

## Chapter 6

### SQUADRON EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

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**6.1 Squadron educational departmental structure.** A squadron's educational department consists of the squadron educational officer (SEO); assistant squadron educational officer (ASEO), if elected; members of the local boards for boating (basic public education) (LBB), advanced grades (LBAG), and elective courses (LBEC); teaching aids committee (TACom), chairman of learning guides and guides (ChLG), chairman of seminars (ChSem) and the educational property officer. The commander is, *ex officio*, a member of the department and all committees within the department. The success of the USPS educational program rests

with those who handle the educational activities of the squadron: the commander, the SEO, and the local boards, with the assistance and cooperation of the officers and members of the squadron.

**6.2 Squadron educational officer.** The SEO is elected annually by the members of the squadron upon nomination by the squadron's nominating committee or as otherwise provided by the squadron bylaws, but the nominee's qualifications must be pre-approved by the national educational officer (NEO). The NEO may delegate this approval authority to the district educational officer (DEO).

Approval of the SEO candidate (by the NEO or DEO) is accomplished by the chair of the squadron's nominating committee filing completed form ED-80 with the DEO at least 60 days prior to the election. If no reply is received from the DEO within 30 days of receipt by the DEO of the written request for approval [ED-80], the qualifications may be considered approved.

The SEO holds the rank of lieutenant commander and is a member of the national educational department, his district educational department, the squadron bridge, and the squadron executive committee. As chair of the educational department, the SEO supervises the educational program of the squadron.

A member who is nominated for SEO should preferably have earned the grade of N, but as a minimum have earned the grade of AP, and should be selected on the basis of enthusiasm for the USPS educational program as evidenced by a record of personal USPS educational achievement both as a student and an instructor, a willingness to cooperate with others involved in USPS education at the squadron, district, and national levels; and encouragement of fellow members to strive for the highest level of educational achievement. An SEO should be willing to serve for up to three years, taking an active part in all phases of squadron activities, and representing the squadron at district conferences and educational meetings. Some of the SEO's responsibilities are:

A) Upon nomination, counsels the nominating committee regarding candidate(s) for ASEO who, with training, could act for the SEO and could eventually be a candidate for that office. Also counsels the nominating committee regarding the educational qualifications of candidates for other offices;

B) Prior to the change of watch, recruits and makes recommendations to the commander-elect for the appointment of the ChLBB, ChLBAG, ChLBEC, LB members, course chairmen, ChLG, ChSem, ChSP, ChTACom, and other EdDept personnel;

C) With the assistance of the ASEO and the ChLBs, plans the squadron's educational program, defining its objectives, determining the courses that should be taught, class schedules, fees,

facilities, personnel and equipment requirements, presents the squadron educational program to the executive committee for its approval;

D) Ensures that all persons appointed to duties in the educational program are suitably trained; distributes all procedures and information received from district and national sources to appropriate squadron personnel and encourages educational department members to attend district educational meetings. In particular, trains the ASEO and staff to share in educational activities so that they are prepared to assume greater responsibilities;

E) Together with the ChLBs, ChSP, ChLG, ChSem and the ChTACom, reviews the availability of teaching aids, determines the requirements for such aids, takes appropriate action to alleviate deficiencies, keeps alert to development of new aids and the entry of effective teaching aids in exhibits at district conferences and USPS annual meetings;

F) Requests assistance from the publications editor and public relations officer in the promotion of the educational program, assists and cooperates with promotional efforts;

G) Maintains close contact with the ChLBs and class chairs, personally investigates classes with high dropout or non-passing rates for probable causes and takes prompt corrective action;

H) Reviews or handles all correspondence among the squadron members and headquarters or national course chairs; provides copies to the commander, DEO and NEO;

I) Files timely basic public education class schedules with the DEO and headquarters using the on-line form HQ-800. Files timely basic public education class reports with headquarters using the on-line form ED-27, the Boating Class Assistant (a software program) or the boating class workbook (an Excel spreadsheet), both of which can be downloaded from the USPS website;

J) Works in close coordination and cooperation with the DEO and national educational department committees, requesting assistance and guidance on local matters as appropriate. Passes along all significant suggestions on teaching methods, teaching aids, and corrections or improvements in course material. Maintains a complete file of and keeps the DEO advised of the squadron's educational activities, including: courses taught, registration and results; educational materials and

examinations ordered and returned; records of grades and course completions of all members; and results of squadron progress toward educational objectives. Also submits recommendations for merit marks to the commander for educational department personnel under his leadership, listing the work performed (including specific number of classes taught and/or proctored), and encouraging those who have earned partial credit toward a merit mark to contribute further;

K) Sees that all reports and forms are filed correctly and in a timely manner, that examinations are administered properly, that sextant sights have been checked thoroughly, and that examination critiques are utilized to the best advantage of candidates and instructors;

L) Assures that the executive committee and the membership are informed of educational activities by preparing reports and forwarding them to the ExCom and squadron publication editor; and

M) Keeps all records and correspondence in good order and turns over all files, manuals, et cetera, to his successor at the expiration of his term in office; and

N) Promptly reports examination results to the candidates, commander, class chairman, local board chairs, instructors, DEO and secretary.

### 6.3 Assistant squadron educational officer.

There may be an ASEO who is nominated and elected in the same manner as the SEO and who should have earned at least the same grade level as a candidate for SEO. The qualifications of the ASEO must be pre-approved in the same manner as those prescribed for the SEO (use form ED-80) [Refer to 6.2 on page 6-1]. The ASEO holds the rank of first lieutenant and assists the SEO as directed. In the absence or incapacity of the SEO, the ASEO acts in his stead, including voting at any meeting. The ASEO is not an *ex officio* member of the squadron bridge, nor a member of the executive committee.

**6.4 Local boards.** The local boards for boating, advanced grades and elective courses are responsible for instruction and examinations in their respective fields. The chairs are appointed by the commander upon recommendation of the SEO. Each serves for one year or until a successor has been appointed and qualified. The qualifications of

members appointed as chairs, assistant chairs and members of local boards must be approved by the DEO acting for the NEO. Local boards are at all times subject to the direction and supervision of the SEO and, in cooperation with the national committees and the DEO, maintain the standards set by USPS for instruction and examinations. Local board chairs keep the SEO advised of important developments in their field and of ideas for improving courses or teaching methods.

Special insigne is authorized for members of local boards for boating, advanced grades, and elective courses [Refer to 13.50 on page 13-9].

**6.5 Chairs of local boards.** The chair of a local board (ChLB),

A) Works closely with the SEO in the recruiting and training of an assistant ChLB, class chairs and their assistants, instructors, proctors, and other local board members;

B) Assists the SEO in setting educational objectives, class schedules, course fees, and facility requirements, subject to the approval of the ExCom;

C) With the assistance of class chairs, orders course material and examinations and handles the return of unused course material and examinations;

D) With the assistance of the chair of the teaching aids committee, class chairs, and instructors, develops teaching aids for each lecture in courses under his local board;

E) Maintains close liaison with class chairs, reviewing the performance of instructors, noting class problems, and suggesting improvements in course material and procedures, reporting these matters to the SEO;

F) Administers all examinations within his local board or secures an authorized administrator and assures that all examinations are administered according to the rules prescribed by the national educational department;

G) Promptly reports examination results to the candidates, commander, class chair, instructors, SEO, and secretary;

H) Maintains liaison, through the SEO, with counterparts in nearby squadrons, his district and the national organization for exchange of successful instructional techniques and for assistance with operational problems;

I) Maintains complete and accurate records for all classes conducted and provides the SEO with copies of all reports, statistics, and other records; and

J) Maintains complete and accurate records of classes and seminars taught, reporting the latter on-line via the seminar workbook.

**6.6 Assistant chairs of local boards.** Assists the ChLB in all phases of his responsibilities as directed.

**6.7 Recommended grades for education department personnel.** The following grades are recommended for officers in the squadron educational department:

- The SEO should preferably be an N, but at least should have earned the grade of AP
- The ChLBB should be an AP or higher
- The ChLBAG should preferably be an N, but at least as high as the highest advanced-grade course currently being taught in the squadron
- The ChLBEC should have passed all elective courses being taught in the squadron
- Class chairs should have passed the course taught. The boating class chair should hold at least the grades of S or P
- The ASEO, AChLB, and assistant class chairs should meet the same requirements as their respective superiors

Note that these recommended grades for educational personnel are to facilitate instruction. New squadrons teaching courses for the first time, understandably, may not have members with the recommended grades to fill all positions. The need for such exceptions should be reviewed with the DEO prior to the making of commitments to individuals.

