

Chapter 7

SQUADRON DEPARTMENTS AND COMMITTEES (EXCEPT EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT, SEE CHAPTER 6)

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7.1 Squadron affairs are handled through appropriate committees whose chairs and assistant chairs have been selected and appointed by the commander for their willingness and ability to serve. Chairs each serve with the rank of lieutenant.

Except for general and standing committees, which report to the membership and executive committee, respectively, it is necessary that committees are assigned either to the executive, administrative, secretary's or treasurer's department as outlined in the plan of organization.

7.2 The **executive department** is under the supervision of the **executive officer** and is responsible for the functions generally described as external.

The committees generally assigned to the squadron executive department are:

- Boat show
- Cooperative charting
- Liaison
- Legislative

- Public relations
- Radio technical
- Safety
- Vessel safety check

7.3 The **boat show committee** is responsible for squadron exhibits at all local boat shows and community fairs. It supervises the design, structure and display of the squadron booth. It prepares material to distribute to the public. These brochures present USPS and the efforts to promote safe boating through education. This committee schedules personnel to staff the booth. It is recommended that members staffing a booth, or exhibit, wear USPS uniform; if this is not possible, a USPS blazer or other clothing that will present a good image to the public is suggested. A calendar showing the locations and dates of future public boating courses will promote interest and attendance in this civic endeavor. Copies of the boat show quiz are available from USPS headquarters. It is great to use at the show to demonstrate the need for boating education. Potential students can see how much they know, or don't know, about boating by checking their own answers. Also showing the Joe

Namath Video Public Service Announcement (PSA) is another excellent way to call attention to the boating booth. The boat show committee is responsible for storing and maintaining the booth and other exhibit materials.

7.4 The squadron **cooperative charting committee** (CoChCom), under the direction of the committee chair, is responsible for coordinating cooperative charting activities within the squadron. The squadron may report on any area covered by National Ocean Service (NOS) products, but may also have a primary area as assigned by the district. The chair initiates activities such as special cruises, land parties and other activities as may be necessary to encourage participation in the program. The chair also holds training classes, processes all individual reports to the district chair [Refer to 4.20 on page 4-5], and checks all reports as prescribed. It is the responsibility of the chair to ensure that articles are prepared for the squadron newsletter. The chair is a member of the district cooperative charting committee. It is recommended that the squadron chair establishes, subject to the approval of the executive committee, an awards program for the squadron and maintains whatever records may be required to support such a program.

The intent of the cooperative charting program is to provide NOAA with data obtained by trained volunteer observers for use in the production of accurate, up-to-date nautical and aeronautical charts and related products, and the preservation of geodetic benchmarks in the National Geodetic Reference System (NGRS). USPS performs this service in accordance with a renewable Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between USPS and NOAA.

One of the new programs in cooperative charting is the popular Adopt-a-Chart program [Refer to 3.15 on page 3-5].

7.5 The squadron **liaison committee** (SLCom) reports to the executive officer, and consists of the liaison officer (SLO) as chair, appointed by the commander, and other squadron members as are deemed appropriate. The SLCom has the same responsibilities and restrictions on a squadron-area basis as those assigned to the DLCom [Refer to 4.21 on page 4-5]. The SLO has the responsibility

of maintaining all contact records for the squadron.

The squadron, the working unit of USPS, furthers the goals of USPS by developing and maintaining good relationships with key individuals of public agencies and other organizations. The committee members refer to *USPS Manual for District and Squadron Liaison Officers* for a list of suggested individuals and organizations. Each SLO should have an up-to-date copy of this manual which is sent to each squadron commander.

Each squadron, under the direction of the SLCom, compiles a liaison directory, a list or file of community VIPs. This important reference initially contains names, addresses and phone numbers of local contacts (Red Cross director, mayor, commissioners, Department of Natural Resources personnel) and any person or organization interested in furthering boating safety and education. The public relations, safety, legislative and educational committees also contribute pertinent data. This network effort will help publicize the educational program and enhances the image and work of the squadron. The directory should be current, on-going and updated with additional records of new resources.

