

Be Sure Be Safe

Submitted by: Robert Whyland BC-RES

In the colder climate area Auxiliarists are putting the finishing touches on the winter storage of their OPFACs.



There is a piece of equipment, and its backup, many trailer boaters fail to review as they winterize and store the boat. I refer to the winch and its components. It is down-right embarrassing, and dangerous to have any of the components

of the winch or safety chain fail at the ramp or on the road.

There are a few items of importance in the inspection process:

- We should be sure all of the winches' moving parts are well lubricated, and any springs or latches are working properly. If the latch fails to engage the winch when under load, there are dangers involved.
- If you are using an electric winch, inspection of the wiring and fuses is critical. It is very easy to overload a poorly installed or connected cable to the battery. This can cause high enough resistance to create enough heat to ignite the cable. Fire is not a friendly enemy.
- We need to be sure the winch cable or strap is in good shape. This means there are no cable strands broken, rusted, or crimped. The splices on the cable to clamp fastening is in proper shape, and the cable is properly attached to the winch. With fiber straps we need to be sure the threads at splices are intact and do not show signs of UV damage or chemical deterioration. The detergents used to clean boats have a detrimental effect on the strap threads. Inspect the length of tears



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Happy New Year to all!

Inside this issue:

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- ✦ [Be Sure Be Safe](#)
- ✦ [Aviation Training](#)
- ✦ [Standing the Watch](#)
- ✦ [Are You Semper Paratus](#)
- ✦ [The Hidden Risk Factor](#)
- ✦ [Reminders](#)

in the strap webbing. The attachment to the winch spool is also important to check.

- We need to be sure the emergency cable or chain is in proper order. Ensure that the connection to the trailer is not rusted, the fastening method is tight, and the chain

(Continued on page 2)



THE RESPONDER

Newsletter of the National Response Directorate

Volume 1

January 2017

Be Sure Be Safe (Continued)

and hook are in good order. If we missed something on the winch, this is our fail safe.

There are many instances of this type of failure and what can occur when this piece of equipment and its backup are not fully functional or fail. I witnessed one such failure this summer. The boat was not damaged and there were no injuries, but the crew had it happen on a very busy day at the ramp. Their public image took a beating. In this incident, the boat backed off the trailer as the tow vehicle pulled up the ramp. It was caused by a failure of the "cog lock" on the winch spool. There was also an incident recently where a USCG RIB was being loaded, with some crew aboard, and the winch strap failed at the threading to the hook. Again no injuries, but an incident that could have been avoided by making sure the winch and components were in good working order.

I expect many of the readers of this page have had or know of experiences with boat fastening device failures. We can prevent this type of incident with proper inspection and care.

BE SURE BE SAFE



Aviation Training With a New Face!

Submitted by: Jenny Stack DVC-RA

Auxiliary Aviation has had two required training courses for qualifications and both of them have a new face.

(Continued on Page 3)

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THE RESPONDER

Newsletter of the National Response Directorate

Volume 1

January 2017

Aviation Training (continued)

AUX-17 – Initial Cockpit Resource Management is required for all pilots and aircrew qualified personnel. It is also highly recommended for observers. This course had previously been taught in conjunction with Aux18 in Pensacola, Florida. The two courses have been separated. Now AUX-17 comes to you and your group. Your unit must have at least 10 students and your DSO-AV may request instructors to come and share this course with your group. Additionally, each year the course is offered in at least one location where students are authorized to travel to the offering location. The AUX-17 course is the same course that the active duty Coast Guard members receive.

Pilots and aircrew-qualified personnel must complete this class within one year of their certification in their respective position.

AUX-18 – Spatial Disorientation/CRM is required for all pilots and optional for aircrew and observers on a space available basis. This course has been moved to the Federal Aviation Administration's Mike Mulroney Aeronautical Center in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The course is based on general aviation aircraft and flying and is now much more than simple disorientation. The Oklahoma City training combines cockpit resource management with

practical survival techniques including water, egress and cold weather training. Students also experience a smoke chamber demonstration and a PROTE Chamber allowing pilots to experience the effects of hypoxia so that they may recognize the onset while flying their own aircraft. Most important to safety, students are put through a program in general aviation simulators to invoke the spatial disorientation that pilots may expect to experience in the course of flying small general aviation aircraft.

Pilots must also complete this class within one year of their certification as a pilot.

If you attended either or both of these classes in Pensacola, Florida, please consider attending the updated courses. It will be well worth your time.

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
C-School

Watch the "C-School" website at: <http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=aux00> then click on the FY2017 C-School Schedule.





THE RESPONDER

Newsletter of the National Response Directorate

Volume 1

January 2017

Standing the Watch

Submitted by: Gary Young



The Coast Guard (CG) has indicated a need for additional Auxiliary Watchstanders for Sectors, Air Stations, Boat Stations, and Marine Safety Units.

If you think that CG Watchstanding is only for Auxiliary technocrats that would be wrong. Many of our CG Watchstanders had no prior comms experience beyond their boat radio. Aaron Forste is the Auxiliary Watchstander Recruitment & Retention Officer for D1SR and he is looking for members who are Basically Qualified (BQ) or higher, and are current with their Mandated Training. He encourages interested members to inform their Flotilla Commander of their interest, and then contact the CG unit where they would like to serve. From that point, it's up to the CG and they supply all of the motivation and training.

For your information, AUXDATA/INFO currently lists 697 Auxiliary Watchstanders.

Here is another story about one of our Watchstanders:

Julia Tiernan, works as a Certified Public Accountant and has been an Auxiliary member for twenty five years. During her time with the Auxiliary, she has been a Flotilla Commander and transferred her membership from the Salem to Marblehead flotilla. Along the way, she qualified as an Auxiliary Coxswain and was training to become crew on a CG 41' UTB, before being sidelined by a shoulder injury. She is AUXCOM qualified.