**6.8 Teaching aids committee.** The chair of the teaching aids committee (ChTACom) is responsible for constructing and maintaining teaching devices for the various courses offered by the squadron and for entering these in district and national teaching aids exhibits. The chair and members of the TACom are appointed by the commander upon recommendation of the SEO. The ChTACom is a member of the squadron educational department and the district TACom.

**6.9 Other supporting committees.** There may also be committees responsible for seminars, guides and learning guides, an educational property committee, and other supporting committees appointed by the commander. The educational property committee is responsible for the ordering, dispensing and storing of educational materials, teaching aids and property such as multimedia projectors, overhead projectors, screens, sextants, et cetera. If there is no educational property committee, the responsibilities for handling the above listed material falls on the TACom.

**6.10 Educational procedures.** Educational procedures contained in this chapter and part I of the *Educational Department Manual* have been developed as a guide for all members of a squadron's educational department and are available on the EdDept web site. Deviations should have prior approval in writing from the DEO and the squadron executive committee.

**6.11 Educational Department Manual.** Part I of the *Educational Department Manual* (EDM-I) is a procedural guide for all squadron educational department personnel. A copy is issued to each new SEO in the "SEO kit". It treats educational practices and procedures in greater detail than this *Operations Manual*. Like this *Operations Manual*, it is issued in loose-leaf form so that change pages may be issued from time to time and inserted to keep it up-to-date. Copies of pertinent sections of EDM-I should be given to all who require this information. Additional copies may be purchased from headquarters or may be downloaded from the educational department website as listed in the Table of URLs on page vii.

**6.12 Educational department notices.** When changes in educational practices are directed, an educational department notice (EDN) will be issued and should be filed with the pertinent sections of EDM-I and the *Operations Manual* until changes can be issued. EDNs state the effective date of the change. They supersede other EDNs, educational department forms, the *Educational Department Manual*, DEO bulletins and any portions of the *Operations Manual* that may be in conflict. EDNs are addressed to all squadron educational officers with copies to squadron com-

manders, district commanders, district educational officers, the national educational staff and members of the Board of Directors. Commanders and SEOs should assure that officers and members who have need of the information are informed. Copies of all outstanding EDNs are issued to each incoming SEO in the SEO kit and are posted on the EdDept website.

The *Operations Manual*, EDM-1 and EDNs must be used together, as they complement each other. If they are regularly consulted and their procedures followed, the squadron educational program will proceed smoothly.

**6.13 Standards and regulations.** Student and instructor's manuals for advanced grades, elective courses, seminars, guides and learning guides may contain information regarding standards or regulations that relate to the subject matter being taught. Such standards or regulations are established by industry groups or government organizations. The instructor should make clear to the class when discussing such matters that USPS is not the standards-setting authority. Instructors may direct the student to the organization that controls or publishes the standard or regulation when access to such information furthers the objectives of the course or program or the student's understanding of the subject.

**6.14 USPS public educational offerings.** USPS currently offers to the public *America's Boating Course*. Passing a final proctored examination for *America's Boating Course* fulfills the educational requirement for USPS membership.

In addition to being offered in a classroom version, *America's Boating Course* is also available in self study offerings. It is approved by NASBLA, and successful passing of the proctored examination meets the educational requirement for USPS membership. *America's Boating Course* is offered both on-line via the World Wide Web (Internet) and on a CD available for purchase, with a course manual, through squadrons, various marine product retailers, and by direct toll-free telephone order to 1-866-BOAT-ABC (1-866-262-8222). The current version of this course (Version 3) uses the same manual as the classroom version, and a stu-

dent may complete the course at his own speed. A squadron located in the vicinity of the student will make mutual arrangements with the student for giving the examination. This type of Internet boating instruction will open the door to many potential members for USPS and should be received most favorably by squadrons. *America's Boating Course* also lends itself well to classroom instruction especially with the use of a special computer-aided instruction (CAI) CD.

USPS also offers a variety of seminars (typically one 2-hour session) that squadrons may teach to the public as well as to members. USPS publishes a series of learning guides and guides on various nautical subjects that are sold to the public as well as to members.

**6.15** All squadrons must offer the USPS boating safety course, *America's Boating Course*, at least once each year, and they are encouraged to offer one or more of these courses *four* times a year, winter, spring, summer and fall.

*America's Boating Course* classes must be taught by USPS Certified Instructors and must be open to the public at no cost other than as specified [Refer to 6.20 on page 6-8]. Current material cost and manufacturer's suggested retail price information is provided to each DEO and is maintained on the EdDept website. An educational department notice is sent to each district and squadron commander and educational officer whenever a change is made. The squadron shall set its own reasonable retail prices for these public courses as appropriate to allow for recovery of its material costs and other costs associated with promoting and conducting its public boating safety courses. Squadrons may not confer or collaborate with other squadrons or district personnel in establishing these retail prices.

USPS, its districts and squadrons are subject to the "Americans with Disabilities Act" (ADA). Local educational officers and commanders need to be acutely aware of the ADA and sensitive to the plight of those intended to be protected. As good citizens, we should make every reasonable effort to accommodate the special needs of our students and members who have disabilities.

When faced with requests or the obvious need for special services or facilities, squadrons and districts should make a good faith attempt to assist and/or accommodate the disabled individual(s). Squadrons and districts should likewise extend all reasonable cooperation and flexibility. Assistance in meeting special needs may often be obtained through contact with local and state governmental, charitable, and private resources or services.

The ADA does suggest that if providing a specific accommodation causes an “undue burden” on an organization, the organization is not required to provide the accommodation. As an example, the high cost of providing a signer for hearing impaired students for a public boating course could create an undue burden on a small squadron with limited funds. On the other hand, a squadron should try to accommodate a signer employed by a hearing impaired student, by providing suitable space that does not interfere with other students.

Even though “undue burden” is a proper basis for non-compliance, such status is necessarily dependent on the unique facts and circumstances existing. Additionally, the burden of proof would be placed on the defending organization if challenged. Many problems and challenges (including spot “test” probes by advocate groups) can be avoided or simply resolved by an organization’s display of a cooperative and sensitive attitude and spirit rather than invoking a quick reliance on the letter of the law. Prior to the issuance of any statement of “refusal” of any request for accommodation, the SEO/Cdr must involve and seek guidance from the local district or squadron law officer, or in the absence thereof, the national law officer.

**6.16 Public Relations Officer.** The public relations officer (PRO) is responsible for publicity for all basic public education courses and seminars the squadron offers. The SEO or ChLBB and ChSem should work with the PRO to make sure that publicity releases for any upcoming classes or seminars are issued. Posters and leaflets containing information on the class and its schedule need to be ordered, imprinted and distributed. Timely radio or TV spots and articles or advertisements in local newspapers and regional boating, hunting, fishing or conservation magazines offer other potential

media coverage. Personal contact is always effective. Squadron members should recruit students from their boating friends in yacht clubs, marinas, hunting and fishing clubs, paddle-sports clubs, during vessel safety checks and at work. An *America’s Boating Course* class may be scheduled to follow a local boat show or fair where a USPS display or booth attracts many potential students. Participation in adult education programs is a very desirable way to obtain excellent publicity and appropriate facilities for holding boating classes.

Each squadron's public relations officer has access to the *PRO-Log*, the official USPS publicity guide. It contains a great deal of information and suggestions that can be used to promote boating safety classes. It also provides instructions to the PRO for generating a report (form NPR-101) from the ED-46 USPS basic public education class registration form, on the types of publicity that attracted students to the course. The report enables the Board of Directors to assess the value of the various types of publicity and determine where USPS can most effectively utilize its advertising budget.

USPS maintains up-to-date files of basic public education classes underway or planned, and the BOAT/U.S. Foundation for Boating Safety uses its “hot line” 800 number to publicize basic public education classes. The report used for filing basic public education class information is form HQ-800 (USPS Boating Course Information Report) available on the EdDept website and filed on-line at least as often as follows:

- By 15 March for classes beginning in May through August
- By 15 July for classes beginning in September through December
- By 15 November for classes beginning in January through April.