When a person is invited to speak at a squadron function, the SLO prepares a fact sheet about USPS and the squadron so that the guest will have some knowledge about the organization, its goals and activities. Following an event it is valuable to record notations in the directory as to the date of appearance and subject expertise of the guest speaker. The directory now becomes a more valuable resource for future planning. It is important to nurture the relationships among local, state and national maritime organizations. The squadron directory is submitted to the DLO to become part of the district liaison directory.

The SLO, or members of the SLCom, should be well acquainted with key individuals connected with organizations concerned with maritime recreational activities. The SLO recommends to the commander, without being asked, the names of possible invitees to any phase of squadron activities. The SLO or members of the SLCom will serve as host to the commander's invited guests, as

directed by the commander. The S/Com has the responsibility for presenting and retiring the colors. In matters relating to flag etiquette and protocol, the SLO is encouraged to refer to the "Flag & Etiquette" section of *Operations Manual* [Refer to Chapter 12 on page 12-1].

The SLO makes timely reports to the district liaison officer (DLO) [Refer to 4.23 on page 4-6], when requested, covering the squadron's liaison activities. These reports should include, but are not limited to, the specific liaison goals for the watch year, identity of guests and speakers at squadron functions, names of all organizations and individuals who have helped the squadron.

7.6 The squadron legislative committee (S/LegCom), under the leadership of the squadron legislative officer (S/LegO), monitors and reviews enacted or proposed legislative matters affecting boating in the squadron area in order to keep the commander and membership informed. The squadron legislative officer works with the district legislative officer to keep the membership advised through communications with the district, and the district, in turn, with the national legislative committee, so that determination can be made concerning any action that can be taken on any given matter related to enacted or proposed legislation.

While legislation affecting boating may be of interest to USPS and to its members, taking a position on matters of legislation as an organization or as a member of USPS is not in the member's best interests. Any member may appear as a private citizen at any hearing at which he desires to testify or to be heard, provided he does not intimate that he is representing USPS or any of its units. USPS stationery must not be used to write individual letters to legislative or political bodies or entities except to issue an invitation to a squadron activity or to confer honorary membership. Whenever there is any doubt concerning the propriety of action on any legislative matter, the district legislative officer must be consulted [Refer to 4.24 on page 4-7].

The squadron legislative officer has the following duties:

A) Effectively monitors all local legislative activity in the squadron's area. Some of this may be

delegated, but responsibility for its satisfactory conduct remains with the legislative officer;

B) Attends all district council meetings and conferences to ensure that all information on legislative activity in the district is available to him and to his squadron. This responsibility should not be delegated to another squadron member;

C) Forwards copies of all legislative reports to the district legislative officer so that the district benefits from his efforts;

D) Keeps the squadron law and executive officers informed at all times about any legislative changes or modifications affecting recreational boating in the squadron's area. Such changes can range from local ordinances to national laws and regulations;

E) Maintains records of legislative activity of the committee so that appropriate merit mark recommendations may be made each year.

7.7 The squadron public relations committee (S/PRCom) is chaired by the squadron public relations officer (S/PRO). This officer is critical to the growth and well-being of the squadron. The S/PRO is an active, seasoned member who is a self-starter with a creative imagination, communication skills, initiative and a desire to excel in promoting the squadron and its image.

This officer and the PR committee members have two primary duties:

A) Publicize information pertaining to the *America's Boating Course* dates, times, location(s) through various types of media (posters, flyers, newspapers, radio, TV);

B) Implement a year-round public relations program to enhance the squadron's image and increase public awareness of the contributions that the squadron and USPS make to boating safety through education.

The PR committee is the most important link between USPS and the public. Since the squadron executive committee may be the prime source of information that should be conveyed to the public, it is suggested that the S/PRO be invited to attend executive committee meetings.

