



COMDTINST 16794.11

**MAR 12 2015**

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 16794.11

Subj: AUXILIARY PADDLE CRAFT(AUXPAD) PROGRAM

- Ref:
- (a) Auxiliary Operations Policy Manual, COMDTINST M16798.3(series)
  - (b) Memorandum of Agreement between American Canoe Association and U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary of 29 Jan 11
  - (c) NASBLA Paddlesports America Safety Course
  - (d) Vessel Safety Check Manual, COMDTINST M16796.8(series)

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction supplements reference (a) by providing guidance for the development of regional AUXPAD programs when authorized by the District Commander. AUXPAD programs are intended to promote recreational boating safety (RBS) for recreational paddle craft operators.
2. ACTION. All Coast Guard unit commanders, commanding officers, officers-in-charge, deputy/assistant commanders, and chiefs of headquarters staff elements shall comply with the provisions in enclosure (1). Internet release is authorized.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. CG-BSX 16790 Memo of 19 Sept 11 is cancelled.
4. DISCUSSION. This Instruction provides guidance to train and qualify Auxiliarists to engage in RBS outreach to the recreational paddle craft community, and defines the parameters of the AUXPAD program.
  - a. While the numbers of recreational boating deaths and injuries remain at historically low numbers across the states and territories, the number of paddle craft fatalities has increased as boaters and sporting enthusiasts seek more affordable water recreation opportunities.

DISTRIBUTION – SDL No. 165

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NON STANDARD DISTRIBUTION: Auxiliary National Supply center, NEXCOM, DNACO-RBS, All DCO-RBS, All DSO-V

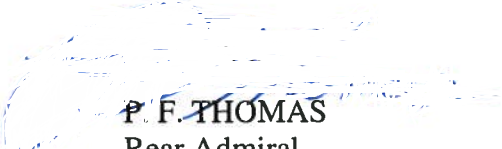
- b. The AUXPAD program supports the Strategic Plan of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program by extending boating safety outreach (objective 2), promoting life jacket wear (objective 4), and promoting operator compliance with Coast Guard regulations regarding required safety equipment (objective 8) with the growing paddle craft community.
5. DISCLAIMER. This Instruction is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it a rule. It is intended to provide operational requirements for Coast Guard personnel and is not intended to, nor does it impose legally-binding requirements on any party outside the Coast Guard.
6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT. This Instruction does not affect the operational command of Coast Guard units. It is intended to provide paddle craft policy guidance for the Coast Guard Auxiliary.
7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS.
  - a. The development of this Instruction and the general policies contained within it have been thoroughly reviewed by the originating office and are categorically excluded under current USCG categorical exclusion (CE) #33 from further environmental analysis, in accordance with Section 2.B.2 and Figure 2-1 of the National Environmental Impacts, COMDTINST M16745.1 (series).
  - b. This directive will not have any of the following: significant cumulative impacts on the human environment; substantial controversy or substantial change to existing environmental conditions; or inconsistencies with any Federal, State, or local laws or administrative determinations relating to the environment.
  - c. All future specific actions resulting from the general policies of this Instruction must be individually evaluated for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Policy NEPA regulations 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508, DHS and Coast Guard NEPA policy, and compliance with all other environmental mandates.
8. DISTRIBUTION. No paper distribution will be made of this Instruction. An electronic version will be located on the following Commandant (CG-612) websites. Internet: <http://www.uscg.mil/directives/>, and CG Portal: <https://cgportal2.uscg.mil/library/directives/SitePages/Home.aspx>
9. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS. This Instruction has been thoroughly reviewed during the directives clearance process, and it has been determined there are no further records scheduling requirements in accordance with Federal Records Act, 44 U.S.C. § 3101 et seq, NARA requirements, and Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series). This policy does not have any significant or substantial change to existing records management requirements.