SEO’s are urged to file HQ-800 information as often as class schedules are set or changed. The easiest way to file is on-line via the Educational Department website.

The on-line form will provide the same information to the DEO and one or more state Boating Law Administrators (BLA). HQ-800 reports must include the name of the person to call for informa-

tion. Care must be used in the selection of zip codes of areas from which the squadron desires to attract students, for they frequently change as the postal service adjusts to compensate for demographic change. Where two or more squadrons share the same or nearby zip code(s), they should work closely together and with the DEO to assure that the public is well-served, yet without creating any inter-squadron conflicts. Squadrons should avoid sponsoring or offering basic public education classes out of their own normal operating area when such actions would conflict with or overlap another squadron's normal operating area.

**6.17 Facilities** *America's Boating Course* classes and seminars may utilize public facilities. Many schools like to include such courses as part of their adult education program, providing facilities and registration publicity at no cost. Control of the material to be taught must rest with USPS.

*America's Boating Course* classes and USPS seminars may be taught within squadron owned or leased premises. Squadrons must ensure that any other concurrently conducted members-only class or activity is held in a separate, physically distinct part of such premises. Additionally, all squadron books, records and other documents within a squadron owned or leased premises must be stored so as to maintain their confidentiality whenever members of the public are present on the premises.

**6.18 Materials.** Material for *America's Boating Course* classes should be ordered at least 30 days in advance on the standard order form. If a basic public education class is found to be larger than expected and more course material is required, an add-on order to increase an original order placed in the preceding 90 days may be placed by telephone by the commander, SEO, ASEO or ChLBB. Telephone orders for other than basic public education add-on orders will not be accepted.

Orders for *America's Boating Course* material will be processed in the order received at headquarters. Although squadrons should continue to plan carefully and order in a timely manner, emergency add-on orders will be accommodated on a priority basis. The ordering squadron bears the expense of any special-request shipping.

Only currently valid course material should be used. Only USPS Certified Instructors with current certifications may teach *America's Boating Course*. Only that course material may be taught plus appropriate state and local regulations.

Instructor kits (for instructor use only) are shipped with orders of basic public education course student manuals on request. These kits, including one instructor manual and one student manual each, will be marked "For Instructor Use Only" and may not be returned for credit or sold to students.

Supplemental supplies are not sent automatically with each order of *America's Boating Course*. The following items should be ordered as needed:

- Fact Sheet
- Examination answer sheet (ED-26)
- Graduate certificate
- Graduate wallet card

If more students are expected than the number of student manuals ordered (due to sharing), additional supplemental items should be ordered.

**6.19 Registration.** For *America's Boating Course* classes, each student should fill out both sections of the registration form, ED-46. This form can be downloaded from the EdDept web site. The upper section of the first page (ED-46-M) provides information to the membership committee to help in its membership efforts. The lower section (ED-46-PR) provides information for use by the PRO in determining the effectiveness of PR efforts. Forward these two sections to the respective committee chairs on registration night. The registration card (ED-46S) is the permanent record of the squadron basic public education course containing all pertinent student information, including examination grade, and is retained on file either electronically or paper for six years.

At the first session of any class, the purposes of the course and what is expected of students should be explained. Questions relating to books, materials and supplies should be fully covered. Members of the local board and other squadron officers present should be introduced.

**6.20 Fees.** The squadron may charge any reasonable fee for *America's Boating Course* class or seminar that enables the squadron to recover its material costs and other costs associated with promoting and conducting its basic public education courses. The squadron's fees schedule for these courses is to be established by the squadron executive committee. Fees may vary by location and may be changed at the sole discretion of the squadron.

Students should be told that it is to their benefit to possess the textbook on which the course is based, as well as any plotting instruments needed for the course. The squadron may offer to sell instruments to them at retail prices and/or advise them where they may be procured. Students are not obliged to have such materials, nor are squadrons obliged to furnish free of cost any accessory text material or plotting instruments for study, completion of homework or examination purposes.

**6.21 Examinations.** Regarding *America's Boating Course* examinations, the class should be told that the examination places no one under obligation to the squadron, and that all who pass it will be issued a graduate certificate and graduate wallet card. Only the examinations provided by USPS, which are approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), may be used. Squadrons may charge a reasonable examination fee to those students who did not purchase a separate set of course materials (that is, where several people shared the same set of materials) or to those students who purchased their course materials from another squadron or a retail outlet. Candidates are to provide their own #2 lead pencils for the examination. The course includes sufficient Personal Watercraft (PWC) material to certify PWC operators. There is no examination for part two of the course (the optional charting and plotting material).

*America's Boating Course* examination consists of two parts:

- A closed-book examination (50 questions) on general subjects Form ED-26 examination answer sheet is used to record the answers for the examination

- (If applicable) A state regulations examination (normally 10 questions) provided by the local state boating authority

It is important to use the latest editions of the applicable course manual and matching examination. Ask students to enter their full names, addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, the state and date of birth on the upper portion of the answer sheet. This data allows USPS to maintain a traceable record of course completion to meet state certification requirements and to allow a student to prove course completion in the event he loses his completion certificate or wallet card. Ask students **not** to write in examination booklets so that they may be reused for long as they are current.

All *America's Boating Course* examinations should be supervised by the ChLBB, who may appoint proctors as required. Any active member of USPS may be appointed as a proctor for these examinations. In conducting examinations the following procedure is used:

A) Each examinee should be assigned a place where he can work without being disturbed and where he will not disturb others. No text, notes or other assistance is permitted. A calculator and scratch pad may be used;

B) Grade examinations as soon as they are turned in. A passing grade is 80%. Enter the student's grade on the examination answer sheet and on the ED-46S student's registration card. Enter records in the Boating Class Workbook or Boating Class Assistant for all students passing the course and upload them to Headquarters for permanent storage;

C) The ChLBB should discuss wrong examination answers with students who request such information. Such a discussion must be on a one-on-one basis. All basic public education course examinations are the copyrighted property of USPS. Copies of the examination must not be furnished to or retained by the student;

D) Present students who have successfully completed the examination with a graduate certificate and graduate wallet card and thank them for attending the class. This is a fitting time for the membership committee to interview students regarding USPS membership, if this has not yet been done. If a student has been adequately

prepared in advance, by promoting USPS membership and interviewing students throughout the course and by pre-clearing the names with the squadron executive committee, students may be enrolled into membership immediately following successful completion of the examination. Many squadrons find this the best time to recruit new members.

E) If a student does not pass, advise him/her to study the material further and take a reexamination in a week or two. The examination must be a different NASBLA approved examination from they first one taken.

**6.22 Course completion records.** *Registration cards*, form ED-46 or electronic equivalent *must be retained for six years*. These are becoming increasingly important to students, as successful completion of a course in safe boating may favorably affect their boat insurance premium and an individual's participation in boating recreation. Individuals who cannot find their graduate certificate often approach a squadron's commander requesting verification of passing. Headquarters can respond to these questions with respect to individuals who have taken the course after 1989, when retention of records of boating graduates began. Beyond that, the commander must rely on the squadron's registration card file. Situations may arise where the file may not be complete. In such cases the record may be established through secondary evidence of course completion such as:

- A) The copy of the registration card which the ChMemCom received at the time of completion;
- B) Published names of successful graduates in the squadron newsletter;
- C) The ChLBB may have retained a record of those who passed.

In all such cases the commander must make a sincere effort to determine the facts in the case and respond to the individual. If the record shows that he did pass a boating examination successfully, he should be furnished a letter attesting to this fact. The letter should clearly state that its issuance is based on the factual record and is in accordance with these procedures. A copy should be prepared for the record, including copies of the sources which were relied on to determine the verification. Issuance of the letter should be reported to the

executive committee and a copy of the letter furnished to the squadron secretary to retain in the squadron's files. In addition, the commander should issue a replacement wallet card and certificate showing the correct completion date.

**6.23 Graduate certificate.** Graduate certificates and graduate wallet cards are furnished by headquarters with each order for *America's Boating Course* materials at no cost to the squadron. These should be presented to each student who has passed the examination as soon as it is graded, or mailed if the student leaves prior to grading.

**6.24 Course report.** The boating class workbook or boating class assistant should be used to upload records of passing students immediately following the grading of examinations. Do not wait for the results of one or two re-examinations as a subsequent upload can be done for them.