In addition to being selected for initiative and ability to serve in this position, consideration

should be given to the candidate's willingness to remain in office for several years because of the time it takes to establish effective contacts and develop well-coordinated public relations programs. The S/PRO reports to and works under the direction of the squadron executive officer and is a member of the district public relations committee. The S/PRO makes use of the *PRO-Log* (PR Manual) and all products and material available from the national public relations committee (N/PR/Com).

It is the duty of the S/PRO to collect descriptions and receipts of the various projects that promote and advertise the public boating classes. A portion of these costs may be reimbursed to the squadron as part of the **Cooperative Advertising Program** [Refer to 3.25 on page 3-10]. Reimbursement funds are distributed to squadrons based on the total of the Education Department's prior year sales from 01 December thru 01 November. Each Squadron's annual co-operative pool is 10% of that squadron's prior year's net purchases (purchases less returns and allowances). These records are forwarded to the D/PRO.

Another activity which is designated to the squadron public relations committee is the fostering of entries in the three PR **competitive contests**: the Charles F. Chapman PR Award for compiling the best squadron scrapbook; the Carl C. Mahnken Commander's Cup Award for excellence in developing a slide presentation; and the Roger Upton Video Contest for creating a video production explaining a particular concept and using a variety of visual images [Refer to 3.26 on page 3-12].

The S/PRO and his/her committee have the responsibility and specific duties of promoting classes, image building and promoting the benefits of USPS to the public. However, every member of the squadron shares these responsibilities in telling all boaters who we are, what we do and why they will benefit by being involved with USPS.

7.8 The **squadron radio technical officer** (SRTO) is a member of the district radio technical committee (DRTCom) [Refer to 4.25 on page 4-7]. The individual selected for this office should have a broad technical background in maritime elec-

tronic systems, including telecommunications; however, this knowledge may be augmented by assistant RTOs.

The SRTO has the following responsibilities:

A) Acts as the focal point in the squadron regarding technical matters and regulations relating to installation and operation of marine electronic equipment, including telecommunications;

B) Establishes liaison with local representatives of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and marine electronics and telecommunications organizations, including yacht clubs and marinas licensed as private coast stations. Identifies qualified representatives who could be invited to provide programs at squadron meetings. The chair of the district liaison committee is to be advised of all contacts with outside agencies;

C) Takes an active part in all educational activities of the squadron that contain material relating to marine electronic equipment;

D) Attends, or has a representative attend, meetings of the district radio technical committee. When any squadron member with an interest in radio technical activities attends a Governing Board meeting he should attempt to attend open meetings of the elective courses division and the boating activities committee to determine which national committee has responsibility for his area of interest.

The SRTO, in his role as liaison between the DRTCom and his squadron, is alert for articles on maritime electronics in squadron publications, reports, correspondence and minutes of RTCom activities and brings them to the attention of the district chair and national chairs of committees concerned with these issues.

7.9 A **Squadron Safety Officer** (SSO) is appointed by the squadron commander on the basis of his interest in marine or industrial safety and carries on an informative program during the year in class work and during the boating season. He should work closely with the educational staff to relate the teaching of certain subjects in their application to the promotion of safer boating. He is responsible for distribution of bulletins, posters, safety literature, et cetera, received from the

National and District Safety Committees. It is the SSO's job to inform and advise the squadron membership in conjunction with the Squadron Legislative Officer of any state legislation pertaining to boating. He should be encouraged to become certified as a Vessel Safety Examiner.

It is his duty, together with the Public Relations Officer, to promote National Safe Boating Week and make the public aware of safe boating practice all year, thereby performing a civic service. He should originate information and news applicable to his local area. He should organize an adequate safety patrol at squadron rendezvous. He should initiate such safety special events as will educate and interest the members of the squadron. He is expected to communicate with other safety organizations in his/her area and serve as a member of the District Safety Committee. [Refer to 4.26 on page 4-7].

The SSO is responsible for the completion and submission of the Safe Boating Week Campaign Activities Report, the USPS Recreational Boating Safety Committee's Squadron Safety Officer's Report, and the United States Power Squadrons/Motor Boating Chapman Safety Award reports. Squadron members should be cognizant of any deserving member on an individual basis, company or organization on a squadron/district area-wide basis as a recipient of this award and bring it to the attention of the SSO and the DSO [Refer to 4.26 on page 4-7].