As a qualified CG Watchstander at Small Boat Station - Gloucester for twenty-two years, her training was delivered by the CG in the form of its Personal Qualification Standard (PQS). Always up for a challenge, she has also become a qualified Station OOD. When asked about what originally motivated her to become a Watchstander, she said: *"It looked interesting and was very different from my everyday life. When on duty, you live in a different world and you need to prove yourself. I would definitely do it again. In a typical month, I serve about twenty hours and it would take a book to describe all of the exciting things that I have been involved in."*





THE RESPONDER

Newsletter of the National Response Directorate

Volume 1

January 2017

Are you Semper Paratus?

Submitted by: Bruce Pugh DVC-RE

It's that time of the year for those of us in the more northern reaches of the country to secure our facilities for a long (hopefully not too cold) winter's nap. But once our surface facilities are all tucked away safe and sound our job is not done. PPE inspections are due every 6 months and it is likely that one of those inspections is due about now. Don't overlook this and don't just rush through the inspection "cause I'll do it the right way again in the spring". This protective equipment must be ready at all times. The inspection process must be logged and signed off by a trained PPE inspector. What the inspector does not do for you is the monthly testing of your PLB. That is your responsibility. Each month you should run the self-test within the first 5 minutes of any hour of the day. These regular inspections and tests, especially in the so called "off season for some of us" will give you ample lead time to get your equipment repaired or replaced if needed. If your PPE is not "Always Ready" then neither are you.



The Hidden Risk Factor

Submitted By: James McCarty DVC-RS

When we talk about performing at a high level on our surface facilities, aircraft, or in any operational role for that matter, the expression that there "is no substitute for experience"

always rings true. To be more precise, maybe we should also say that education, training, and common sense are also critical variables in that high performance equation; experience is not the only factor we need to consider. I suggest that we should also recognize another factor as a key element in that safety equation, an element that can undo all the training, education and experience we rely on so much. That insidious and usually hidden risk factor is complacency.



On a night operation some years ago, three experienced members of a boat crew had just completed a short (3 hour) mission to provide security for a July 4th fireworks display that was launched from a barge; a secure perimeter was established around the barge to keep pleasure boats out of harm's way during the festivities. Later, this crew helped with traffic control as over one hundred boats tried to leave the area simultaneously....a water borne rush hour experience to be sure. Everything went smoothly, the weather was comfortable, and

(Continued on Page 6)



THE RESPONDER

Newsletter of the National Response Directorate

Volume 1

January 2017

Hidden Risk Factor (continued)

everyone was relaxed as the facility began its return to the marina.

At 2230 hours, the boat and crew easily found their way back to the slip in the dead of night. As the crew tied up, camaraderie and good feelings abounded as they relaxed after a night op that could have gone wrong in so many ways. They made fast all lines and began unloading equipment onto the dock, ready to get home to celebrate the 4th. The coxswain turned away from the cockpit to contact the duty officer by radio, to secure from the operation. Mission accomplished! ...Right? Not so fast!

One very experienced crew member remembered that he had forgotten a piece of equipment that had been left on board. The Coxswain was happily completing the Patrol Log on the dock, the helmsman had turned his back on the dock while securing the console as everyone congratulated themselves on a flawless patrol. As the crewman confidently stepped back onto the gang plank, now moist with evening dew, to retrieve his equipment, his foot slipped and he fell backwards, off the stern and into the area of water between the dock and the stern of the facility. He uttered a short "expletive deleted" as he fell, the helmsman turned aft just in time to see the resulting

undignified yet potentially dangerous mishap unfold.

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At that point, the remaining crew stopped the chatter and quickly lifted the crewmember out of the water and onto the dock. They immobilized him until a visual check for injury was made, and the fallen crewmember repeatedly assured them that he felt no ill effects (other than his damaged pride). After some additional assessment and more assurances from the crewmember, the mission was finally secured.

This is a true story that is in some form replicated many times every day. We tend to be especially alert and on top of our game while underway, especially at night or in more challenging circumstances, then the hidden, quietly insidious "complacency" sets in. We all fall into this trap from time to time; we assume the job is done and we relax our situational awareness based on our years of experience and training. What could go wrong now?

(Continued on page 7)

Hidden Risk Factor (continued)

The renowned philosopher, Yogi Berra, is famous for his quote “It ain’t over, till it’s over”. Complacency and over-confidence can be an unforgiving enemy. The fact is that no mission is “over” until everyone is safely home from the patrol. We cannot allow over-confidence, or complacency to reduce our situational awareness no matter how experienced we are, no matter how well trained we are, and no matter how smoothly the mission seems to be proceeding. Little things like a darkened dock, a moist gangplank, and complacency can be just as hazardous as a snapped tow line or a collision if we fail to maintain our vigilant assessment of risks until the mission is truly “over”.



Reminders

Just a few reminders for 2017

The Operations Workshop is now a requirement for all Surface Auxiliarists (Crew, Coxswain, PWO) for 2017. The Workshop can be found on the [Response Directorate web site](#) under News and on the [workshop archives page](#).

2017 Optional workshops for AuxAir and Telecommunications are also available at the same link.

The 1 hour TCT Refresher continues to be a requirement for all Surface Auxiliarists for 2017. Facilitator and participant materials are on the Response Directorate web site.

Don’t forget N-Train (National Training) 2017 in St. Louis, MO January 21 – January 29, 2017. Further information regarding this event is at <https://www.cgauxa.org/auxa/ntrain2017/>

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