10. FORMS/REPORTS. None.

11. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. Individuals may recommend changes by writing to:

COMMANDANT (CG-BSX-1)  
ATTN: OFFICE OF AUXILIARY  
U. S. COAST GUARD STOP 7501  
2703 MLK JR AVE SE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20593-75

/S/

  
P. F. THOMAS  
Rear Admiral  
United States Coast Guard  
Assistant Commandant of Prevention

Enclosures: (1) AUXPAD Mission and Program Components

AUXPAD MISSION AND PROGRAM COMPONENTS.

1. Mission. The primary mission of the Auxiliary Paddle craft (AUXPAD) program is to extend boating safety outreach, promote life jacket wear, and promote operator compliance with Coast Guard required safety equipment within the paddle craft community. Regional AUXPAD programs can be more stringent in the training and operational parameters detailed in this guidance. The AUXPAD program consists of Ashore and Afloat Outreach components.
2. AUXPAD Ashore Outreach. AUXPAD Ashore Outreach involves RBS activities targeted toward recreational paddle craft users.
  - a. AUXPAD Outreach Ashore may be executed by any Auxiliarist at a pier, dockside, convention center, store location, classroom or similar venue. Ashore activities consist of: classroom outreach and instruction, literature distribution, promotion of safety courses and materials, paddle craft vessel safety checks (VSC), and promotional displays as authorized in reference (b).
  - b. Although highly recommended, Auxiliarists participating in AUXPAD Ashore Outreach activities are not required to be a qualified AUXPAD Afloat operator or an AUXPAD Qualifier (AQ).
  - c. Only Auxiliarists qualified as an Instructor (IT) are authorized to administer the NASBLA Paddlesports America safety courses or the Coast Guard approved equivalent, to recreational paddle craft users as outlined in reference (c).
  - d. Only Auxiliarists who are qualified as Vessel Examiners (VE) are authorized to perform paddle craft vessel safety checks (VSC) in accordance with reference (d).
  - e. Auxiliarists shall wear the authorized uniform of the day for AUXPAD Ashore Outreach activities, as prescribed by the Order Issuing Authority (OIA). The Auxiliary VE polo shirt is authorized.
3. AUXPAD Afloat Outreach. AUXPAD Afloat Outreach is an extension of ashore activities. AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activities places qualified AUXPAD operators in direct contact with recreational paddle craft users on the water. It promotes paddle craft RBS via personal example and affords an opportunity for Auxiliarists to assimilate with the paddle craft community and develop networks to promote boating safety.
  - a. AUXPAD Facility. Only kayak offers-for-use that are approved by the Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX) may be utilized for AUXPAD Outreach Afloat activities.
    - (1) AUXPAD facilities shall only be non-inflatable, non-collapsible, one person kayaks. Canoes, stand up paddleboards, rafts, and any other watercraft primarily powered by oars, sweeps, or paddles are not authorized for use.

Enclosure (1) to COMDTINST 16794.11

- (2) AUXPAD facilities are required to complete the Facility Offer For Use Form (ANSC 7003) before being accepted for use.
- (3) AUXPAD facilities are required to meet the carriage requirements identified in reference (d) and Paragraph 3.c. of this instruction.

b. AUXPAD Operators.

- (1) Only qualified AUXPAD operators may participate in AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activities. AUXPAD operators shall educate by example by appropriately carrying and operating the proper safety equipment required by federal and state laws for kayaks as well as following best practices common to the paddle craft community.
- (2) AUXPAD operators are not authorized to teach paddle craft maneuvers or emergency/egress techniques.
- (3) VSCs are not authorized while on the water. However, AUXPAD operators are encouraged to also be VE qualified so as to provide legitimacy when discussing VSCs with the paddle craft community.
- (4) Auxiliarists shall only wear the authorized uniform of the day for both the AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activities, as prescribed by the Order Issuing Authority (OIA). AUXPAD operators that operate in tandem shall wear the same uniform. The tilley hat may be worn in lieu of the ballcap. Sunglasses are also highly encouraged.
- (5) Due to the physically demanding nature of this program, all AUXPAD operators are highly encouraged to meet the boat crew physical fitness standards established by the Coast Guard Boat Crew Seamanship Manual, COMDTINST M16114.5 (series) for their specific sex/age group.

c. Specific Equipment Required for AUXPAD Facilities and Operators. In addition to the minimum federal carriage requirements, the following items are required to be carried on all AUXPAD facilities, in order to be accepted for use and assigned to duty.

