

Minutes  
USPS Educational Department  
Combined DEO - Ed. Leadership Meeting  
Crystal City, Arlington, VA Governing Board  
11 September 2014

1. Welcome and Introductions Don Fiander
  - a. Self-introductions
  
2. Description of Tall Ships Challenge on the West Coast Don Stark
  - a. Tall Ships Challenge 2014 – San Pedro, San Diego, and Dana Point
  - b. Tall Ship Cruises 2014 – Lady Washington and Adventuress – D16 and D32
  
3. Report from The National Training Officer CPS/ECP Carolyn Reid
  - a. CPS doing well with 24,000 members and 150 squadrons and a budget surplus.
  - b. CPS has purchased a USPS Virtual Trainer simulator. This version will be multilingual to combine English, French, Chinese, Spanish, etc.
  - c. Invitation to Fall meeting in Quebec City.
  - d. Changes because of government changes include new by-laws, new governance. This led to a review of the entire organization structure, and this led to a good result.
    - i. Titles will change, (i.e. The National Training Officer will be the National Education Officer).
    - ii. There will be one type of membership.
    - iii. CPS will be less a less paramilitary organization.
    - iv. There were two surveys conducted.
    - v. There will not be any Ranks
    - vi. There will be a smaller Board of Governors, a smaller Board of Directors, and a smaller Executive Department.
  - e. Courses are much like those of USPS
    - i. All courses are going into e-book format and print on demand.
    - ii. Students can order a printed version if they choose.
    - iii. CPS will no longer create CDs. Material will be available on the “Cloud”.
    - iv. CPS no longer worries about Digital Rights Management.
    - v. CPS is creating courses on line.
      1. PCOC. (equivalent to ABC)
      2. Electronic Navigation – being offered through the colleges. CPS works with one college, and the course is available to all 63 colleges in a program called Ontario Learn.

- a. This an instructor led self-study course.
  - b. Electronic Navigation is being shared with USPS.
- vi. Courses are being offered by Webinar. CPS has purchased GoToTraining.
  - 1. Courses can be taken across Canada through this method.
  - 2. Also use GoToMeeting for training and updates.
- f. I will be leaving as Training Officer next month and have enjoyed working with you.

4. Comments from the NEO Bob Brandenstein

5. Social Media Awareness Jan Wright

(This [Power Point presentation](#) has been posted on the [Educational Dept.](#) web page)

- a. Social Media is just an extension of the internet for a different form of communication.
- b. There are over 700 different types of social media platforms.
- c. On these platforms, USPS can post any kind of content that we want about us, our products, about boating, about anything that you want to do.
- d. This is a good thing and very powerful.
- e. 74% of internet users also use social media platforms.
- f. There are over 1 billion users of Facebook.
- g. USPS is using Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram
- h. There is also Google+
- i. These can expand our reach.
- j. The message posted live forever (unlike a newspaper advertisement or article).
- k. We can use social media to specifically target our message.
- l. People can post a comment or a question.
- m. There are analytical tools included to track the number of visitors and how many people like your page, etc.
- n. USPS is on Facebook, but we have few friends (1200) and almost no original content.
- o. USPS is on Twitter using the name Boating Is Fun. We have originated 1200 messages and have 900 followers.
  - i. Twitter can be powerful because you can directly send your messages.
- p. We have original content, but we haven't been posting it.
- q. We need to post things for the public that give a positive image of our organization.
- r. Through social media we need to be helping people and giving them a reason why they should trust us and believe in us.
- s. We need to inform and help people for free. Give something to people that they can use.

- t. The recommendation is that we work with Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, Instagram, and Pinterest.
  - u. We need to post USPS content on our page. Currently much of what is posted is non USPS content.
  - v. We need to set Branding and Style Guides for USPS. We need some guidance.
  - w. We don't want to fragment what is posted by having separate sites for different parts of the national organization.
  - x. It would be good if we had a couple of people in the Educational Department who could post content and reply to inquiries (hopefully quickly).
  - y. We need to define scope and content and package them for the main users of our content.
  - z. We need volunteers for fresh contents, photos, graphics, and videos.
  - aa. We need you each to be "Champions of Change".
  - bb. Question – How do we proceed?
    - i. We need to have photos and perhaps an email account to collect them. Suggest that if you have a good photo that you send them to PR@savannahsboatingclub.org, which is Jan's email address through the Tybee Light Power Squadron.
    - ii. Suggestion is that there be a step-by-step presentation live on-line given at Jacksonville at the Annual Meeting.
    - iii. We could also do training for this using GoToMeeting before Jacksonville.
    - iv. We need to have a photo release form available so that others can use your photos.
    - v. Photos of people require that each person gives a release to publish their photo. We have to be careful. We need guidance as to what we are allowed to do.
6. Boat Operator Certification – On The Water Training Committee update - Scott McDonald
- a. Three Programs Under this committee
    - i. Boat Operator Certification Program
      - 1. Currently certifying the Inland Navigator, Coastal Navigator, and the Advanced Coastal Navigator levels.
      - 2. There is a Beta Test of the Off Shore Navigator certification process
    - ii. Practical On the Water Program
      - 1. Adaptions to boats larger than the 22 foot water trainer.
    - iii. Working with the On-the-water guides for other USPS education courses.

