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Vessel Safety Check Newsletter

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This newsletter is the publication of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, District 11NR - Vessel Safety Check program and published at no cost to either the Coast Guard or the Coast Guard Auxiliary. This newsletter will be distributed in PDF format electronically to each Vessel Examiner in D11NR with a CURRENT email. It can also be found on the D11NR website. It will be published on January 1st and each month starting with April and ending with October. Disclosure of the personal information contained in this publication is subject to the provisions contained in the Privacy Act of 1974. As a matter of policy, roster of names, addresses, email address and telephone numbers shall not be made available to the general public or any outside organizations. This newsletter is a team effort by the DSO-VE staff and is responsible for its content. If you have anything suitable you think should be included that others would benefit from, please send it to Mike Lauro. It may be discontinued at any time by the DSO-VE.

DSO Comments

By Mike Lauro



I'd like to remind everyone that the **WEAR IT CALIFORNIA!** campaign kicks-off this month in the Delta along with VSC Mega-

Weeks at the start of National Safe Boating Week (NSBW) on Saturday May 16TH THRU 22nd. VSC Mega-Weeks continues through the month of June culminating on July 5th.

More about the **WEAR IT CALIFORNIA!** campaign further in the Newsletter. Unfortunately, I've never received any replies to several inquiries about the WEAR IT programs in Nevada and Utah. NSBW is an excellent opportunity to use the ICS training we've received over recent years to plan VSC/PA activities. This is an excellent opportunity to involve the FSO staff

and ALL flotilla members at VSC stations that were planned and scheduled at the April Flotilla meeting by the FSO-VE. Hopefully, the FSO-MA ordered materials and the FSO-PA has SEVERAL PA announcements planned.

Copies of handout materials, VSC decals, and forms need to be distributed as soon as possible to not only the examiners, but the PA personnel as well, so they may familiarize themselves with changes in the materials and laws.

During this period, weekly or bi-monthly VSC ramp stations should be scheduled in the areas where there is the highest concentration of our target audience; trailer boats, PWC's, canoes, and kayaks. Boating accidents and death statistics have shown that trailer boaters and vessels less than 26' in general are involved in the majority of accidents.

But, that is not to say that we still shouldn't provide the service to larger vessels at yacht club safety days.

A little specialized training and confidence is necessary in greeting the public at PA booth or to be a VSC greeter. In addition to providing materials to the boater, the greeter's 1st order of business should be to discuss the VSC prior to sending the trailer boater to the next available examiner. CURRENT handout materials also need to be available at the PA table explaining local, state and federal regulations and other boating safety information. Boaters don't need to be lectured or supplied a huge volume of material or unnecessarily detained from launching. Most contacts should not require more than 10 minutes at the ramp. Please staff each event accordingly. When at a ramp, each participating examiner should be able to produce about 8-10 VSC's, 4 or 5 at a yacht club safety day. That way it's worth everyone's time to participate. ALL participants need to wear the same

uniform, which should have been specified in the early planning meetings. Remember that if you wear a Tilley hat and/or the light blue golf shirt that these are NOT uniform items and NO devices are worn on your hat. **No** Coast Guard unit caps should be worn. We should also be wearing our new WEAR IT! pfd's. This is also an excellent opportunity to review our etiquette and VSC greeting for VSC and PA activities as we gear-up for the summer VSC activities. More can be found on your D11NR VE website:

<http://rbsafety.d11nuscgaux.info/ve.html>.

Although not all examiners may be able to participate at each outing, make certain that all examiners have an opportunity to participate at future outings. If you are short on personnel, consider partnering with another flotilla, division or possibly the local Power Squadron. Finally, consider scheduling a pot-luck BBQ and possibly consider inviting the local sheriff or Power Squadron.

As always, your comments are welcome.