- (1) A Type III personal flotation device (PFD) with prescribed Auxiliary markings, an attached strobe light, a whistle, a mirror, and a knife (3" blade minimum) is the only PFD authorized for AUXPAD afloat operations. Properly equipped PFDs that also serve a dual function as a rescue vest are highly recommended.
- (2) Grab lines/deck lines on kayak.

- (3) One waterproof VHF-FM marine radio or portable VHF radio in a clear plastic waterproof bag. This waterproof bag must be designed for the marine environment. Food storage bags are not authorized for this use.
  - (4) Cell phone in waterproof container to serve as a backup means of communication.
  - (5) Waterproof flashlight or headlamp.
  - (6) Portable Global Positioning System (GPS).
  - (7) Compass, hand-held or mounted.
  - (8) Spare paddle/oar.
  - (9) Personal First Aid Kit.
  - (10) One 30 ft polypropylene towline equipped with a “quick release” device. A specialized paddle craft towing harness is authorized, but is not required.
  - (11) Electronic or paper chart of local area. If a paper chart is used, it must be enclosed in a waterproof bag designed for the marine environment, or be printed on waterproof paper.
  - (12) Printed pre-underway checklist.
  - (13) Pen or pencil.
  - (14) Small notebook/logbook.
  - (15) Manual pump for dewatering.
  - (16) Drinking water stowed in such a way as to be accessible underway.
  - (17) Temporary CG Auxiliary patrol sign placed on the deck of the kayak, aligned longitudinally. AUXPAD facility decals shall be placed on the exterior of the kayak behind the operator’s seat. All markings must be clearly visible.
  - (18) Proper protective clothing for the environmental conditions must be worn.
  - (19) Completed paddle craft “If Found” sticker, placed on the inside of the kayak on the starboard side.
- d. AUXPAD Afloat Operational Envelope. The following operational parameters and requirements outlined in the chart below are to be strictly adhered to at all times to ensure the safe execution of AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activities.

<p><b>Weather Parameters</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operation is not authorized when there is a weather advisory or warning active in the mission area.</li> <li>• Daylight operations only (sunrise to sunset)</li> <li>• Water temperature must be greater than 60° F</li> <li>• Combined air and water temperature must be above 120° F</li> <li>• Visibility greater than 5 NM</li> <li>• Sustained winds less than 15 knots</li> <li>• Seas less than 1 ft</li> <li>• Current less than 3 kts</li> </ul>
<p><b>Geographical Limitations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operations within 1,000 yards (0.5 NM) from shore</li> <li>• Not near shipping channels/traffic lanes</li> <li>• Missions may not be conducted near whitewater areas or areas of breaking surf.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fatigue Limitations</b></p>	<p>Maximum of 6 total underway hours in a 24 hour day. There must be a mandatory 8 hour rest period within that 24 hour day, following the completion of total underway hours. A one hour off the water break period is also mandatory after 3 hours of underway time.</p>
<p><b>Mission Restrictions</b></p>	<p>AUXPAD Afloat Outreach is intended to promote paddle craft RBS. Other activities, including ATON verification and Maritime Observation Missions are not authorized under the AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activity. (See provision for Safety Zone/Regulated Navigation Area Patrols.)</p>
<p><b>Search and Rescue (SAR)</b></p>	<p>During the execution of an AUXPAD Outreach Afloat mission, an AUXPAD operator may encounter a person(s) in distress (e.g. another paddler, person in the water). AUXPAD operators are authorized to render aid to persons in imminent distress based upon their level of training, skill and limitations, on scene weather and other conditions, and only after assessing the risk using the Green-Amber-Red (GAR) model. Upon encountering a person(s) in distress, the AUXPAD operator shall immediately notify the respective Coast Guard unit and report the situation and intended course of action.</p>
<p><b>Safety Zone/Regulated Navigation Area Patrols</b></p>	<p>The AUXPAD’s safety-centric presence while patrolling safety zones or regulated navigation areas (RNA) is aligned with the RBS outreach aspects of this program.</p> <p>OIAs may assign AUXPAD facilities to assist Coast Guard or other law enforcement/public safety boats while patrolling near-shore safety zones or RNAs (i.e. swim events). Given the increased likelihood of encountering a person in distress, OIAs must carefully assess the risks associated with the mission and ensure operators know how to render aid to a distressed person in the water from their paddle craft. AUXPAD facilities should be utilized in waters that cannot be effectively patrolled by boat(s).</p>