**6.25 Boat Operator Certification.** USPS is now certifying members as recreational boat operators. Certification requirements include not only completing certain courses and seminars but also demonstrating skills, including on-the-water skill demonstrations. At this writing, this program is being rolled out. A complete description can be found at the Boat Operator Certification web site: [www.usps.org/national/eddept/boc/main.htm](http://www.usps.org/national/eddept/boc/main.htm).

**6.26 USPS University.** This concept encompasses all the USPS courses, as well as the seminars which are now available. It is important to keep records of seminar completions for boat operator certification. Currently USPS courses are only being offered to members, but that may change. Seminars are offered to the general boating public as well as members.

**6.27 State boating courses.** If no USPS basic public education courses are available to or accepted by a state agency for boating safety education of residents of that state, squadrons in that state are requested to cooperate in furnishing instructors for the state's own boating course. However, squadrons are neither expected nor encouraged to provide instructors for state or private courses that compete for students with basic public education courses offered by any USPS squadron.

Although any member may teach USPS internal courses, only USPS-certified instructors may teach a USPS or government-sponsored public safe-boating course. It is the SEO's responsibility to maintain a current list of certified instructors and make this list available to the commander or the executive committee upon request. USPS Headquarters will issue wallet size certificate cards for those who complete the Instructor Development course or are recertified. Certified instructors must meet the following qualifications:

- Completion of the Instructor Development (or predecessor) course
- The above is waived for college professors who have taught for three of the past five years, and those holding active, current teaching credentials from an accredited teaching organization. This includes, but is not limited to, those completing the U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Instructor Training Program, a NASBLA approved state boating instructor program or equivalent as determined by the NEO. With the approval of their SEO, they may request approval for their initial four year certification without completing ID. **See the policy statement on the EdDept web site for the most current policy on instructor certification**
- Complete the recertification seminar if certified more than four years ago

The wallet-size certification card has a place for the member's name, the name of the member's squadron, the squadron commander's signature and the date.

USPS members, acting as such, cannot receive compensation for time spent in instruction. Instructors may, however, receive reimbursement for actual expenses such as transportation, meals, lodging and supplies. USPS insurance does not cover professional teaching liability; however, if teachers are not compensated for their time they are not considered "professional" and our existing liability insurance will cover their teaching activities.

Cooperation with the state must not adversely affect the squadron's primary mission of teaching

*America's Boating Course* or member-only courses.

The state must sponsor the course and provide all teaching facilities, administrative support, supplies, advertising and students.

The state must agree in writing to hold USPS members harmless from any liability arising from their activities in connection with such course, either directly or indirectly.

The squadron's commander must keep a record of such activity by active members of the squadron and may include such efforts as part of merit mark recommendations.

When teaching a state course, an instructor furnished by the squadron is encouraged to wear a USPS blazer, a USPS certified instructor shirt or other appropriate USPS attire.

**6.28 USPS courses and planning the educational schedule.** Each squadron must offer at least one *America's Boating Course* class each year. In addition to this, USPS offers its members five advanced grade courses and eight elective courses. See the outline at the end of this chapter for course descriptions.

Advanced-grade courses (AG) are those that build upon the basic boat handling and piloting skills learned in *America's Boating Course*. Currently, the five advanced grades are *Seamanship* (S), *Piloting* (P), *Advanced Piloting* (AP), *Junior Navigation* (JN) and *Navigation* (N).

Seven of the eight elective courses (EC) offer knowledge on topics that enhance a member's boating. Currently these courses are *Cruise Planning* (CP), *Engine Maintenance* (EM), *Marine Electrical Systems*, *Marine Communications Systems*, *Marine Navigation Systems*, *Sail* (Sa) and *Weather* (Wx). The eighth elective course, *Instructor Development* (ID), provides knowledge on the techniques of presenting information and teaching adults. Note: the above electrical courses replace the Marine Electronics (ME) course/modules. They are under development at this writing.

Some member courses were converted to a modular format, but that change has been reversed as the modules are being re-integrated into single courses, except for ME where the modules are being upgraded to courses. Members who successfully pass all required modules for a course, are awarded credits for the course and sent a sticker for attachment to the member's certificate.

Small squadrons should schedule all advanced grades (AG) and elective courses (EC) at least once every three years; larger squadrons should strive to schedule every course on an annual basis. Immediately following each change of watch, the squadron educational department should have an organizational meeting to start planning future classes. Spring classes may be underway already, following the plan of the previous watch. An inventory of the educational achievements of all members should be available so that potential candidates for every AG and EC class will be known. Although a member may take any member-course examination or submit a sight folder whenever he/she is ready to do so, no course credit will be awarded until all the requirements of that course have been met. The squadron may require that a student successfully pass an examination in another course(s) before enrolling in a designated course. When a tentative class schedule has been prepared, it should be reviewed and approved by the executive committee.

**6.29 Class facilities.** Once a schedule is approved, arrangements should be made for classroom facilities. Consideration must be given to projected class size; availability of multimedia projectors and screens, chalkboards or whiteboards; tables for chart work; facility for showing overhead transparencies, video, movies or slides and a PA system if needed. There are currently no restrictions on where USPS classes may be held: either privately-owned or taxpayer-supported facilities may be used.

**6.30 Course eligibility.** The *America's Boating Course* and seminars are open to the public. Effective the Annual Meeting of 02/06/10 conducted in

Orlando, all advanced and elective courses are open to both members and nonmembers alike.

**6.31 Course Publicity.** Publicity of the class schedule should be timed for maximum impact. Initially, an overall schedule of all courses for the entire year should be published in the squadron newsletter with a return card or a list of telephone numbers to be called to indicate interest. Announcements at squadron functions are effective, and membership response at these meetings is helpful to generate enthusiasm. Recognition in print and at meetings of member educational achievements, especially educational proficiency awards and educational achievement awards, helps motivate students to continue their education.

Members of the educational department should be familiar with individual achievements. They should contact members and promote the programs. Names of individuals interested in each course should be passed on to class chairs so that they can consolidate lists of candidates for their respective classes.

**6.32 Course material.** Orders for course material, via mail or fax, must arrive at headquarters at least thirty days before the initial class session, preferably earlier. Only the latest course material should be used.

Prices to squadrons for student manuals and instructor manuals are established by the Governing Board and are posted on the EdDept website and printed in the Materials Catalog.

The Standard Order Form is used when ordering course material. The item number and description of material should be entered on the ED-X form to assure shipment of correct material requested.

This form may be submitted electronically or faxed to headquarters at (888) 304-0813 and should not be confirmed by mail if submitted electronically or faxed.

Because there is a surcharge for each shipment, orders should be consolidated, if possible. Squadron orders must be approved by the commander,

SEO, ASEO, ChLB, DEO or ADEO before forwarding to headquarters.

Payment for squadron orders must be made only by the squadron treasurer; personal checks cannot be accepted. Material, except for examinations, will not be shipped by headquarters to a squadron which is delinquent in any charges.

Upon receipt of an order, materials should be verified against the order and the enclosed packing list approved and forwarded to the treasurer for payment. If material shipped to the squadron is found to be incomplete, defective or damaged, advise headquarters promptly of all details so that replacements may be shipped. Do not destroy or return defective items until advised by headquarters.

Monthly statements sent to squadrons for all materials, including course manuals and supplies, are payable upon receipt. Invoices should be reconciled with statements. Further shipments to squadrons, except for examinations, will be curtailed if accounts are not paid in full within 120 days. A letter warning of impending curtailment is sent at the 90-day point.

Orders should be placed as soon as requirements are known, never less than thirty days before the first class session. All orders must be clearly prepared in typed or printed form. Upon request, headquarters will ship via United Parcel Service at extra cost. This is faster than fourth-class mail. All orders will be filled in the sequence received. Upon request, headquarters will hold material for pickup by a representative of the squadron. The order form must stipulate who is to be notified when the material is ready. Walk-in requests for course materials cannot be honored. Priority processing for courses other than the *America's Boating Course* is not available.

**6.33 Advanced grades sequence.** Advanced grade courses are designed to be taken in sequence, beginning with *Seamanship*, then *Piloting*, *Advanced Piloting*, *Junior Navigation* and *Navigation*. When possible, this sequence should be followed. In some squadrons, this may be difficult. Governing Board policy is that squadrons have the

option of presenting *Piloting* before *Seamanship*. The grades of both S and P must be awarded before the grade of AP is awarded; AP must be awarded before the grade of JN is awarded and the grade of JN must be awarded before the grade of N is awarded. However, national does not impose any prerequisites and members may challenge any examination they wish. Note that for ID, certain classroom activities and attendance is also required.