For more information on "America's Waterway Watch," National Weather Service, and Environment refer to 3.18 on page 3.6.

7.10 Vessel safety check committee. Squadron members are encouraged to become vessel safety examiners. There are various requirements before a person is qualified for this important function. A member must have classroom training, pass a proctored exam and conduct five safety checks under supervision. Each VSC examiner makes a difference in recreational boating safety by making certain that boats meet the federal and state requirements for safety equipment. After a boat has passed the inspection an appropriate decal is displayed on the vessel. An official uniform identifies

those USPS members who are in the VSC program [Refer to J.3 on page J-2].

7.11 The **administrative department** of the squadron is responsible for functions generally described as internal. It is under the supervision of the **administrative officer**. The committees currently assigned to the administrative department are:

- Membership
- Member involvement
- Boating activities
- Meetings and program
- Operations training

7.12 The **squadron membership committee** (SMemCom) is under the leadership of the squadron membership chair, an outstanding member dedicated to USPS, appointed by the commander. He or she reports to the administrative officer. This committee plays a large role in the future growth and success of a squadron. The committee is concerned with the acquisition of new members. The ability of USPS to protect its private status and the integrity of its educational programs depends on strict adherence to membership procedures set forth in the *Membership Committee Guidelines*.

The membership committee reviews, evaluates and processes applications for membership. Under guidelines approved by the Operating Committee, its prime function is to accept applications and recommend these applicants to the squadron's executive committee for approval. After that, membership responsibility passes to the member involvement committee for familiarization of the new members and their assimilation into the squadron.

The key to successful acquisition of a prospective member is in the timing and expeditious processing of the required paperwork. Procedures have been designed to eliminate time consuming delays which can result in the loss of potential new members. From the moment the individual indicates a desire to join USPS, time is critical. A knowledgeable, well organized and efficient membership committee translates into a greater number of acceptances.

The squadron membership committee can be small, perhaps consisting of a chair and just three or four others. Trained interviewers, when needed, may be recruited from the member involvement committee. Interviewers are trained by the membership committee for this purpose and supplied with the necessary forms and pamphlets.

The membership committee must make a concerted effort to select and train interviewers in the procedures and techniques used in conducting an interview in the most efficient and expeditious manner. Because interviewing time is often limited, the interviewer should:

A) Explain to the prospective member the purposes, aims, goals and contributions of USPS and of the squadron;

B) Evaluate the individual's desirability as a member.

Effective interviewing requires skill and expertise. These qualities determine the success of the squadron in acquiring members and identifying particular expertise which may be beneficial to the squadron.

7.13 The **squadron member involvement committee (SMIC)** is composed of a group of enthusiastic squadron members who are responsible for the involvement both in educational and social activities of all members. They must encourage new and active members, as well as inactive members, to participate fully in squadron educational and social activities. It is suggested that a committee large enough to involve ALL members consist of one (1) committee member for each fifteen (15) squadron members.

The squadron member involvement committee is responsible for the following:

A) Providing warm and enthusiastic welcomes to members in attendance at every educational class and social function;

B) Monitoring the changing needs of the membership and communicating these needs to the squadron bridge and executive committee;

C) Developing a *Members Manual* which is available to all squadron members. A model is available from USPS headquarters;

D) Surveying a member's skills and interests and reporting findings to the squadron bridge, executive and nominating committees for committee and squadron officer assignments;

E) Developing a telephone calling committee that will contact the squadron membership monthly regarding educational and social programs;

F) Developing a buddy mentor program for new members so that they may be properly assimilated into squadron activities;

G) Presenting the squadron orientation programs;

H) Encouraging youth, ages 6-14, to participate in the annual USPS Poster Contest [Refer to 3.45 on page 3-21]. Youth involvement leads to adult membership;

I) Submits retention and involvement ideas to the district Membership Chair, via the Involvement Chair. These ideas will be shared with all of USPS and will be entered in the William Selden IV Member Involvement Retention Award - MIRA contest which recognizes three (3) outstanding involvement ideas yearly. MICA was developed to enable the national membership committee to accumulate retention and involvement ideas for dissemination to squadrons and districts [Refer to 3.44 on page 3-20];

J) Making sure that the *New Member Involvement Manual* (MI Manual) is a part of the squadron's library and that the ideas contained in this *MI Manual* are used for the betterment of the squadron;

K) Assisting yearly with contacting non-renewals.