- (1) GAR Model. All AUXPAD operators shall exercise prudent risk management and utilize the GAR model before commencing or continuing any AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activity or any type of SAR response.
  - (2) Tandem Operating Requirement. Auxiliary paddle craft are required to operate in tandem with another vessel. This vessel can be another Auxiliary operational vessel facility (boat or personal water craft), a Coast Guard boat, a law enforcement/public safety agency boat, or another AUXPAD facility. No tandem facility shall be more than 50 yards or half the visibility, whichever is least, from its AUXPAD facility.
- e. AUXPAD Operator Training.
- (1) The training and qualification standards of the ACA shall be the governing standard for all AUXPAD operators and AQs.
  - (2) AUXPAD operators are not required to become members of the ACA. However, all AUXPAD operators must successfully complete/pass all the required training and skills assessments listed in Appendix A- AUXPAD Training, according to ACA standards.
  - (3) Within the first year of a regional AUXPAD program being established, two AQs will be required per Coast Guard district, in order to properly train and maintain that region's AUXPAD program. Auxiliarists can only become qualified AUXPAD operators and AQs after successfully passing the training requirements listed in Appendix A.
  - (4) Since participation in this program is voluntary, Auxiliarists are responsible for the costs associated with obtaining the required training, unless funding is provided by the District.
- f. AUXPAD Operator and AQ Qualification Process. Auxiliarists are authorized to participate in AUXPAD Afloat activities only after their DIRAUX has:
- (1) Verified and retained a copy of the individual's successful completion of required courses and assessments for his or her specific facility. Training and qualification standards are not universal for all types of approved AUXPAD facilities (i.e. traditional kayaks vs. sit on top(SOT) kayaks), and:
  - (2) Verified and approved the seaworthiness of the AUXPAD facility.
- g. Communications.
- (1) All AUXPAD operators while under orders shall carry a working, waterproof VHF-FM radio or other suitable communications capability that meets the requirements of the OIA, as stated earlier in Paragraph 3c.



- (2) Prior to launching, the AUXPAD operator will contact and establish a radio guard with a Coast Guard unit, Auxiliary vessel facility or Auxiliary shore/mobile radio facility. AUXPAD operators shall conduct a comms check every 30 minutes with the facility that they're operating in tandem with. Operations and position reports will be conducted with the unit maintaining its radio guard at intervals not to exceed 30 minutes.
  - (3) When AUXPAD facilities are operating, one paddle craft operator will be designated to keep the other's radio guard. That designated paddle craft will make ops and position reports for both.
- h. Lost Communications Plan. Lost communications is defined as lost comms with any AUXPAD facility, whether by its tandem facility or by the unit maintaining its radio guard. The actions below will be carried out by AUXPAD operators:
- (1) Attempt to establish communications via channel 16 or on secondary working frequencies via the portable hand held radio.
  - (2) Initiate call using the onboard cellular telephone. If communications are not established after several attempts, try to contact other units on the working channel.
  - (3) If this is unsuccessful, attempt communications with any other Auxiliary or Coast Guard unit on Channel 16.
  - (4) If still unable to establish communications with a Coast Guard or Auxiliary unit, send a call on channel 16 stating "To any vessel or unit, this is Coast Guard Auxiliary Paddle craft Operator(call sign), I have lost communications with (your controlling unit), request you relay the following information to the nearest Coast Guard unit." Include position, situation, reason for communications outage if known, and any other important information.
  - (5) If reliable comms cannot be established and maintained via the portable hand held radio or cell phone, abort the mission and immediately return to the station following the same route that was used to transit to your current position. This is extremely important since any search efforts that may be initiated will follow the route given during operations and position reports.
  - (6) If on a down-river patrol where returning upstream is impossible or impractical, safe takeout points should be pre-arranged in the patrol briefing. Proceed to the safe takeout point and make contact as soon as possible.
  - (7) If the Coast Guard unit or Auxiliary unit maintaining the AUXPAD operator's radio guard determines there is a loss of communications with a vessel, the unit's lost comms procedures should be utilized.