Those who have been awarded an advanced grade may show the highest designation following their name. An active member may wear the insignia of his highest grade on USPS uniform or blazer.

**6.34 Teaching aids.** As early as possible, the instructor should review course material to determine which teaching aids will be the most effective for each lesson. He should determine the availability of teaching aids within his squadron or in other squadrons in his district or from headquarters. Ample time should be allowed if a new aid is to be made.

During recent years, PowerPoint slides have been furnished for each course on CD. Instructors wishing to use overhead transparencies can print them from the slide files. If there are updates for these slides or errata for course material, they are posted on the responsible committee's web pages. Instructors should review and download this updated material prior to teaching a course.

Some squadrons and districts have a library of video cassettes and DVDs that can serve as supplemental material for a variety of USPS courses. These can be reproduced locally with ease.

The U.S. Coast Guard's Office of Boating Safety has furnished a series of videos to all squadrons as these have been produced.

These educational materials are valuable teaching resources that should be safeguarded by the squadron's educational department. They should be placed in the custody of a responsible member of the department and records kept as to their location. Many have application for more than one

course and some have utility as programs for squadron membership meetings.

**6.35 Student registration.** In registering students for an advanced grade or elective course it is essential to list the member's name (exactly as shown on the membership certificate), certificate number and squadron affiliation (if other than the sponsoring squadron). This information will be required when ordering examinations.

At the first session of the class, the purposes of the course and what is expected of students should be explained. Questions relating to books, materials and supplies should be fully covered. Members of the local board and other squadron officers may be introduced.

**6.36 Class fees.** Class fees are usually collected at registration. These reflect the cost of course materials, examinations, prorated facility cost (if any) and miscellaneous expenses such as postage for course materials and examination return, service charges, film rental, handout photocopying and sales taxes. Monies received must be conveyed to the squadron treasurer for deposit.

Students may be told that it is to their benefit to possess the textbook on which the course is based, as well as appropriate instruments such as plotting tools. The squadron may offer to sell such items to them at retail prices and/or advise them where else they may be procured. Students are not obligated to have such materials. Although the squadron is not obligated to furnish, free of charge, any accessory text material or plotting instruments for study, completion of homework or examination purposes, squadrons may have items that have been donated that they will furnish to students for their use.

**6.37 Conduct of classes.** There are various methods of conducting classes. For small classes, the instructor works closely and informally with the students, instructing in the subject matter of each lesson, marking students' homework papers and discussing with them, individually or collectively, any phases of a previous lesson not understood.

For large classes there may be a different lecturer for each lesson. Assigned homework is turned in to a proctor for grading and assessing overall progress. This technique may result in less personal contact, so there is a risk that students who have been away from formalized education for a period may become frustrated, feel lost in the crowd and drop out.

Sometimes, a more desirable method is a combination of these methods: the lecturer presents the lesson to the class as a whole. The class may be subdivided into discussion groups of six to twelve with proctors as discussion leaders. Students should be assigned to the same group for each lesson so that they get to know the proctor and the others in the group. They will feel at ease in the discussions and raise questions when they do not understand something. Homework may be graded either by the proctor or within the group. Either way it should be discussed so that every student learns the correct answers and why they are correct. Since the proctor must be knowledgeable in all phases of the course, he must be qualified in that course and other USPS courses that pertain to the subject being taught. A lecturer, on the other hand, may specialize in only one or two lessons of the course and should develop effective teaching aids in his field of expertise.

To promote interest in completing the work, field trips should be arranged to appropriate places. Arrangements should be made for JN and N candidates to take their required sights in order to pass either course. There are also very interesting field trips for elective courses: a weather station, marine engine repair shop or sail loft, to name a few. On-the-water instruction for all USPS courses and programs is permitted (and encouraged), subject to USPS policies. See the current on-the-water instruction policies on the USPS law committee or secretary's department web site or contact the law committee or secretary's department for current information on policies and insurance coverage.

All students are expected to participate in the class work and do the assigned homework. This is desirable even for persons having considerable practical experience. If a candidate wishes to take the examination without attending classes or sub-

mitting homework, the class chair should point out the advantages of taking regular class work, or attending as many as possible, particularly the review sessions. If the candidate still wishes to take the examination without such class work it remains solely the responsibility of the member to learn the applicable course material needed to prepare for the examination(s) to be taken. An exception is ID, for which certain classroom activities and attendance are required.

**6.38 Return of educational materials.** After the third class session, or after all expected students have registered, unused student manuals should be returned to headquarters for credit. Unused educational materials must be received back at headquarters within 90 days from the date the material was originally shipped from headquarters. Educational material to be returned must be complete and undamaged and in a condition suitable for reissue.

A form for claiming return credit (HQ-9A) is available on the USPS website. If any material is returned for credit, the claim form must be filled out with copy 1 enclosed as a packing slip with the materials being shipped, copy 2 forwarded to the squadron treasurer and copy 3 retained by the shipper as his record. After processing at headquarters, credit will be entered on the squadron account and shown on the month-end statement to the treasurer. For the return of unused examinations refer to form ED-17 [Refer to 6.45 on page 6-18]. The following procedures are recommended for the handling of shipments of educational material:

A) Open packages carefully: the container may have to be reused;

B) Whatever type of container is used for returns, be sure it will withstand the rigors of mail or parcel service. Lightweight paper envelopes are usually not suitable for bulky packages; nor is household-type mending tape recommended for sealing;

C) Use stiffeners and/or interior packing. Avoid newspapers as the ink rubs off. Seal securely;

D) Furnish a legible return address. *Identify the squadron by name and squadron account number.* If labels are used, attach them securely. Use zip codes;

E) Postal regulations require that written material such as letters, orders, payments, used exams, et cetera, be sent via *first class mail*. Therefore, when shipping by U. S. mail parcel post, do not include such items in return shipments of material, as this may delay receipt and cause the imposition of penalties, if the package is opened for inspection. However, packing slips are allowable in parcel post shipments. This content restriction is not imposed by United Parcel Service and other carriers;

F) Be sure to include a properly executed Claim for Credit (form HQ-9A) as a packing slip;

G) No restocking charge will be levied for returned material;

H) Course material and examinations should not to be returned in the same package.

The materials listed below have a long shelf life and surpluses are to be held by the squadron for subsequent use. They may not be returned for credit:

- USPS plotters and quik-course plotters
- 1210-TR charts
- Bowditch Bay charts
- Loose-leaf binders
- USPS celestial coordinate transformers
- Padded forms
- Sight forms
- Table or Almanac excerpts (for JN and N courses)
- Protractors
- Dividers
- Videos, DVDs and CDs

**6.39 Examination order.** The examination order (ED-33) should arrive at headquarters via mail or fax at least 30 days prior to the scheduled examination date. Fax orders should not be confirmed by mail.

If circumstances prevent all students from taking an examination on the same date, then a separate ED-33 should be filed for those students taking the examination on each date. It is now permissible to give the examination on different days to accommodate student schedules, but examinations should not be held for an extended periods, so a separate order should be used if a student cannot take the examination within two weeks of the others.

Re-examination and original examination requests are not to be placed on the same ED-33.

Arrangements for the conduct of an examination must be discussed with the class early enough to satisfy the lead time required to obtain examinations in an orderly fashion, and to consider the personal plans of the students. Students are usually eager to know the circumstances surrounding the conduct and processing of an examination. They accept readily the need to protect the integrity of the examination procedure and are willing to adjust their personal preferences if the requirements are discussed with them early in the course.

The examination order, form ED-33, must be filled in completely, listing the names of the candidates in alphabetical order, last name first, with certificate numbers and squadron affiliation if other than the squadron requesting the examination. In the case of anyone whose current name differs from that on their certificate, give both names. On the same form list woman's certificate holders, apprentices and members of Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons, alphabetically by category. Specify the edition of the student manual used in instruction, as this determines which examination is provided. The name and address of the examination administrator must be clearly shown.

Many squadrons schedule new members to attend *Seamanship* or *Piloting* classes soon after they have joined the squadron. In some cases the new member may not have received a certificate number. After verifying with the squadron membership chair that a MemCom-1 has been sent to headquarters, new members' names should be listed on the examination order with the notation "Pending" in the certificate-number column. If headquarters doesn't have a MemCom-1 on file for any new member listed, an examination for that individual will not be enclosed in the examination package.

