

DRAFT

Government and Partner Relations Committee

1305 Thursday, 22 February 2007

Call to order by R/C William E. Husted, SN

Introduction of Committee Members in Attendance

P/ C Gale Alls, SN	D/Lt Donald E. Baker, SN	D/Lt Verna L. Clayton, P
P/V/C Robert P. David, SN	P/C C. Henry Depew, SN	Stf/C Lee W. Devane, AP
Cdr. Richard Gercak, AP	Lt/C Paul W. Gulgowski	R/C William E. Husted, SN
D/1st/Lt Mary Ann Jensen, AP	P/C Terrence M. Jordan, S	P/C Gregory E. Korstad, AP
D/Lt/C Richard McGaughy, JN	P/D/C E. Ben Owen, SN	P/R/C Norma J. Parrish, AP
P/V/C James E. Roeber, SN	P/Stf/C Fred Sellenraad, SN	P/R/C Joyce Shaw, AP
P/D/C Richard Stablein, SN	P/D/C Bruce R. Theriault, AP	

Guests: John Malatak, US Coast Guard
P/C/C Tony Gardner, Canadian Sail and Power Squadrons

Approval of New York GB Committee Minutes

The minutes of New York meeting were approved as distributed.

NGPR Committee Update – R/C Bill Husted

Assigned Task Progress - All committee members were reminded to pay attention to and complete the Homework assignments.

Partnership Reviews – Bill has been working with Citizen Corps (emergency preparedness group) to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). It was to have been signed at Saturday's Annual Meeting; however, the head of the Corps could be reached because of a house fire. Bill requested that Fred Sellenraad become involved with Citizen Corps. Red Cross has advised that it does not become involved with Agreements at the National level. All agreements are local in nature.

Team Reports

Homeland Security - Lt/C Paul Gulgowski

Six USPS/USCG District liaison positions have been filled. These positions align with the nine Coast Guard Districts. The liaison positions for California and Hawaii have not been filled. In addition, there is no liaison for the Alaska District since there are no Squadrons in Alaska at this time.

Liaison – P/Stf/C Fred Sellenraad

A written report was submitted and is attached to these minutes. A listing is needed in the District section of the National Directory for Liaison Officers. Responsibilities should be listed in Operations Manual in addition to NGPR website. P/R/C Norma Parrish will follow up.

MOU Update – P/V/C Jim Roeber

The NASBLA MOUs are in very good shape. These relate to educational program. There are MOUs with ¾ of the states and USPS is working on the others. It is necessary to review those that have a 'window'; i.e., a 3 to 5 year review. USPS has an excellent rapport with NASBLA.

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Non-Governmental Partners (i.e., organizational MOUs) – There are difficulties trying to get ‘arms around’ these MOUs. There is not a clear understanding that ALL MOUs are to be coordinated through NGPR Committee. Many go through the vice-commander in charge of the particular committee without coming to NGPR Committee. All MOUs go through the Law Committee; however, that committee is looking to ensure the wording of the MOU won’t get USPS in legal trouble. R/C Husted is attempting to get a clear and distinct ruling from the Operations Committee regarding this. The key issue is that several people may be talking to the same organization. Thus, no one knows what is going on. There is a need for coordination, not control, by NGPR Committee. All of USPS needs to be on the same page.

There is a national boat registration effort for which public comment is being sought. This would be a national data base of boats. The concept was presented by Admiral Nimmich. Also, NASBLA exploring national data base of people who have passed NASBLA-approved boating education courses.

WebSite – P/D/C Bruce Theriault

Windows 95 and 98 are no longer supported, and Windows 2000 will be included in this list shortly. This may be the reason people are having problems accessing the website.

To access the website go to the Index, select Executive Department, and then select NGPRCom. All information (roster, minutes, MOUs) is online. The roster and minutes are in the members area.

John Malatak is requesting that a list by state of Liaison Officers be posted. If this were available, the liaisons could be advised of breaking events/news. P/Stf/C Fred Sellenraad was asked to coordinate this effort with John. P/Stf/C Sellenraad raised the question of when do the duties of the liaison officer leave off and the duties of the legislative officer begin?

NGPR Committee Debut in Expo 2007 – Stf/C Lee Devane

There will be an Expo at the Norfolk Governing Board Meeting on Friday, 7 September 2007. R/C Husted wants the NGPR Committee to have a presence. A team is needed to set up the booth and man the booth.

P/V/C Roeber suggested having a map showing where we have MOUs. The intent would be to focus on the relationship side. P/C Korstad asked what is the purpose of the booth? P/V/C Roeber replied: First, to inform the USPS membership of who we are and what do we do; and second, to show with whom USPS has formal relationships. This is an opportunity to slowly start to show people what we are all about.

Suggestions included:

- Have a handout that includes an article that can be published in the squadron newsletters
- Who we are, what we do and why is the message. Keep it simple.

Stf/C Devane will be contacting everyone for assistance. The contact will be either by phone or email.

Committee members were asked to email Stf/C Devane anything they think should be in the flyer.

