

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

FIRST SOUTHERN AID TO NAVIGATION TEAM

1SR ATON NEWSLETTER

March 2008



Notes From The DSO-AN

The D1SR Aids to Navigation Team is offering a Training class at the Saturday March 29th afternoon session. The class will be approximately 3 Hours long and will prepare the AV candidate to be able to proceed to the PQS step upon their return home. The PQS can be downloaded from the Aids to Navigation website, and can be verified by your local ADSO-AN or the DSO-AN. The completed PQS is then sent to the DSO-AN who will approve it and send it on to the Diraux office and then it will be entered into Auxdata.

I know that sounds like a lot of work but being an AV is a job where education is extremely important. The aids that we are responsible for are the Road Signs on the waters of our AORs and their placement and condition play a large part in the safety of Mariners, not only our boaters but the commercial Mariners From around the world who enter our waters. Your AtoN team is dedicated to insuring the professionalism of our Aids Verifiers and are available to help you succeed as a Verifier.

Richard Mullare
DSO-AN, 1SR

***SO-ANs and FSO-ANs: Please forward this
newsletter down the chain to your
Flotilla members!***

Under the Privacy Act of 1974, all information in this newsletter may only be used for official purposes. Any other use is a violation of law. This newsletter was prepared and published by the First Southern Aid to Navigation Team – DSO-AN 1SR - Richard Mullare Distribution of this Newsletter to other members of the Coast Guard and Auxiliary is encouraged.

News From 1SR Bridge Program

The end of 2007 marked the completion of the second year of the district's new Bridge Program. The statistics for the year's activities showed that Auxiliary members were quite active in reporting problems observed in area bridges, and because of this activity, many bridges that had not displayed proper lights for years are now displaying the required navigation lights. 2007's bridge activity numbers showed a 130% increase in discrepancy reports over the prior year's level!

Particularly active were the members of Division 10 in northern New Jersey. With eighteen bridges over the navigable portions of the Hackensack River, and another eighteen bridges over the Passaic River's navigable stretch, the division has more bridges in their AOR than any other division in the district. Al Olsen, Dave Salt, Bob McHugh and the rest of Division 10 turned in an impressive fifty two bridge reports during 2007, with the majority of the reports dealing with extinguished navigation lights. The Coast Guard bridge office responded with written orders to the bridge owners requiring them to make the needed repairs. With their active bridge program, Division 10 accounted for 59% of all 1SR bridge discrepancy reports in 2007!

In addition to the work by the Division 10 members, Auxiliarist Richard Eberhardt from New Orleans has also made a significant contribution to the 1SR bridge program. While he lives in New Orleans and is a member of Flotilla 49 in District 8CR, Richard spends several weeks each month working as captain on a commercial tug boat pushing oil barges around New York harbor and its tributaries. Richard has been reporting and sending pictures of navigation problems he spots while on the local waterways, and these reports have led to several orders for repairs from the CG bridge office. As a result of these efforts, the bridges on the Hackensack and Passaic have been significantly improved over the course of the past year.

In other areas of the district, members have also been active reporting problems observed on area bridges. All told, bridge discrepancy reports for 2007 were 2.3 times that of the prior year. That is a remarkable increase from the first year of the program and has led to a significant improvement in the navigational status of area bridges. The bulk of the increase in bridge activity for last year was due to the great effort from the Division 10 crew, and that has made a big difference in bringing the Hackensack and Passaic River bridges up to snuff.

The major opportunity in 2008 is to extend the bridge program to the many bridges on the south shore of Long Island. Divisions 1, 11 and 13 have the second largest number of bridges in their respective AORs in the district. While on patrol and passing through these bridges, Auxiliary members are uniquely situated to observe and report on any deficiencies observed. For those members looking to find out what to look for in checking a bridge, the district's ATON web site (www.boatmoves.com/CGAux/aton.htm) is a valuable resource. In addition to direction on what to look for in checking a bridge over navigable water, the forms to be used for reporting discrepancies can also be found there.