i. Patrol Procedures.

- (1) Paddle craft are assigned to patrol duty in the same manner currently used for vessel and air patrols. AUXPAD operators request orders through Auxiliary Order Management (AOM) system. AUXPAD operators shall coordinate with their OIA and the Auxiliary Division's Operations Staff Officer (SO-OP) to determine the most appropriate or most effective patrol area.
  - (2) The AUXPAD operator's primary mission is to enhance safety awareness and educate by example to all members of the boating public. While on patrol, all AUXPAD operators shall conduct themselves and operate their paddle craft in a professional and courteous manner. They will comply with all state/local regulations. They shall be sensitive to operating in environmentally sensitive areas and will act responsibly.
  - (3) Prior to launching, the AUXPAD operator will contact and establish an appropriate radio guard according to Paragraph 3.g. of this instruction.
  - (4) All AUXPAD Afloat operational hours shall be recorded in Auxiliary Data (AUXDATA) utilizing the specific AUXPAD mission/ activity code for all authorized AUXPAD Ashore and Afloat activities.
  - (5) AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activities are only eligible for meal reimbursement and mileage driving to/from AUXPAD launch sites. Associated patrol claims shall be processed using AOM.
- j. Passengers. Passengers or guest are not authorized on board an AUXPAD facility while it is under orders.

APPENDIX A - AUXPAD TRAINING

- (1) AUXPAD Operator Required Training – All AUXPAD operators must successfully complete and pass the ACA kayak courses and skills assessments identified below, in order to obtain an initial qualification.
  - (a) Level 1: Flatwater Kayak Safety and Rescue
  - (b) Level 1: Introduction to Kayaking-Skills Assessment
  - (c) Level 2: Coastal Kayaking-Skills Assessment
  - (d) Level 2: Essentials of Sit on Top (SOT) Kayaking. (Only applicable if the AUXPAD operator will be operating a SOT kayak).
  
- (2) An AUXPAD Qualifier (AQ) must be certified as an ACA Instructor for Coastal Kayaking. AQs shall maintain their certification as such, by fulfilling all the currency requirements established for ACA Coastal Kayaking Instructors and retain appropriate documentation verifying their qualification currency. AQs shall administer all ACA course material and content, as well as skills assessments, in accordance with the education/training standards established by the ACA. To obtain the qualification of AQ, Auxiliarists must successfully complete the following ACA kayak courses:
  - (a) Level 1: Introduction to Kayaking-Instructor
  - (b) Level 2: Essentials of Sit On Top Kayaking-Instructor
  - (c) Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring-Instructor
  
- (3) AUXPAD Operator Currency Maintenance – At a minimum, all AUXPAD operators and AQs are required to successfully complete the following skills assessments semiannually, in order to maintain their proficiency and participate in AUXPAD Afloat activities. Only current AUXPAD AQs and ACA Instructors are authorized to evaluate these assessments. These semiannual assessments are:
  - (a) Level 1: Introduction to Kayaking- Skills Assessment
  - (b) Level 2: Coastal Kayaking- Skills Assessment