1. Available for all the USPS Advanced Grade courses and Sail and America's Boating Course.
  2. Some area of the country are doing well with these OTW components. Others are hesitant to try. It is very easy to do.
- b. Need to do a better job in marketing.
    - i. We will provide support with email contacts to potential students wherever in the areas where training is offered by the squadrons.
    - ii. We need to do a better job informing our members about the program.
    - iii. We have created our own survey to find out how we can improve communications about this program.
    - iv. One of the problems is that this is a complicated program, and it is not necessarily clear from our website. We need to simplify the message.
  - c. We are interested in hosting events that will expand our certifier network and help grow the program.
    - i. This will help strengthen our educational programs throughout the Advanced Grades.
  - d. POTW brings students into our squadrons and members.
  - e. Water Trainer is going back to the manufacturer.
  - f. To get more information about the programs, come to our sessions tomorrow which includes a breakout session about teaching on the water.
  - g. We recommend that you charge \$250 for POTW class. You can give a discount to squadron members if you like, but this is a bargain for an 8 hour course that includes 4 hours of OTW training. We are providing a valuable professional level program to the public. We need to view this differently.
  - h. Our organization greatly benefits from this program.
7. Marketing Initiatives - Rinck Tammy Brown, USPS Marketing Director
- a. Decision was made to get assistance with on-line sales.
  - b. Rinck is the company that was chosen to help us be more visible in the internet-based world.
  - c. Rinck will provide about 800,000 impressions of USPS online mostly through Facebook. This will be targeted to those who meet certain profile information such as having bought a new boat etc.
  - d. Rinck will measure impressions and will track the numbers of responses.
  - e. We plan to do an online survey to see what our customers want. This will be sent to about 55,000 people who have taken one of our boating classes but have not joined. The names of those who take the survey will be entered in a drawing for a free Weather for Boaters online class.

- f. USPS can respond by providing the online classes that are most desired.
  - g. We will also do some other surveys to help us improve.
  - h. New Logo development will be delayed until maybe March.
  - i. Question was raised about how does this work without the new website.
    - i. Peter Mitchelson will address this at the governing board meeting.
    - ii. There will be a new company involved in developing the website.
    - iii. There are ways that we can improve the current site internally.
  - j. We are working to create PR and marketing tools to fill our boating classes.
8. Report on the development of the on-line courses Eileen Rickard / Andy Sumberg
- a. Boat US Foundation is a partner with USPS in this program
  - b. These are our courses that exist on the Boat US platform.
  - c. Weather for Boaters has now been released.
    - i. This is based on the Weather and Forecasting Seminar.
    - ii. This course was relabeled to get a better response online.
    - iii. Supplemental materials available in electronic form online.
    - iv. Includes a preview of what the course looks like before the user buys the course.
  - d. 4 seminars are being developed: VHF, Hurricanes, GPS, and RADAR.
  - e. Cruising and Cruise Plan is moving along.
  - f. Sales have not been spectacular, but we are working on this and they are improving.
  - g. 354 seminars have been sold so far, altogether.
  - h. We found that the title "Partner in Command" didn't mean anything to anyone on the Internet. We added a tag line "An essential introduction to boating for all crew members".
  - i. We have researched the price. Perhaps we are priced too high for the Internet course. We tried two different prices in July to see the effect on sales.
  - j. We recognize the talents of Tom Brincka and his abilities that contribute to this effort.
  - k. Content development – Andy Sumberg
    - i. 3 courses have been released, and others are coming along quickly.
    - ii. GPS is in the Story Boarding phase.
    - iii. VHF has been story boarded and is in line for development.
    - iv. RADAR is just beginning.
    - v. Cruising and Cruise Planning is the first course and is a large undertaking. This is in the story boarding phase.
    - vi. We need subject matter experts.

- vii. Our starting point is the existing seminar or course.
  - viii. We need a narration for everything that we would want a teacher to say.
  - ix. Story Boarding shows every scene that we need to include.
  - x. Media sharing is part of the future. We can share images and content and PDFs. We can share narrations and text, but we can't share the interactive nature of the web based courses. Some things are already on the Ed Dept FTP website for Weather.
  - I. Overall work of the Educational Outreach Committee - Bill McManimen
    - i. We will also put on the website the process of development.
    - ii. Introductions of Chris Edmonston, Amanda Suttles Perez and Tony Bird
    - iii. We need three production teams to be ability of creating the new courses. Ideally there would be three or four people per team.
9. Chris Edmonston – President of Boat US Foundation
- a. Boat US Foundation is keenly aware of how the squadrons are organized and wants to help drive students to the squadron's classrooms.
  - b. We can't replace classroom courses.
  - c. That has always been our intent and our goal.
  - d. Boat US Foundation wants to help USPS grow.
10. Survey Follow Up Bob Brandenstein
- a. Analyze of the Free Form comments from the survey.
  - b. Electro Mechanical System Committee - George Hallenbeck
    - i. 40 responses applied to EMS committee topics
    - ii. Several topics may be addressed by a seminar. Some would be addressed by a chapter within a course.
    - iii. AIS is of interest to many.
    - iv. E-books are of interest for VHF.
    - v. How does this fit together? We see these in terms of specific areas including
      - 1. Propulsion systems.
      - 2. Navigation Systems
      - 3. Other systems.
  - c. Basic Public Boating Education Committee - Dick Carson
    - i. America's Boating Course
      - 1. Recommend that for Customs information that we stick with the Cross Border Seminar and eliminate this topic from other courses. It will be removed from ABC.