The national membership committee sponsors a **youth poster contest** [Refer to 3.45 on page 3-21]. Squadron winners, first, second and third place in each category will be announced at the district spring conference or summer rendezvous and will be entered at the national level. All participants at the national level will receive certificates of appreciation. It is also suggested that all participants be recognized by their squadrons.

There is a William Selden IV Member Involvement Retention Award - MIRA [Refer to 3.44 on page 3-20] developed by the national membership committee. The committee is endeavoring to accumulate retention and involvement ideas so that

these may be disseminated to all USPS squadrons. The following rules describe this award:

- Squadron entries must describe a plan that was devised and utilized to solve a member's involvement need that has produced measurable retention results. Before and after figures are welcome.
- The award is presented yearly at the spring Governing Board meeting. Squadrons may submit as many entries as desired.

7.14 The **squadron boating activities committee** (SBACom) plans and organizes various boating activities. Participating in these events fosters fun and friendships. Plans might include rendezvous, raft-ups, cruises, picnics or other on-the-water activities. Boating unites the squadron members in a cohesive unit. The SBACom has the responsibility for coordinating and implementing the boating activity programs in the squadron. Dates and locations are selected for rendezvous and cruises and are cleared with the chair of the district committee so that as few conflicts as possible will occur with cruises of nearby squadrons, district gatherings or local yacht clubs to which members may belong. These plans are made and submitted early in the session to the squadron executive committee for approval.

The chair ensures that at least one **port captain** is designated for each major boating area and that all areas within the squadron's geographic regions are covered. Designated committee members are very knowledgeable and articulate about local waters, marinas, repair facilities, and other shoreside facilities and services of interest to cruising members [Refer to 3.37 on page 3-17].

In some squadrons there are two sub-committees, one to take charge of cruises and nautical contests and the other to be in charge of rendezvous. At all times consideration is given to the safety and well-being of all who participate.

Once approval is given for these suggested cruises and rendezvous, the committee works closely with the editor of the squadron newsletter in order that all members are aware of dates and details as early as possible. Such information as to what arrangements are being made for overnight

stops, fuel and meal accommodations, time and place of departure, details of courses to be followed and events to be held will all help to insure the success of these undertakings.

The chair encourages all members holding an amateur radio license to participate in USPS-CPS amateur radio network activities every Saturday at 1700 GMT on 14.323MHz.

The squadron boating activities chair is to maintain close liaison with the district chair and to support each program of the boating activities effort. He works with squadron officers on program content and member selection of the committee. Guidance and assistance may be obtained from the district boating activities committee chair and from related national committees. Forms for each program may be obtained from USPS headquarters or the national boating activities committee.

7.15 The **squadron meetings, programs and entertainment committee** plays an important part in the success of the squadron. Affairs, such as anniversary parties, change of watch dinners and commander's balls, require much attention to detail. A large committee might be divided into three smaller committees or sub-committees, each with specific responsibilities. Various detailed tasks are easier to manage and can be delegated to a smaller working group. The meetings sub-committee secures the meeting place, arranges for the conduct of the meeting such as size of the head table, rostrum, number of seats and microphones, tickets, menus, decorations and flags. The program sub-committee is responsible for obtaining the guest speaker, or the "program for the evening". The duties might entail requesting the "bio" of a speaker and preparing his/her introduction. It also might prepare announcement posters or the news article about the program plans which will appear in the squadron newsletter. The entertainment sub-committee arranges for an orchestra or some type of music, obtains equipment for showing a movie or secures any necessary equipment and works out details in cooperation with the program committee. It is important that the commander be informed of all plans prior to final arrangements being made, and it is the commander's privilege to finalize seating arrangements.