Kevin Redden
ADSO-AN Bridge

News From Sector-NY North-Burlington

As expected, there is not a lot of AN work taking place on Lake Champlain in the winter months. But winter is a good time to plan for the upcoming boating season and AN verifying activities. So, in the near future, I will travel to STANT Burlington for an ATON meeting with BM1 Rucker. Hopefully, we will develop a plan for a program on Lake Champlain, to begin early in the boating season. Also, there are many SCFs on Lake Champlain that need to be surveyed for chart updating. This can be done from land and it is hoped that these facilities can be visited sometime this year.

As I think we are all aware, it is now a requirement that all Aids Verifiers complete ICS 100 and ICS 700 to maintain their qualification. If this requirement has not been met, now is the time to take care of that. These courses can be found on-line at <http://training.fema.gov/IS/NIMS.asp>.

Keep in mind that our primary goal is to verify the condition of PATONs. All reports concerning either ATONs or PATONs should be sent to me for further action at both STANT Burlington and District. Keep in mind how important our task is to the Coast Guard. With this thought, I wish you all a very safe, well-planned, and productive AN verifying season this summer.

Jim Wilson
ADSO-AN Sector NY- North-Burlington

Proper Distribution of AtoN Information

There is a reported problem that AtoN information such as notices, updates, etc are not being passed down the chain properly. This information is vital to the success of the AtoN program. This information is necessary for all of our Staff Officers and Aid Verifiers to perform their jobs properly. We must stop this counter productive practice to ensure that all information is passed on quickly and completely down the chain. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Information must be passed down to the SO-ANs to the FSO-ANs and finally to the Aid Verifiers.
2. Information should not be omitted, censored, edited or summarized.
3. You may add your own information and comments.
4. Information should be passed along as soon as possible. Do not wait for your Division or Flotilla meeting to pass the information on.
5. REMEMBER: "Information is for knowledge and not for power"

James A. Reznik
ADSO-AN SectorNY-South

Submitting Paperwork Properly

The 2008 AtoN season is almost upon us. Let's all prepare to start the season off right, by reviewing some of the basic report writing skills.

1. Document all relative information in your reports
2. Compare your reports to PID Lists, Charts, Light List, Coast Pilot, Notice to Mariners & Corrections.
3. Include photos, chart-lets, diagrams, news articles or anything else that will support your reports.
4. Submit your reports in a timely fashion. (A.S.A.P)
5. Submit your reports as per district policies. (see the Report Routing page on the district AtoN web site, or the directions on the district AtoN discrepancy forms)
6. Write your reports as if the person(s) reading it has no local knowledge of the area.
7. Do not be vague or make the person(s) reading your reports try to guess what you're saying.

James A. Reznik
ADSO-AN SectorNY-South

Aids Verifier Training at the District Conference

On 29 March at the District Conference in Mystic, the District AN Department will present an Aids Verifier training session. This training will be presented in two parts:

- 1315-1430 Aids to Navigation – Part I
- 1445-1600 Aids to navigation – Part II

After completing the classroom training, AV candidates can then work through the PQS sign offs with any of the ADSO-ANs or the DSO-AN to complete the Aids Verifier qualification program.

The Conference schedule and sign up information can be found at:

www.cgaux1sr.org/staff_pages/PB/PB_docs/OTB_Conference2008.pdf

News From SFO Moriches

I have been recently appointed ADSO-AN SFO Moriches. Tom Fisher and Dick Mullare were gracious enough to meet with me and handover lots of information. I will be contacting the SO-ANs shortly to more formally introduce myself and I look forward to working with you all. Tom only had good things to say about the SOs and I look forward to begin working with this outstanding group.

Two of my initial goals are to get training for the members that volunteered to update the new Harbor Master's database system and to have each division formally inspect the bridges in their AOR. The annual PATON inspections seem to have worked well the last couple of years and I expect that to continue in the upcoming season. Let's keep up the good work, get the Harbor Master's DB up and running, get those bridges inspected and most of all - HAVE FUN.

Phil Pelter
ADSO-AN SFO Moriches

YOUR FIRST SOUTHERN AID TO NAVIGATION TEAM LEADERSHIP

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