinking", but does "critical" necessarily always have to be so negative?

Critical thinking really means "asking the right questions". It involves taking a clear, unbiased look at a set of facts, and making an informed and accurate decision based on good logical analysis. That's why asking questions...of others, of ourselves, and of the situation we encounter (circumstances)...makes so much sense as crew members. Let's see how this squares with the seven principles of TCT.

Mission Analysis: Good decisions are the logical result of critical thinking. When we stress thorough planning and good analysis before getting underway, we are gathering important information that will lead to better decisions. The pre-underway checklist,

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including weather forecasts, crew fitness checks, equipment checks, etc. are all designed to insure that we make the best decision about how to complete the mission safely and effectively. If we fail to ask these "questions"; if we fail to gather the best information available, we risk injury and jeopardize the mission needlessly.

Adaptability-Flexibility:

When we are adapting to new circumstances that we encounter during a mission, we are really being open to new ideas and avoiding the trap of complacency. So, we "ask the right questions". Is the weather turning bad? Is a crew member having trouble keeping his/her feet? Complacency is the enemy of a critical thinker, and crewmember.

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UP TOP IN OPERATIONS

CREW MEMBERS SHOULD BE "CRITICAL"

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Flexible action is based on being adaptable...we react to new information by changing our actions to meet those changes. Do we slow down in a dangerous area? Should we cut the patrol short due to a troublesome engine?

Assertiveness: When we have analyzed a situation as a crew member, and have arrived at a different solution to the problem, we are encouraged to "speak up". This is a positive form of "asking the right questions", not negative criticism. "Criticism" can be positive and welcome.

Communication: Part of critical thinking is seeking out as much information as possible before making a decision, so we avoid jumping to the wrong conclusion. Critical thinking is all about gathering information to improve decision making.

Decision making: This is the action side of the process. After we gather information, question its' accuracy, and weigh all alternatives, we make a decision. Decision making is the end result of critical thinking. We all do it at

some level, but do we always do it right?

Leadership: Whether we are the coxswain or a crew member, our responsibility to our shipmates is clear. The leader must insure that he or she is open to new ideas from the crew...and that he or she has not allowed their ego to interfere with "questioning" that must occur before we try to make the right decision.



Situational Awareness: When we prepare for that side tow, and we execute a 360 degree turn around the vessel looking for hazards and dangerous conditions...we are actually asking the questions "Do I have enough information"? "Is it safe to tow this vessel"?

Being "critical" is often seen as an undesirable trait, but in a very real and practical sense, we must all become positive critical thinkers.

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