ADSO Comments

By Tony Budlong



As the paddle sport usage has grown in the recent years, so has the number of accidents being reported from the use of canoes, kayaks, and rafts. A recent American Canoe Association (ACA) article quoted figures from a 2006 Outdoor Industry

Foundation 5 year Study indicated the following: 22 MILLION paddled a canoe, another 22 MILLION went rafting, and additional 10-12 MILLION paddled a kayak. Their study went on further to indicate that the number of kayakers represented a growth of 272% during this period! The study also reported that approximately 75% of the related accidents involved

kayakers NOT wearing of lifejackets, and 20% of the cases were contributed to the use of alcohol. Additional kayak/canoe accident statistics are shown at the end of my comments. These increases are the reason that Mike Lauro DSO-VE and I established a pilot VSC program with a large Monterey kayak rental dealer. The dealer had an established, well organized rental program that provided personal safety equipment, renter indoctrination and training. The results of this project were so successful that we are pleased to establish a District-wide VSC program for 2009. This program was introduced at two workshops to over 75 vessel examiners D/Train in Rohnert Park! If you are going to perform VSC's on any kayaks or canoes, there is far more to a VSC kayak and canoe VSC than attaching a whistle to a life jacket and placing a VSC decal on the vessel. This is more of a **one-on-one education** with the boater. During the VSC, you need to discuss and stress the following important safety tips:

- *Learn how to swim.**
- *Be aware of the effects of cold water and plan accordingly!**
- *Take classes/get instruction on the specific equipment you plan to use!**
- *Never paddle alone-It is safer and more fun to paddle with a friend!**
- *Leave word with your family, friend, or Marina on your destination and time of return!**

***Plan your outing for potential hazards, problems, and restrictions and manage your risks!**

***Know the expected weather in your area-keep posted for weather changes!**

***Plan for and take needed safety equipment, gear, supplies-secure for trip!**

***Always wear your life Jacket, properly fitted and secure!**

***Don't paddle while under the influence of drugs or alcohol!**

A handy and helpful tool to guide you through the kayak/canoe VSC is the: "How to Perform a VSC on a SUB" which can be found the D11NR VE website:

<http://rbsafety.d11nuscgaux.info/ve.html>

As what was brought out by the ACA, most risk factors can be reduced by either planning for or activity avoidance, and by recognizing and accepting responsibility for the potential we all face when out on the water.

When these suggestions are used in conjunction the with District Rental Vendor Program, we can help expand our VSC penetration and provide educational opportunities for the kayak user and help to improve the safety record of the ever growing segment of boating.

If you have any questions regarding the pilot program or performing VSC's on paddle craft in general, please don't hesitate to contact me at:

a_budlong@msn.com

In 2007 United States Coast Guard Accident Statistics indicated the following from Canoes/Kayaks:

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>Increase/Decrease</u>
Drownings	86	97	1.13%
Other	13	10	-.77%
Total Deaths	99	107	1.08%
Total Injuries	54	93	1.72%
Total Casualties	153	200	1.31%

Welcome Aboard and Welcome Back!

Gary L. Link***	03-03	Nancy E. Link***	03-03
Annette F. Herring**	03-09	Catherine Cieri***	04-06
Francis N. Panza***	05-05	Sjoerd S. Halbersma*	05-05
Pamela R. Harris***	05-07		

***Re-certification**

**** February PCA VE graduate!**

*****February PCA VE graduate and awarded "WEAR IT" pfd! (5 awarded to 1st 5 to complete VE certification)**

With the addition of these 7 new and re-certified examiners for 2009, our examiner base total is now 300 active examiners! This represents about 21% of our total District membership. This information is supplied by the Director's office, as examiners are qualified.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to the following examiners who have performed 20 or more VSC's during 2009*!

Charles M Duncan Jr.	03-09	Joaquin P. Duran	04-09
Anthony T. Budlong	06-04	Michael A. Rafatti	10-02
Anthony D. Leonardi	10-03	Phillip E. Grove	10-05

This brings our total to 15 examiners reaching this plateau!! This is approximately 5% of the total District examiner base. 2008 had 9 examiners or 3% at this time. Where's your name?