Examinations must not be ordered for candidates who are delinquent in dues.

The ED-33 must be signed by either the commander, SEO, ASEO, ChLB, DEO or ADEO. One

copy is sent to headquarters and one copy should be retained in squadron files.

#### **6.40 Confirming examination order contents.**

Upon receipt of the order at headquarters the name of each candidate is checked against the computer record to verify the spelling and any suffix such as "Jr." or "III". Eligibility to take the examination is verified by checking dues status. No examination will be shipped for an ineligible person until the necessary correction is made. Many such problems can be prevented by checking the accuracy of names or certificate numbers on the order form at the squadron before it is sent to headquarters.

Shipment will be made as soon as the order can be processed. When the examination arrives:

A) Open the package and check its contents against the enclosed packing list;

B) Check each examination folder to make sure it is for the proper student, certificate number, course and course edition year. In addition, verify that all the pages are present in each folder. Each folder should agree with the packing sheet and the examination order confirmation;

C) Check the enclosed examination order confirmation, which lists approved candidates, against the examination order. Verify that the student information: name, certificate number, et cetera, is preprinted on the examination sheets, if they are supplied;

D) Notify the SEO immediately if any items are missing or incorrect or if there are rejected candidates;

E) Notify any rejected candidate before the examination date. Contact all approved candidates to remind them of the date, time and location of the examination. Specify any material they must bring and, if applicable, which part (open or closed book) will be given first.

#### **6.41 Administering examinations.**

Closed book examinations are usually administered to the entire group at the place specified, and only to those candidates whose names are listed and approved on the examination order confirmation enclosed with each examination shipment. However, an administrator may administer the examination to a student on a different day, providing that does not unduly delay the return of the exams.

(Specifically, the exams must not be held for more than 14 days.) If you wish to use the extra examination supplied for another candidate, pre-approval from the DEO or responsible R/C is required.

All open-book examinations are to be completed within the period specified on the examination.

Computer-graded closed book examinations for all elective courses and certain advanced grades courses come with a matching pre-printed bubble-style answer sheet. It is critical that the student be given both the examination and the answer sheet printed with his name. The computer at headquarters has matched that particular answer sheet to the sequence of questions on the student's own examination. Use of the wrong question booklet or answer sheet will undoubtedly lead to a non-passing score on the examination. These examinations also show an expiration date. Care must be exercised to ensure that these exams are used and returned to headquarters prior to the printed expiration date.

Authorized examination administrators include class instructors and chairmen responsible for the course; any current Squadron, District or National Commander, Executive Officer, Educational Officer (including EdDept R/Cs and Stf/Cs), Administrative Officer, or Assistant Educational Officer; the ChLBAG, ChLBEC and ChLB/B; or any holder of the USPS Educational Achievement Award ("Senior Navigator"). Those taking the examination are excluded.

Examinations will be sent only to a person who is authorized to administer the examination. Examinations will not be sent to an examinee, even though he may be an officer normally authorized to administer examinations. There may be special circumstances requiring deviation from these procedures. In such an event the NEO or the ANEO must be contacted in advance for a waiver. Complete written justification for a waiver must be submitted with the request and adequate time must be allowed for consideration and a reply.

**6.42 Sight folders.** All sights contained in a sight folder should preferably be taken within a

period of two years prior to the time the sight folder is received at headquarters. For all sights over two years old, the candidate must include photocopies of the applicable nautical almanac pages that contain data unique to the dates of the sights in the folder.

Sight reductions and supporting plots should be done on the applicable printed sight reduction forms (typically provided in padded form with the student materials). If printed forms are not available, then fully legible, fullsize, first-generation photocopies of these forms may be used.

Sight folders submitted to Headquarters must be accompanied by an examination order, form ED-33. Inasmuch as sight folders represent many hours of labor, they should be sent by a safe method such as certified mail with return receipt requested, Postal Delivery Confirmation Service or United Parcel Service. Photocopies of the complete sight folder (except cover) will be accepted in the event of a loss in transit. Sight folders may be resubmitted without limitation as to the number of resubmissions.

**6.43 Examination dates.** Instructions accompanying the examination must be strictly followed.

A squadron may schedule an examination to be administered on any date following receipt of the examination shipment from headquarters, subject to the following conditions:

A) Closed-book examinations should be administered to the entire group in a single sitting whenever possible. If a class member(s) is(are) unable to take the examination on that date, the examination may be administered to said member(s) on another day within 14 days of the class examination;

B) The completed examination package must be received back at headquarters not later than 90 days from the date the examinations were printed at Headquarters. If headquarters does not receive all examinations within that period, a letter of explanation must be provided to Headquarters by the squadron within that 90 day period. A short extension may be granted by headquarters but any extension over five working days should be approved through the national course chair. (For

names and contact information, see the back pages of each issue of *The Ensign*);

C) Examination answer sheets for some courses are issued with the names of eligible candidates pre-printed. Examinations must be given only to candidates whose names appear on the order form and approved by headquarters as shown by the examination order confirmation, and for those courses which are scanner-graded, on the pre-printed answer sheet. With prior approval from the national course committee chair (R/C) or from the applicable DEO, the extra examination may be given to any member in good standing. If an examination is administered to a member who is not in good standing, the squadron will be billed for that member's dues.

Examination irregularities always delay the processing of an examination package because administrative time and correspondence is required. This need never occur if the SEO and the examination administrator assure that examination administrators are properly prepared using the *Operations Manual*, the *Educational Department Manual*, Part I and "Instructions for Conducting Examinations" (ED-17) that is included in all examination shipments.

The most common examination irregularities are: ordering exams for ineligible candidates, mixed up or wrong names or certificate numbers, computer-generated examination booklets and answer sheets mis-matched or incomplete examination packages.

**6.44 Conducting examinations.** Plans for conducting examinations should be given careful consideration by local boards. The high regard in which USPS grades are held is due largely to the assurance that course credit or grade cannot be obtained until a candidate has demonstrated his fitness by passing a searching but absolutely fair examination. Examinations should be conducted with a proper degree of formality and dignity. Local boards can greatly influence the atmosphere of an examination by selecting an appropriate setting. Provision of suitable facilities is also important to enable candidates to make the most of the time available and to minimize nervous strain.

Ample desk room for each student is particularly desirable.

To assure uniformity in the administration of examinations in all courses throughout all squadrons, and thus assure that the basis for an award of a grade is the same everywhere, the procedure in the following paragraphs has been established. It guides all officers and members who participate in the educational process, especially examination administrators and chairs of the local boards, whose primary responsibility is to see that examinations are properly administered and are actually the work of individual candidates.

Examinations must be given at the time selected and the place specified, and *only* to those candidates listed on the examination order and approved as eligible by headquarters. Seating arrangements should be such that all students are separated. All instructions given on the examination papers should be strictly followed. Most examinations are computer-generated random exams. Squadron examination administrator may allow students to keep their question booklets for these exams and to submit only the bubble sheet answer forms to headquarters for grading. However, for some exams where the work must be shown, the examination booklet must be submitted for grading. (It will be returned after grading.)

The class chair or an assistant may be present to administer the examination if desired and may answer valid questions. No one else may be admitted to the room except the DEO or other authorized examination administrator as previously specified. There must be full-time supervision of the examination, except for take home examinations. Individual examination folders may be opened only when the class is assembled and all are ready to take the examination.

*No supplementary teaching is permitted during any examination session, nor is any answer to be made available to candidates. If, and only if, a candidate requests clarification of a question and, in the opinion of the class chair (or assistant) and administrator present there is an ambiguity, the administrator may restate the question for the benefit of all candidates and render an interpretation.*

When making such an interpretation, extreme care should be exercised not to contradict any basic statements of the problem, and the explanation must be reported on the examination report form, ED-34, by stating why a question (state the question) was considered ambiguous and how candidates were told to interpret it.

Neither the examination administrator nor class chair may call special attention to, or advise any candidate to check the answer to any multiple-choice or selection-type of question in any examination. All work must be that of the candidate.

No alteration, addition or deletion of any answer or supporting work may be made on any candidate's paper after his completed paper has been submitted to the examination administrator.