The physical set-up of the booth was discussed. What should we have as a backdrop? (Email Stf/C Devane with suggestions) Don’t put a table across the front of the booth. The Committee wants a booth by the door (10X10). P/R/C Parrish with follow-up on this.

Individual Team Breakout Sessions – (All)

The committee broke into teams to discuss goals and objectives.

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There was discussion of differences between legislative activities and lobbying. Legislative people are providing information to the legislature and are catalysts to alert the D/C and National of issues. USPS members are counselors and advisors. In any contact with the Legislature, they must use personal letterhead. They can add affiliations to the letter but cannot state that they are representing those organization(s). D/Lt Clayton will look into examples of what members can and cannot do when providing information.

OBS/USCG Strategic Plan - R/C Bill Husted

The USCG's Office of Boating Safety (OBS) Strategic Plan has been developed in collaboration with boating groups, NMMA, and NASBLA. The recommendations for OBS Plan for 2007-2011 are to give the Coast Guard direction. The Law Committee and the Operating Committee received copies of Plan on Wednesday. The intent is for the Operating Committee to approve the Plan so that the Chief Commander can participate in the official signing at next week's IBWSS conference. The plan stresses safety, education, and advanced education. R/C Husted will email copies of plan to all Committee members. As part of the plan, the Coast Guard will provide each Vessel Examiner with belt pack that must be worn during Vessel exams.

Afternoon Review/Committee Remarks

The question was raised as to whether there is any proactive strategy for the work of this committee. If there is, how does that strategy get communicated? The committee seems to be reactive rather than proactive. USPS needs to identify policy goals and get these goals reflected in State legislation. For example, does USPS want every boater to have a boating safety class? If so, establish policy and work directly with legislatures to enact laws.

It was suggested that a kit be developed to present to new legislators. Also, a volunteer's kit should be developed that contains information on how to work with legislators, including handouts. Possibly include a 'model' letter to be sent to targeted legislative committees (e.g., Law, Public Safety). D/Lt Baker and P/C Korstad were assigned to work on this issue.

ADJOURNED 1640

RECONVENED 0810 Friday, 23 February 2007

Introduction of Committee Members in Attendance

P/D/C Fred P. Adame, SN	P/ C Gale Alls, SN	R/C Robert Brandenstein, SN
D/Lt Verna L. Clayton, P	P/V/C Robert P. David, SN	Stf/C Lee W. Devane, AP
Cdr. Richard Gercak, AP	R/C William E. Husted, SN	D/1st/Lt Mary Ann Jensen, AP
P/C Terrence M. Jordan, S	P/R/C Norma J. Parrish, AP	P/D/C Artemas Pickard, SN
P/R/C Joyce Shaw, AP	P/D/C Richard N. Spurr, SN	

Guests: John Malatak, US Coast Guard
Tony Niles, Army Corps of Engineers
Bryan Zumwalt, National Marine Manufacturers Association
Captain Richard Moore, Florida Fish and Wildlife
Steve Tadd, National Marine Manufacturers Association
Ruth Wood, Boat US Foundation
Jeff Johnson, NASBLA
Ed Weiss, US Coast Guard Sector Jacksonville
LTJG Brian Zekus, US Coast Guard Headquarters
Thomas Taylor, US Coast Guard Sector Jacksonville
Division Commodore Mary Larsen, US Coast Guard Auxiliary

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Bill Gossard, National Transportation Safety Board

USPS Representative Reports

National Boating Federation - P/V/C David is the USPS Liaison with the National Boating Federation (NBF). The NBF working on finalizing an MOU with NASBLA. There will be a joint award to the squadron with the best (public boating) education. P/V/C David is involved with four different harbor safety committees.

European Boating Association - NBF provides USPS entry into the European Boating Association with official observer status. This is an opportunity for USPS to sell course material to other English-speaking countries. UN Resolution 40 requires a certification of boating proficiency, issued by country of origin, in order to boat in European waters.

NBSAC- P/V/C David is the USPS liaison. NBSAC is working on a legislative change proposal so that the U.S. can issue certificates of proficiency for U.S. citizens and that will also allow acceptance of other countries' certificates.

National Safe Boating Council – P/R/C Joyce Shaw is the USPS Liaison with the National Safe Boating Council (NSBC). She introduced Ruth Wood the chairman of NSBC. NSBC coordinates National Safe Boating Week. This year there will be a special campaign in California to target fishermen. There are several different types of awards provided by NSBC. 60% of NSBC income comes from grants. This organization will be celebrating its 50th year in 2008.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – P/R/C Parrish introduced Tony Niles from the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). USACE publishes and sells chart books on 13 different river systems. By the end of the year, USACE will have geover software on its website. This can be downloaded free with adobe acrobat. Geover software provides geographic mapping of the waterways. USACE will be publishing an article (primer) regarding this. USACE is providing a conference room in Puerto Rico for USPS meetings over the next year. It was noted that citizens can report on any of the shoreline facilities and fixed navigation aids. The website for viewing and downloading is www.tec.army.mil/echarts. A viewer is needed. USACE is pursuing a web based reporting system. This continues in testing with D/10.