7.16 The Leadership Development Committee (LDCom) conducts the squadron operations training and leadership development programs in accordance with standards set forth by the national operations training committee [Refer to 3.45 on page 3-21]. It is responsible for recruiting and training other members of the squadron and for providing trained instructors for conducting its many courses and programs. The LDCom chair reports to and consults with the district LDCom chair [Refer to 3.45 on page 3-21]. This committee has the responsibility to employ two important programs.

The **operations training program** is a management tool which offers members the opportunity to learn about the workings of USPS, including the relationship among squadrons, districts and the national organization. It includes insight into squadron education, training, staffing, planning, conducting a meeting, USPS protocol and communications. The program, presented in modules, normally takes about twelve hours in class; however, there is no exam. Each squadron offers the program at least once each year and encourages all members to complete it. It is a prerequisite for becoming commander, unless waived by the district commander under extenuating circumstances.

The **leadership program** presents workable tools for a practical approach to leadership. It provides a means of identifying and choosing the proper course of action in using situational leadership and various leadership styles. The program consists of three parts: leadership, communications and motivation. This program normally takes about three hours in class; however, there is no exam. It is recommended that the program be offered at least every other year. The OT chair requests from headquarters on **forms OT-2** and **OT-3**, certificates of completion for each member completing the operations training and leadership development programs.

Presenter's Guides for the OT and LD programs are available as tools for squadron chairs and presenters to aid and facilitate their presentations. Both contain important tips for each topic and include overhead-transparency masters. OT

and LD program manuals, forms and this *Operations Manual* (used extensively in OT) may be ordered from headquarters on **form OT-1**.

7.17 The following committees are recommended under the **secretary's department**:

- Historian
- Directory (roster)
- Calling (telephone)
- Newsletters (publications)
- *The Ensign* correspondent
- Computer systems committee

7.18 The squadron historian. It is important for the preservation and indexing of valuable historical material that each squadron have a historian. The commander appoints a member willing to serve in the office more than one year so that the historian becomes a link between changes of watch. The **squadron historian** has the rank of lieutenant (Lt).

Files of correspondence, records and reports from all officers and committee chairs will attain considerable bulk and are turned over to the historian for retention in the archives. He may dispose of those with no historical value. Discretion is used to decide which files to retain; however, it is a requirement that membership records be kept for five years. Much of the routine correspondence concerning address changes, transfers and resignations quickly lose value and can safely be destroyed. However, there are records and reports which are kept because they are the history of the squadron.

The historian prepares and files the annual squadron reports (**form H-701**), due 30 days after the change of watch. Two copies of this report are forwarded to the **district historian** [Refer to 4.42 on page 4-13], who retains one copy for files and forwards the second to the national historian committee representative. The historian is responsible for publishing articles in the newsletter which relate to the history of the organization, particularly to commemorate USPS Founders' Day (2 February) or anniversaries.

The squadron historian's records include:

- Minutes of the original organizational meetings
- The original squadron charter (laminated for protection)
- A copy of the incorporation papers, including periodic endorsements
- A color rendition or photograph of the squadron burgee and its heraldry
- Bylaws, including all amendments adopted
- Important correspondence (congratulatory and official)
- Minutes of all meetings (annual, special, executive committee, including reports)
- Publicity (newspaper clippings, radio and TV scripts, photos)
- A complete file of squadron periodicals (newsletters, directories) and annual reports
- Biographies and photos of past and present squadron flag officers.

7.19 The **squadron roster committee** is responsible for the preparation of a directory which becomes a most important document to the members and especially to the squadron bridge. The roster contains data about the officers, chairs and members. The list of bridge officers and committees appears in the directory as well as the names of past commanders. The name of the member, rank, grade, courses completed, certificate number, address, telephone number, email address and name of the spouse are included. Usually there is a fleet roster listing name of vessel and type. Rosters vary depending on the size of the squadron. Some contain only a few pages while others are professionally published and include pictures of activities and officers.