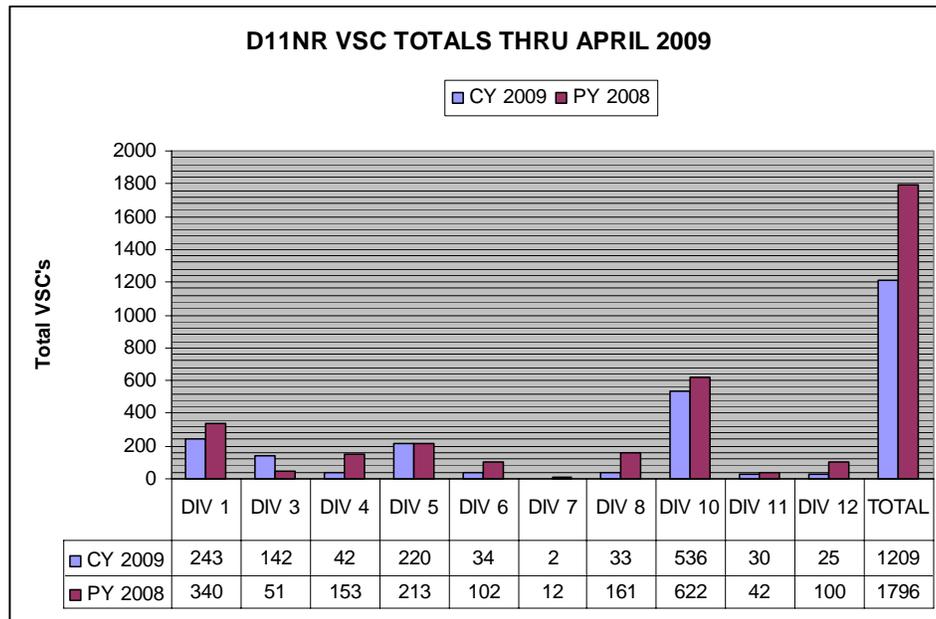
PLEASE be certain that all stats are reported MONTHLY using the CURRENT Form 7038 to your FSO-IS so you and your unit(s) will receive proper credit.

*Statistics as shown in AUXINFO thru April 2009

VSC Calendar

- National Safe Boating Week May 16th-22nd
- VSC Mega-Weeks-May 16th-July 5th
- VSC Station at Lake Sonoma-contact Gary Murray at dutcher@sonic.net for more info
- Coast Guard Auxiliary 70th anniversary-June 23rd
- National Marina Day August 9th
- Past Captains Training Fair-August 15th-16th at Coast Guard Island

• Division Statistics*



The goal for D11NR for 2009 is **7,800 VSC's**. We are **16%** of our goal for the year and **67%** of 2008 production! The data source is AUXINFO. PLEASE be certain that all stats are reported **MONTHLY** using the **CURRENT** Form 7038 to your FSO-IS so you and your unit(s) will receive proper credit.

Additional stats from AUXINFO* indicates that **585** or **49%** of our VSC's are First Time VSC's. In addition **575** or **48%** are High Risk VSC's.

*Statistics as shown in AUXINFO thru April 30, 2009

Bet You didn't Know...

As incredible as it sounds, it wasn't long ago that men and women took baths only twice a year (May and October)! Women kept their hair covered, while men shaved their heads (because of lice and bugs) and wore wigs. Wealthy men could afford good wigs made from wool. They couldn't wash the wigs, so to clean them they would carve out a loaf of bread, put the wig in the shell, and bake it for 30 minutes. The heat would make the wig big and fluffy, hence the term "big wig." Today we often use the term "here comes the Big Wig", because someone appears to be or is powerful and wealthy.

VSC Questions - Answers can be found in another location in the newsletter

1- Inflatable PFDs are becoming more and more popular. You are examining a 22' stern drive vessel with two adults and two pre-teen children aboard. They proudly show you their four new inflatable PFDs, still in the manufacturer's original packaging. If everything else is okay, can you issue a VSC decal?

- a. No. Inflatable PFD's are not yet Coast Guard Approved so they don't count as acceptable for carriage.
- b. No, inflatable PFD's are not approved for children under 16 years of age and since they are Type V PFD's they must be worn to count.
- c. Yes, but be sure to recommend that they remove them from the packaging since PFD's in plastic are not readily accessible.
- d. Yes, but you need to remove them from the packaging, examine the firing device by removing the CO2 cartridge to determine it has not been used.

2-Certain gear on a vessel must be Coast Guard, S.A.E. or U.L. approved to be eligible for a VSC decal. Which items are these?

- a. PFD's, VDS's, Fire Extinguishers, First Aid Kits, Anchors.
- b. PFD's, Fire Extinguishers, First Aid Kits, Navigation Lights, MSD's.
- c. VDS's, Fire Extinguishers, Backfire Flame Arresters, MSD's, Navigation Lights.
- d. VDS's, PFD's, Fire Extinguishers, Backfire Flame Arresters, MSD's.