Worksheets and plots submitted with open book examinations for grading shall be prepared by hand by the student. Computer generated worksheets and plots will not be accepted. Examinations that are submitted with computer generated worksheets or plots will be returned to the squadron without grading. Copies of forms and worksheets contained in the course materials, when completed by hand, continue to be acceptable. Nevertheless, for open book exams, computers and calculators may be used by students to check work. However, all work must be shown (plots on charts, formulas with values substituted, et cetera) using the methods taught in the course or credit will not be given.

If any deviation from these procedures will be required to accommodate a candidate with special needs, an examination may not be ordered or issued except upon prior approval of the national course chair concerned. The request to the national course chair must explain the nature of the disability and the squadron's proposal for enabling the candidate to sit for the examination. The squadron's proposal must specify any deviations from these procedures that are planned. Each such case must be determined on a case-by-case basis with consideration for the candidate balanced against the primary goal of enabling all candidates to be examined in an equal manner. A request for deviation from these procedures must be prepared by the

SEO for signature by the squadron's commander. A copy of any such proposal should also be sent to the DEO. Discretion on the part of all involved in such a request is vital.

**6.45 Return of examination papers.** Squadron examination administrators are authorized to allow students to retain their question booklets for Seamanship and all elective courses. These booklets are useful when students review their examination critiques. For these courses, only the bubble sheet answer forms are submitted to headquarters for grading. Both used and unused answer forms are returned. For other advanced grades, the examination booklets, charts and other materials are returned. Use the pre-addressed label provided in the examination package. The returned exams must be accompanied by one copy of the examination order confirmation and one copy of the examination report, form ED-34. The examination papers and reports are to be sent within two business days as specified in form ED-17.

The examination report, signed by the examination administrator, records the name of the class chair (or assistant) present, the names of those who substituted for the administrator during any temporary absences, the names of others who were admitted to the examination room during the examination and the reason for such admission, details of any clarification of examination questions and any other pertinent information. Any developments during the examination period which are not anticipated by accepted procedures are also to be reported and explained. Copies of these forms are included in each set of examinations.

The examination order confirmation accompanies the examination shipment. It contains a pre-printed list of candidates for whom examinations are being furnished and spaces to indicate by check mark which candidates sat for the examination as well as those who did not.

If there are errors in student information, report them using the personnel change report, form HQ-102 that is available on line or uploaded using DB-2000. No changes are to be made to the pre-printed names of candidates as they appear on the exami-

nation order confirmation or on the pre-printed answer sheets.

Unused examinations and the copy enclosed for the class chair must be returned with completed examinations. The extra copy must not be used by a candidate, without approval as stated above; all unused copies are routinely destroyed upon return to headquarters.

All examination return packages must be post-marked and receipted, either by the U.S. Postal Service as certified mail, Postal Delivery Confirmation Service or the United Parcel Service, within two business days, excluding Sundays or legal holidays, of the examination date and time. If examinations are not received at headquarters within ninety days from the date the examination was printed at headquarters, inquiries will be made. Examinations may be voided for unjustified delays in return. Because of the irreplaceable nature of the material, a means of shipment which provides verification of receipt should be used. This makes it possible to trace a lost shipment. If a non-traceable means of transmittal is used, no effort will be made to trace the shipment, and no credit will be given for lost materials.

**6.46 Examination results for advanced grades and elective courses.** The minimum passing grade for all advanced grade and elective course examinations and sight folders is 80%. When examination results are entered into the computer at Headquarters, ED-6 forms and individual achievement certificates are generated. ED-6 forms, with the critique for each student, are forwarded to the SEO. Achievement stickers for membership certificates are mailed to each student passing the course. It is the responsibility of the SEO or administrator to notify those persons who did not pass, making certain that they are given a copy of their critique and that plans are developed to assist them to prepare for a re-examination.

A critique is included with the notice of course completion indicating, for each candidate, the homework question or student manual section covering the examination questions that were answered incorrectly. This is a valuable tool in preparing unsuccessful candidates for re-examina-

tion, and helps the instructor identify weak areas in his presentation. *Give a copy of the critique to each student promptly.* A copy should also be given to the instructor or class chair.

After notifying candidates of results, the notice of course completion should be forwarded to the squadron secretary to update the squadron records. If the candidate is from another squadron, the SEO of that squadron should be notified. An announcement congratulating successful candidates should also be sent to the squadron editor for use in the next newsletter.

**6.47 Re-examinations.** When notified that a candidate has not passed the examination, the instructor or class chair should review with the candidate deficiencies reported by the critiques and related course materials. Such an individual needs encouragement and reassurance that he has the ability to pass the examination. Unless the review is initiated immediately and a re-examination scheduled with minimum delay, the candidate will become discouraged, lose interest and his newfound knowledge will be forgotten. This may stifle future participation in other courses as well.

A re-examination is ordered using form ED-33. Separate forms must be used to order original examinations and re-examinations.

There is no limit on the number or frequency of re-examinations for any course, unless the course has been designated as obsolete. In JN and N, where sight folders are required for course completion, any rejected folder may be resubmitted an unlimited number of times but the final submittal which results in acceptance must arrive at headquarters within a one year period starting on the original date of submittal.

**6.48 Educational proficiency award.** The educational proficiency award (**EPA**) recognizes members holding the grade of AP with the additional successful completion of any three elective courses. A special uniform insigne is provided.

**6.49 Educational achievement award.** The educational achievement award (**EAA**) recognizes those who have passed all advanced grade USPS

courses currently offered plus any six elective courses. (The older “Motor Mechanics” may be substituted for EM; ID has replaced IQ, IT and IA or IQ but those who have passed both IT and IA are considered to have met the requirements for ID, except in regard to instructor certification.)

A special uniform insignie is provided for this award. The educational achievement award is orally referred to as “senior navigator” and in printed references the member can display his grade as “SN” although “N” remains an acceptable alternative.

A certificate bearing the name of the person entitled to the award and signed by the chief commander will automatically be sent to the DEO.

**6.50 Learning guides and guides.** Learning guides (LGs) are special-interest texts that consist of several lessons as determined by the nature of material and the depth to which it is to be studied. A “Learning Guide” is more specialized than a course and is handled through the most applicable course committee. There are no examinations for learning guides. Guides are books on well defined nautical subjects. They are available through USPS and sold at other outlets.

Learning guides and guides are available to non-members as well as members and can be ordered by squadrons headquarters using the standard order form, which must be signed by a commander, SEO, ASEO, ChSPCom, D/C, DEO or ADEO. They may be purchased by individual USPS members from the Ship's Store when the store is set up at a meeting, or by calling (toll free) 1-888-FOR-USPS or on-line from the USPS Ship's Store web site or from any of several marine dealers.

Learning guides and guides currently available are listed in the Materials Catalog. All learning guides and guides may be sold to non-members'. Pricing for members can be found in the *Materials Catalog*; for non-members prices, refer to EdDept website.

**6.51 Agreement between USPS and CPS.** USPS and Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons

have an agreement regarding each other's educational courses. Course materials and examinations will be furnished to CPS members at the same charge (U.S. \$) as for USPS members. A member of CPS may purchase materials for any of the learning guides or guides and may participate with a USPS squadron and take advanced grades or elective courses.

A similar arrangement will be made for USPS members residing in or near Canada who wish to take advanced grades or elective courses with a squadron of CPS.

A Canadian who passes a USPS qualifying basic public education course examination and desires to become a member or junior associate of CPS should write to:

Chair, Committee on Extensions  
Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons  
26 Golden Gate Court  
Scarborough, Ontario M1P 2A5 CANADA

If a CPS member, lady associate, or junior associate wishes to enroll in a USPS advanced grade or elective course, the procedure is as follows:

- 1) The candidate must present to the squadron's commander or SEO satisfactory evidence of CPS membership and grade, such as a membership card for the current year and a membership certificate;
- 2) The candidate will be charged the same fees (U.S. \$) for course material and examinations as a USPS member;
- 3) The Canadian's CPS certificate number, squadron and “CPS” must be noted on Form ED-33 when ordering examinations from USPS headquarters;
- 4) All provisions previously listed must be adhered to [Refer to 6.37 on page 6-13] through [6.45 on page 6-18];
- 5) A validating sticker for the candidate's certificate will be mailed directly to the candidate from CPS headquarters.