Restriction. A roster of officers, members and committees is to be considered strictly proprietary and not available to any outside individual, organization or agency. No member of USPS may use any such source for any purpose, public or private, outside the normal activities of USPS without approval of the Operating Committee.

7.20 The **squadron telephone calling committee** is a very important and valuable group. This special committee is probably unique at the squadron level. This committee is the personal contact, a real person, notifying the squadron members of

coming events and inviting them to participate in these activities. An invitation to a meeting, rendezvous or social has special meaning when it is a personalized message. Usually one person is designated as chair, and the committee members are assigned various members to contact on a regular schedule. This committee has the dual role of also being part of the membership involvement committee under the administrative department.

The following are **guidelines** for the telephone committee:

- Establishes procedures and schedule for regular contact of all members (except any specifically wishing not to be contacted)
- Organizes a committee with enough members for your squadron membership (a good ratio is 1 committee member for every 10-15 squadron members)
- Add new members to the calling list as soon as they have joined the squadron and want to participate in a job.

The chair, who may become a substitute caller in cases of emergency, is the contact person who passes the information (meetings, classes, socials and district/national activities) to committee members, collects responses, and gives his report to the appropriate officer or chair.

7.21 The (publications) **newsletter committee** in the squadron is chaired by the editor. He and the committee members are responsible for editing and publishing the newsletter. These publications vary from a simple one-page monthly newsletter to a magazine complete with pictures and advertising. Newsletters are the media by which all USPS activities are brought to the attention of the membership. In so doing, they provide an effective method of binding the organization together and stimulating interest at its various levels. They recognize those members who provide leadership and those who contribute to its welfare by participating in the many activities. In addition, newsletters provide information on educational programs, boating safety and social events.

The newsletter committee includes members with talents appropriate to the needs of publishing. These members are writers, artists, photographers,

cartoonists and graphic arts specialists. Newsletters contain inspirational or motivational articles written by the commander or a designated bridge officer. They also carry informational articles written by other bridge officers, in addition to squadron, district and national news and notice of coming events. It is important that the editorial content and all features be in accordance with USPS policies. Any questions dealing with standards are discussed with the respective commander or his representative. The commander assumes complete responsibility for the contents of the publication.

Because it is important to keep lines of communication open between squadron and district, many squadrons appoint a correspondent to the district newsletter editor. Information about squadron activities then receives recognition in the district publication [Refer to 4.44 on page 4-13].

Most squadron newsletters are published monthly, with the possible exception of July and August. In addition to the normal distribution of publications to the squadron membership, copies should also be sent to the national bridge officers, the chair and assistant chair of the national publications committee [Refer to 3.56 on page 3-25] and to the chair of the district publications committee [Refer to 4.44 on page 4-13].

Squadron newsletters that are outstanding and follow specific accepted rules of good publication receive recognition from the national publications committee. At least four issues of the newsletters must be sent to a designated national committee member. He evaluates these issues based on specific criteria. Those squadrons publishing the best newsletter are listed on the Honor Roll and given the **Distinction in Journalism** award, a special logo that appears on newsletters the following year [Refer to 3.56 on page 3-25].

7.22 Correspondents to *The Ensign* are appointed by each squadron commander based upon ability as a writer and reporter. *The Ensign* correspondent:

- Writes and solicits articles of noteworthy activities such as cruises, rendezvous, public relations, cooperative charting efforts and

other information of national interest and forwards to *The Ensign* editor

- With the assistance of the squadron or district photographer, obtains pictures to accompany such articles, as well as photos suitable for *The Ensign* cover pages
- Solicits advertising for *The Ensign* and may earn commissions for the squadron
- Becomes familiar with *The Ensign* monthly feature and deadline schedule
- Checks the squadron newsletter distribution list to see that the appropriate member of *The Ensign* committee receives a copy of all publications.