National and District News

National News

-From: CHDIRAUX

Subject: COAST GUARD UNIT BALL CAP CLARIFICATION -011/09ALAU
33/08 of 10 November 2008 dealt with several Auxiliary uniform matters. One of these involved the wear of ball caps, specifically Coast Guard unit ball caps. Section 1.C.2. stated:

"If an Auxiliarist is authorized to wear a Coast Guard unit ball cap, such wear shall not extend to activities involving public interaction. This is to ensure that an Auxiliarist is not mistaken by the public as an active member of a Coast Guard unit with commensurate authority. **"FOR EXAMPLE, AN AUXILIARIST MY NOT WEAR A COAST GUARD UNIT BALL CAP WHEN PERFORMING VSC'S".**

For the complete policy statement on the wearing of Coast Guard ball cap, please refer to: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg3/cg3pcx/>.

-To: ALAUX

From: CHDIRAUX

Subj: Non-Operational Facilities Category Eliminated -012/09

1. As a matter of information, NEXCOM and the National Bridge recently made final the decision to eliminate "non-operational facilities" from the categories of vessels in the Auxiliary. CG-5421 concurs with this action which is effective immediately.
2. The Auxiliary Ensign may now fly only on either inspected surface facilities (*including PWC's**) that display a current facility decal or on vessels owned by Auxiliarists that have successfully completed a Vessel Safety Check and that display a current VSC decal.
3. Changes in regards to non-operational facilities to the Auxiliary Operations Policy Manual COMDTINST M16798.3(series) will be reflected in future editions of the manual.
4. The purpose of this list is to keep Auxiliarists as well as all other interested parties abreast of current developments, policies, manuals, etc. All information contained herein and linked is OFFICIAL policy and information.

**italics are mine*

-Because of cut backs by State Farm Insurance, our VSC decal sponsor, it was necessary to modify the normal VSC decal distribution plan and unfortunately, ANSC has been out of stock for the past few weeks. However, National convinced State Farm to produce additional decals. They are expected at ANSC the first week of May. Please notify your local FSO-MA and SO-MA that orders can be mailed to ANSC beginning on 27 April. Priority will go to Flotillas and Divisions **who did not receive their initial order.**

Hopefully, additional supplies will be in the field prior to the start of NSBW and VSC Mega Weeks.

UPDATE: As of May 1st, Decals ARE being now being shipped from ANSC!

District News

-In addition to many NSBW events throughout the region, Division 3 is hosting the **WEAR IT CALIFORNIA!** kick-off for the 2009 season with a joint PA/VSC event on Saturday May 16th at the start of NSBW at Discovery Park in Sacramento. This is an excellent opportunity to come out to see the vessel and many local safe boating advocates. Because of program restrictions, the **WEAR IT CALIFORNIA!** Campaign is limited only to the Delta region. As is in previous years, we've been asked by CAL BOATING if we'd like to partner with appearances of the wrapped boat and/or truck display and schedule VSC stations. If you and/or your flotilla are interested in scheduling a VSC station at any of the WEAR IT outings listed below, please contact me **ASAP** at: sumfun@juno.com for more details.

The schedule is:

May 16th at Discovery Park

June 6th at Viera's Resort

July 4th at Discovery Bay

August 1st at Tiki Lagun

August 15th at Korth's Pirate Lair

September 15th at Tower Park Marina

May 23rd at Paradise Point Marina

June 20th at Buckley Cove Marina

July 18th at Rio Vista

July 15th at Viera's Resort

August 29th at Brannon Isl. State Park

The schedule may be subject to last minute change(s) and currently there no plans a have the vessel on the water.

-Gary Murray from Flotilla 5-5 is looking for vessel examiners to help man a VSC station at Lake Sonoma on Saturday May 23rd. Here is a GREAT opportunity to get some good numbers! If interested please contact Gary ASAP at: dutcher@sonic.net.

Question 1-"b" See page 11 of the VSC Manual
Question 2-"d" See page 15 of the VSC Manual



Let's work together for our safety and the safety of others by setting an example and wear our WEAR IT! lifejackets while performing VSC's especially when working around docks and when climbing aboard large vessels!

