



THE RESPONDER

Newsletter of the National Response Directorate

March 2013



“ROGER, GOOD COPY.”

Submitted by: Bob Shafer, DIR-R

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Roger—Good Copy	1 & 2
Record of OPS Policy Testing	2
A Stitch in Time	3
Goodbye POMS, Hello AOM!	3
Downgrading from Coxswain to Crew	4
Department Contact Information	4
Hail and Farewell	4

Recently, a DSO-AV told me of a “lost comms” incident in his District. “I got a call from Sector,” he told me. “They were calling to inquire if I knew anything about an AUXAIR facility that was now ‘very overdue’.

In the background, I could hear the watchstander calling AUXAIR. Sector was about to start a SAR case and launch a helicopter to look for my guys. Before doing that, they called me and asked if I had any ideas.”

The DSO went on to explain that he was able to assist the Sector by contacting the regional Air Traffic Control (ATC) facilities. They soon discovered that the AUXAIR facility had landed for a short time, took off again, and was still in the air, about to land at its home base.

When the DSO spoke to the flight crewmembers after they landed, they assured him that

they had called Sector to secure radio guard prior to their first landing and that ATC held their guard for the final leg home. The “scratch log” made while in flight confirmed this.

However, the pilot offered that there was something just a little unusual about exchange on the radio with Sector. He noted that the confirmation of the radio call requesting that guard be secured was “a little different than usual”. It was “Roger, good copy, nothing more at this time” rather than the usual “Radio Guard secured at xx minutes.”

After discussing the situation with the flight crew and with Sector, it became apparent that that the Sector Watchstander mistook the call to secure radio guard as just another position report. Accordingly, when the Sector didn’t get any further communications from the plane, they initiated lost com-

munications procedures. Bottom line, it was all just a big misunderstanding. Everyone was safe. No one did anything “wrong;” or did they?

It’s important that we look for lessons to be learned from this miscommunication. After all, this is an important safety concern. Today’s minor misunderstanding could be tomorrow’s un-happy ending from a missed critical communication.

The communications environment in an aircraft or on a surface facility is not ideal. There is often noise from competing radio traffic and always noise from engine, wind, radio static and other sources. Likewise, the communication environment at the Sector or Station is less than ideal. There is simultaneous traffic on multiple radios, telephones and other distractions. In either environment, it

(Continued on page 2)

The Responder is produced by the National Response Directorate, United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, at no cost to the U.S. Coast Guard or the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Please submit articles for Publication, via the chain of leadership and management, to the editor:
COMO Jerri A. Smith,
dogmom1@charter.net

Confidentiality Notice: PRIVACY ACT OF 1974: The disclosure of the personal information contained in this publication is subject to the provisions contained in the Privacy Act of 1974. The subject Act, with certain exceptions, prohibits the disclosure, distribution, dissemination or copying of any material containing the home address, home telephone number, spouses names, and social security numbers, except for official business. Violations may result in disciplinary action by the Coast Guard and/or civilian criminal sanctions.

“ROGER, GOOD COPY.”

A FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE... (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

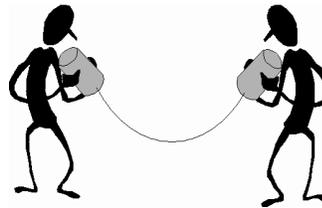
is easy to misunderstand a call or to miss the call altogether.

This incident underscores the need for all of us to pay careful attention to correct communications procedures, including the correct use of pro-words. It's not enough to transmit and speak, we must also receive and listen (as opposed to just "hearing").

In a financial transaction, we "transmit" money and "receive" goods or services. We also get a receipt, confirming the details of the transaction. We all know that it's smart to take a look at the receipt to make sure the details of the deal are correct.

Likewise, we communicate in the form of a transaction between two parties. Both sides of the communication transaction share responsibility for making sure that the intended message is correctly sent, correctly decoded and that the correct

feedback is received, confirming the transaction. We must listen to confirm that the message



being acknowledged is the message that was intended.

Use of correct phraseology and correct pro-words are an important part of clear communication, because both sides of the conversation have a previously agreed upon understanding of these phrases and words. This allows both sides to quickly "decode" the messages, even when they are sent under adverse conditions.

Just as in a financial transaction, it's important that we look at the receipt, the feedback of confirming information. If there is ever any question about the message

received or that the message being acknowledged is not the message that was intended, we should ask for further clarification.

In the case related above, it would be easy to say that the watchstander was at fault, mistaking the "secure guard" message for a position report. However, that's not entirely correct or fair. The flight crew heard the acknowledgement, noted that it wasn't the standard phraseology expected, yet did not challenge it. So they have a share in the miscommunication, too.

All of us in Response activities must be on guard to avoid miscommunication. When we are in the air, operating on the surface or standing watch by the radio, we must not allow our communications to become "too routine" or perfunctory. Yes, we must speak clearly and correctly, but we must also listen carefully and understand. Ask for confirmation or clarification if there is ever any question or doubt about what was intended. Let's make sure that "Roger, good copy" leads to a message understood.