Scheduled Remarks/Presentations by Special Guests

Captain Richard Moore is Florida's Boating Law Administrator within the Florida Department of Fish and Wildlife. He discussed the necessity of increasing life jacket usage to prevent fatalities. R/C Husted noted that all exhibitors and staff at the NMMA Boat Show wore life jackets. The new life jackets -- belt packs, suspenders, etc. -- are not as bulky and easier to use.

Jeff Johnson, President of NASBLA, discussed the Strategic Plan. The NASBLA Homeland Security Committee is working with the Coast Guard leadership on the education front. It is committed to doing the best job possible. The committee is working through some issues. There are new NASBLA committees: Training and Certification to establish standards and criteria, and Marketing and Outreach.

Bryan Zumwalt from the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) discussed the importance of educating boaters. He also provided details on invasive species and the Clean Water Act. A 2004 California Federal District Court decision found that the EPA did not have the authority to exempt certain kinds of boats from the Clean Water Act. He also cited several other laws (the Non-Indigence Aquatic Prevention Act and the 1996 National Invasive Species Act) that contain several loopholes. International boats are not complying with these acts. The 2004 CA District Court Case allows citizens to sue. A national certification/discharge permit will be required. The EPA must have regulations in place by 2008. The NMMA is setting up a website (Boatblue.org). It will be up next month. The California Ruling will be available on this site. There are far reaching, scary implications. The approach NMMA is proposing is to deal with the 18 million recreational vessels only. Commercial vessels would not be included. An alternative solution for recreational boats has to be crafted.

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Ruth Wood from the Boat U.S. Foundation stated that organization is partnering with NMMA as partner on above issue. She noted that there are Boating Safety grants and Environmental grants available from the Boat U.S. Foundation. There is a new DSC Radio tutorial, also a marine debris project (monofilament lines) and a new environmental leadership award.

R/C Husted noted that the OBS/USCG Strategic Plan was approved by the Operating Committee this morning. The plan includes USCG-provided belt packs; all Vessel Examiners must wear them when performing Vessel Safety checks. More details will be forthcoming including on-the-water training. The hope is to establish USPS as a leader with four levels of proficiency and certified instructors.

Steve Tadd (NMMA) talked about Grow Boating (an effort to increase boating) and Discover Boating (a national marketing campaign). NMMA has 2 certification programs, one for manufacturers and one for dealers. There are water access changes. NMMA is trying to increase access which is decreasing in some areas. There will be an MOU signing Saturday with the Marine retailers (MRAA).

BREAK 0948 – 1015

LTJG Brian Zekus, USCG Headquarters, provided an update on America's Waterways Watch (AWW). He noted that P/D/C John Bennett (D/9) worked to distribute AWW materials with Boat Registrations in Michigan. This same initiative is also active in Connecticut. The contact phone number to report suspicious activities is 1-877-24WATCH.

P/D/C Fred Adame introduced the Coast Guard representatives present. He noted that USPS is working with the Coast Guard Auxiliary on many different activities.

Division Commodore Mary Larsen from the US Coast Guard Auxiliary noted that there is a "tremendous appetite" for AWW. There will be an in depth presentation this afternoon on AWW at the Homeland Security meeting. She believes people are motivated to do something.

Thomas Taylor works with Coast Guard Sector Jacksonville as a Security Specialist. This Sector covers the area from Kings Bay, Georgia (naval submarine base) to south of Melbourne, Florida, including Cape Canaveral. Recreational boaters fill significant gap in knowledge (i.e., smaller vessels under 300 gross tons). They are the first to notice something out of the ordinary. The public's input is critical, and they are included on sub-committees. It was noted that the Harbor Safety Committees and the Maritime Security Committees are two different entities. A balance between the two committees must be maintained.

P/D/C Adame noted that USPS is attempting to build a team with Coast Guard Districts. Five of seven have liaisons. These liaisons will help to identify what squadrons can do to enhance homeland security.

Ed Weiss, US Coast Guard Sector Jacksonville, stated that eight Auxiliary members assist in inspecting fishing boats and tugs. They talk about AWW all the time.

Bill Gossard from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) stated that NTSB appreciates USPS support in attempting to get state laws enacted. In 1993, the effort began to require PFDs for children. There are only four states that do not have laws (Iowa, Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming). There are 15 states without laws regarding education (Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, North Carolina, South Carolina, Utah, Virginia, and Wyoming). One state, Alabama, requires an operator license. There are 1,000 – 2,000 commercial passenger vessels operated at the state level. A diskette is available from Bill regarding passenger vessel safety. NTSB is looking for volunteers to work with states without PFD laws. NTSB would also like to look at states whose laws do not apply to children through age 12 (Alabama, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Vermont).

USPS Government & Partner Relations Committee
2007 Annual Meeting
Jacksonville, Florida

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ADJOURNED 1125