2. Course will be rewritten again to meet the new NASBLA education standards.
  3. We recommend that ABC be a feature on the USPS website.
- ii. HQ800 –
1. We would like our course assistants to be able to access HQ800. Everyone on the ED-1 should have access.
  2. We want to simplify the help page description of the HQ800 process of dealing with course information to three steps: Register a course, populate the Course with student information, and enter grades. This will be on the website tomorrow.
  3. We are looking again at a prepay system using PayPal or a similar system for ABC.
  4. Comment from Bob Brandenstein - People today shop for products using the Internet. We all do. We need to make the Boating Course information on our Main USPS page. It should be the most prominent thing on our page.

- d. Instructor Development Committee      Tom Shuell
- i. There was a plea for more instructors. There is an 11 % decline in the number of instructors over the past year and an 8 % increase in the number of instructors who have not renewed their certification.
  - ii. We need to address the needs of struggling squadrons.

11. Boating Skills Virtual Trainer      Lisa Herndon

- a. The trainer is much improved.
- b. We need to make a big deal and talk about this breakthrough technology that can have great educational impact. We are in the end of the first year of the grant.
- c. This is the first simulator of its kind designed for education. Scott McDonald and his team wrote the instructor manuals for the trainer. Five units are available.
- d. New version allows a 360 view by “slewing” to the right or left.
- e. Can be customized for wind, current, and day or night views.
- f. Includes a virtual compass, speedometer, and RPM gauge.
- g. The environment has been much improved.
  - i. There is a full marina view.
  - ii. There are nine exercises.
  - iii. Red and Green buoys have been added.
- h. The units have been a hit at so many of the shows.

- i. Currently there is no usage or maintenance fee associated with ordering a unit, but this will be monitored and perhaps changed if necessary.
  - i. You pay only the actual costs of shipping. Get an estimate from USPS customer service. Cost is approximately \$115 to \$175 one way in continental US.
  - ii. You can reserve it up to 14 days for named events.
  - iii. You need time to learn how to set it up and get familiar with the unit.
  - iv. The turnaround time is very critical. Talk to Rachel or Cindy in Customer Service. There is a quality check at HQ to be sure the unit is complete and working before it is shipped again.
  - v. There is an instructor manual on the website that should be read before your unit arrives. There is also a video.
  - vi. You need to follow assembly directions exactly both for set up and shut down. Everything has to be done in a certain order, no exceptions!
  - vii. There is a tally sheet that monitors the use and experience.
  - viii. Technical support is available during business hours Pacific Time.
  - ix. Do not make any changes in the units. We don't want to violate our units.
  - x. There has been a problem with things shaking loose in shipping. They are working on that.
- j. This is a special use computer, not like your typical home computer.
- k. These units are available for sale. Contact HQ. Cost to squadrons and USCG Aux is \$14,900 plus shipping. The cost of the pelican cases is \$1850. Price outside of USPS is \$18,900.
- l. We need your feedback on your experience. We need to streamline the process for your feedback.
- m. With the second grant from the Coast Guard, we will have have 13 units available.

## 12. Brunswick Program Update

John Miller

- a. Brunswick Program
  - i. Need help getting more squadrons involved in the Brunswick Program. Currently 133 squadrons are involved.
  - ii. Need data on how the program is working (positive or negative).
  - iii. If you need to know who the Brunswick dealers are in your area, contact John Malatak.
- b. Captains License Program now on the shelf at a good price (\$535) for members from Marine Learning Systems.

## 13. Advanced Grade Recognition

Don Fiander

- a. In 2008 the number of electives changed (now 8) so the requirement for SN changed so that you were required to complete 6 of the 8 electives.

- b. Recommendation is that Instructor Development be included.
  - c. Comment is that SN should require all 8 electives.
  - d. Various options were discussed.
  - e. Bob Brandenstein comments that we take a pledge “to promote self-education of our members” and that the Instructor Development class goes with that commitment. The program is about giving back to the educational process.
  - f. By show of hands a majority recommend that all elective courses be required for SN.
14. Looking ahead to Jacksonville.
15. Adjourn.

Don Fiander