**6.52 USPS members in CPS courses.** If a member, woman's certificate holder, or apprentice of USPS wishes to enroll in a CPS advanced grade or elective course, the procedural steps are similar

to those outlined above. Contact should be made with CPS headquarters for details.

**6.53 USCG Auxiliary eligible for Instructor Development.** Instruction and examination in ID may be given to members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary using the following procedure:

A) Squadrons must charge USCGAux members the same fees that are charged squadron members;

B) When ordering examinations, list USCGAux members separately on the examination order by name, membership number, and the notation "USCGAux";

C) The examination order confirmation, and an address label for return of the completed examination will be furnished with the examination shipment;

D) Upon receipt of results of the examination, provide the USCGAux member with that information. Instruct the Auxiliary member to transmit the results of the examination to the flotilla; emphasize that USPS will not do so.

**6.54 Non-members eligible for Instructor Development.** Instruction and examination in ID may be given to employees of government agencies charged with educating the public in safe boating, using the following procedures:

A) The course will be conducted by USPS instructors;

B) Squadrons must charge non-members the same fees that are charged their squadron members;

C) When ordering examinations, list government employee on the order form and state "non-member";

D) The examination order confirmation and an envelope for return of completed examinations will be furnished with the examination shipment;

E) Every non-member receiving a passing grade will be furnished a non-member certificate of completion. The non-member must be instructed to notify his sponsor, as headquarters will not.

**6.55 USPS-USCGAux mutual admissions policy.** USPS and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary have a mutual admissions policy whereby a member of the Auxiliary who has passed either the USCGAux *Boating Skills and Seamanship (BS&S)*

or *Sailing & Seamanship (S&S)* course will be accepted by USPS as the equivalent of having passed the required examination for USPS membership. The Auxiliary counterpart of this policy is that membership in USPS or successful completion of USPS *America's Boating Course* examination is tantamount to having passed the required Auxiliary examination. The agreement concerns only educational requirements for membership; all other membership procedures apply.

## 6.56 Description of USPS Educational Courses

### *America's Boating Course*

USPS *America's Boating Course* is the organization's primary civic effort toward public instruction in the fundamentals of safe boating.

This course is designed to familiarize the student with the fundamentals of safe boating and qualify for certification in most states that require boating education before operating a watercraft. This course is presently offered in the classroom and on-line.

Every squadron is expected to teach a classroom version of *America's Boating Course* at least once each year. Successful completion of the *America's Boating Course* examination or passing another approved boating examination is a requirement for active USPS membership. (At this writing, the Governing Board has permitted an exemption for a trial period that permits experienced boaters to be accepted for membership without passing this course or an equivalent course.) Affiliates must pass one of these courses as a prerequisite for any "advanced grade" course.

Subjects covered include:

- Boat handling under normal conditions
- Adverse conditions and emergencies
- Types of boats and boating terminology
- Required and recommended equipment
- Boating regulations and navigation rules
- Lines and knots
- Charts and aids to navigation
- Piloting techniques (offered in an optional Part II of the course)
- Marine radiotelephone usage
- Trailing

### Seamanship (S)

Building on the basics learned in *America's Boating Course*, the *Seamanship* course is an important foundation for other advanced grade courses. This course is also available on-line.

The student learns:

- Basic marlinespike seamanship
- Hull design and construction
- Navigation rules
- Operation under normal and adverse conditions
- Responsibilities of the skipper
- Fire prevention and control
- Basic first aid
- Common courtesies on the water
- Boat care
- Marina operations
- Nautical customs and flag etiquette

### Piloting (P)

This course is the first of a two-part program studying inland and coastal navigation. Its focus is on the fundamentals of piloting; keeping track of a boat's movements, determining one's position at any time and laying out courses to a planned destination.

Included are subjects such as:

- GPS navigation
- Charts and their use
- Aids to navigation
- The mariner's compass
- Variation and deviation of the compass
- Plotting and steering courses
- Dead reckoning
- Plotting and labeling charts

### Advanced Piloting (AP)

This is the final part of the inland and coastal navigation series. Its emphasis is on the use of modern electronic navigation systems and other advanced techniques for finding position. *Seamanship* and *Piloting* provide excellent background for AP and are prerequisites to the award of the grade of AP.

Among topics covered are:

- GPS navigation

- The use of Radar for navigation
- Height of tides and tidal currents and their effect on piloting
- Finding position using bearings and angles

### Junior Navigation (JN)

Junior Navigation is the first in a two-part program of study in offshore navigation. It is designed as a practical "how to" course. The grade of AP is a prerequisite to award the grade of JN.

Subject matter includes:

- Precise time determination
- Use of the Nautical Almanac
- Taking sextant sights of the sun
- Reducing sun sights to establish lines of position
- Special charts and plotting sheets for offshore navigation
- Offshore navigational routines for recreational craft
- Electronic and computerized offshore navigation

### Navigation (N)

This course is the second part of the study of offshore navigation, further developing the student's understanding of celestial navigation theory. The grade of JN is a prerequisite to award the grade of N.

The course covers:

- Advanced sight-reduction techniques
- Use of the sextant to take sights of stars, the moon and planets
- Reduction of the above sights
- Honing skills in sight taking and positioning
- Orderly methods for the navigator's day's work at sea
- Navigation coordinate systems and theory
- Navigating with minimal resources, as in a lifeboat
- Electronic and computerized offshore navigation

### Cruise Planning (CP)

This course is designed for members who plan to cruise for a year or just a weekend, in either a sail or power boat.

It covers such topics as:

- Planning a voyage
- Financing a voyage
- Managing commitments back home
- How to equip a cruising boat
- Crew selection
- Provisioning
- Voyage management
- Entering and clearing foreign ports
- Emergencies afloat
- Security measures

### **Engine Maintenance (EM)**

This course attempts to make students more self-reliant afloat, with trouble-diagnosis and temporary remedies given special emphasis. It covers marine, gasoline and diesel engines including concepts of operation, maintenance and repair of their:

- Cooling systems
- Electrical systems
- Fuel systems
- Lubricating systems
- Power train components
- Ancillary propulsion components

### **Instructor Development (ID)**

Unlike other USPS courses, this one is not designed to enhance boating skills. Rather, it deals with effective communications for the speaker and teacher, a quality that benefits the individual in all walks of life. Emphasis is on the special demands of teaching adults.

It offers practical instruction in:

- Preparing for teaching assignments
- Preparing for meeting presentations
- Effective teaching techniques
- Conducting efficient meetings
- Selection and use of audio-visual aids

### **Marine Electrical Systems**

This course teaches essential knowledge about a boat's electrical systems, including:

- Proper wiring both DC and AC shore power
- Grounding
- Corrosion and electrolysis control
- Batteries and their maintenance
- Depth finders
- Alarms

### **Marine Communications Systems**

This course teaches essential knowledge about boat electronic communications systems, including:

- Marine VHF and VHF/DSC radiotelephones
- Short wave radio communications
- Antennas
- Satellite Phones
- Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons

### **Marine Navigation Systems**

This course teaches essential knowledge about a boat's electronic navigation systems, including:

- Radar
- Loran, GPS and electronic positioning systems
- Integrated display systems
- Computer software for navigation
- On-board networks

### **Sail (SA)**

This course provides a thorough study of the terminology and dynamics of sailing.

The course covers:

- Types of hulls and rigs
- Types of running and standing rigging and their adjustments
- Hull and water forces caused by wind and waves
- Forces versus balance
- The theory of sailing
- Points of sailing
- Sail handling
- Sailing under various wind conditions
- Navigation rules unique to sailing vessels
- Racing

### **Weather (WX)**

The *Weather* course is designed to teach a student how to make weather observations and predictions for more enjoyable boating.

Topics include:

- Awareness of weather phenomena
- How to read a weather map and the sky
- How to understand and anticipate weather development
- Structure and characteristics of the atmosphere
- Factors considered in weather forecasting

- Sources and use of weather reports and forecasts
- Instrument and visual observations the skipper can make.

### **Learning Guides and Guides**

Learning guides and guides have been developed to provide in-depth information in many boating-related fields. Subjects have been selected in areas about which members have expressed interest. Current titles available are listed in the Materials Catalog.

### **Seminars**

As part of the USPS University concept, a number of seminars have been developed on specific nautical topics. Some of them are required for certain levels of boat operator certification. These seminars may be presented to non-members as well as members. They typically are about two hours in length. A current list of available seminars may be found in the Materials Catalog.