"Just as in a financial transaction, it's important that we look at the receipt, the feedback of confirming information."

RECORD OF OPS POLICY TESTING

Submitted by: COMO Lew Wargo, DVC-RS

Records of test results for the Operations Policy exams are available in the Auxiliary Directory at: (<http://www.auxdirectory.org>).

When accessing the directory look under the members name and at the very end there is a listing of test results. This is available to any member and indicates all qualifications and test results on record.

A STITCH IN TIME

Submitted by:
COMO David Elliot,
ANACO-RP

As standard procedure all coxswains and crew check our vessels for "patrol-ready" condition prior to getting underway. But do we also check the equipment on our vessel's trailer and towing gear? For those of us who trailer our vessel facilities to the launch site, a recent mishap at a Coast Guard station, which occurred as they were recovering a 25-foot RIB, might be instructive.

MISHAP:

A CG Station was recovering an RB-S with four persons aboard at a local boat ramp, when the winch strap parted and dropped the boat onto the concrete.

The boat was being maneuvered onto the trailer and both the winch strap and forward tie down strap were attached. Once the straps were connected the driver of

the truck was given the command to haul the boat from the water. While preceding up the ramp both the winch strap as well as the forward tie down strap parted, causing the boat to slide back off the trailer onto the concrete of the ramp. The boat eventually came to rest on its port side. Thankfully, none of the four crew members on-board was injured and the damage to the boat was minimal.

The initial cause appears to be that the stitching failed on both the winch strap and forward tie-down strap at



the hook ends which attach to the trailer eye-bolt. The stitching on both straps appeared to be dry-rotted. An inspection of the Station's other RB-S winch strap was completed and it also appeared to be dry-rotted.

While this could be an isolated incident, due to the safety factor it might be prudent for your District to put out a Safety Advisory and even change the re-

quirements to not only inspect and replace the straps, cables or lines if any discrepancies are noted, or possibly also



mandate replacement of fiber straps at a given interval.

The photos show how the stitching on the straps failed and the result of their failure.

The prudent coxswain and crew always inspect equipment prior to use, whether on water or on land. Don't

assume because it was good last season it will be good this season as well. As many prudent mariners say, "Let's be careful out there".



"...but do we also check the equipment on our vessel's trailer and towing gear?"

GOODBYE POMS... HELLO AOM!

Submitted by: COMO Gary Taylor

AUXDATA Order Management (AOM) is coming soon to a computer near you. All district/regions will be live in the next couple of months. Log onto the training database (<http://ordermgmt-train.uscg.gov/>) to see what it's all about and start practicing. On your first log-on, click the "I forgot my password" link to get an AOM password e-mailed to you.



WE'RE ON THE WEB!
[http://
 rdept.wow.uscgaux.info](http://rdept.wow.uscgaux.info)



Robert T. Shafer
 Director



COMO Gary A. Taylor
 Deputy Director

HAIL AND FAREWELL

Submitted by: Bob Shafer, DIR-R

In this issue of *THE RESPONDER*, we note a couple of changes to the staff of the Response Directorate. We welcome aboard our new Responder Editor, COMO Jerri Smith. Jerri hails from D9CR where she served as DCO. In addition to being an experienced Coxswain, she's an experienced newsletter editor with several awards to her credit. We're very glad to welcome her to our staff.

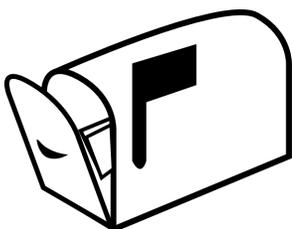
This issue included two articles by COMO Lew Wargo, our retiring Division Chief for Surface Operations. After ten years on the National Staff, Lew is standing down from his DVC-RS job, so he can devote more time to family and business obligations. Lew has earned his respite. In his years on the National Staff, he has contributed to many positive changes in the Surface operations program, including a formal QE process, qualification guides that make sense, a mature STAN team, the introduction of SABOT, and the recently released mentoring guide. We thank Lew for his many years of dedicated service and send him our best wishes for fair winds and following seas in his future endeavors.

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Response Directorate Contact Information

Program Area	Staff Member	E-mail address
Director	Robert T. Shafer	Robert.T.Shafer@cgaux.us
Deputy Director	COMO Gary A. Taylor	gtaylor@cablone.net
Aviation	Wilson Riggan	cgauxwilson@riggangroup.com
Telecommunications	John J. Slattery	jjsstf@aol.com
Education	Bruce C. Pugh	dvc_oe@yahoo.com
Surface Operations	Vacant	

DOWNGRADING FROM COXSWAIN

Submitted by: COMO Lew Wargo, DVC-RS



A coxswain wishing to downgrade from coxswain to crew must send a letter to the District OTO requesting this downgrade. This member must also complete the currency tasks for crew. A coxswain that fails to complete their three-year currency tasks is not automatically downgraded to crew. A member in this status who desires to be downgraded must first send a letter to the OTO making the downgrade request and then complete the QE check ride for crew currency.