7.23 Many squadrons have established **squadron computer systems committees** (SComSysCom), and the number continues to increase. These committees are valuable in promoting continuity in the use of computers within USPS and also alerting the public to the location and work of USPS. The ComSysCom has four main functions:

- Maintains the local roster
- Locates local help-desk for USPS supported software
- Creates the local web site
- Interacts with district ComSysCom [Refer to 4.46 on page 4-14] and the Information Technology Committee [Refer to 3.59 on page 3-27].

Many squadrons have designed their own web site. The squadron web site can be thought of as a giant marketing tool, just for the squadron. On the site, information about the squadron, such as the location of the unit, the dates and places of the various public boating courses and a contact person may be listed. In addition, pictures, articles and other newsworthy items show not only why safe boating is important, but also why USPS is fun and a family oriented organization.

Secretaries and treasurers easily maintain their records with their counterparts, district secretaries and treasurers, using the on-line resources available from national headquarters. Each squadron and district is able to establish an electronic mailing list. This mailing list can be used to post notices, exchange ideas or supplement the squadron newsletter. Many of the forms used in USPS

are maintained on the ever-expanding and improving USPS members' web site. The national committee counterpart is the **information technology committee** [Refer to 3.59 on page 3-27] which is available to assist squadrons with their web pages.

As previously mentioned, the ComSysCom may be responsible for the squadron roster. Roster maintenance is an extremely important function within USPS. It is through this mechanism that headquarters is able to keep the database up-to-date with the following information:

- member name
- current job within USPS
- address
- rank and grade of member
- telephone number
- name of boat
- spouse name

Other information that is maintained electronically is the reports of the historians. Also the resume of each member is recorded on USPS computer, and now can be completed and submitted directly to the Committee on Nominations. This data is valuable and useful for the nominating committees at all levels.

The following is a list of reference areas available to members, and the list continues to grow:

- A) USPS news groups
- B) Mailing list (email)
- C) Members' email directory
- D) Course descriptions, advanced and elective
- E) USPS graphics, clip art
- F) National committee pages
- G) Squadron and district home pages
- H) Boat insurance program
- I) Discount services for members
- J) Port captains list
- K) Ham radio roster
- L) Model bylaws (squadron, district and provisional)
- M) Archives
- N) Various software
- O) USPS Bylaws and *Operations Manual*

7.24 There are certain squadron functions performed by committees designated in the squadron plan of organization as either general committees

or standing committees. By the nature of their duties and responsibilities they report to the membership (general committees) or the executive committee (standing committees).

7.25 The chair and all members of the following **general committees** are elected by the squadron in the spring or fall, depending on the bylaws of the squadron.

- Auditing
- Nominating
- Rules

7.26 The **auditing committee** audits funds and records on the basis of the fiscal year established by the bylaws. Usually the committee consists of a chair and two members who are elected annually. The committee, experienced in finance and record-keeping, is responsible for auditing and verifying the financial status and procedures of the treasurer's department. A detailed report of performance and accuracy is given to the membership before the annual treasurer's report is accepted.

A procedure for auditing the treasurer's records is outlined:

Cash

A) Obtain copies of bank statements and account reconciliations

B) Compare bank account statement balances to checkbook balance and traces to ledger accounts

C) Review listing of outstanding checks for old outstanding checks. Ascertain reason for old outstanding checks and void or re-issue such checks

D) Examine the statement provided by headquarters to the treasurer if funds are on deposit with the national treasurer

E) Verify that the savings account or investment balances shown on the books are supported by statements or directly confirmed by the institution.

Revenue

F) Identify primary sources of revenues as dues, sale of educational material and interest on savings

G) Test dues or assessment totals, multiplying membership count by unit monies. Trace deposits to bank statements and book of accounts

H) Determine if income from other sources (sales, donations, socials) is promptly deposited and credited to proper accounts

I) Determine if interest or dividend earnings are properly reflected in the accounts

J) Verify other income - newsletters' advertising revenue - acknowledged in the minutes of the executive committee and credited in the amounts according to their directions

K) Test all sources of income by comparing to estimates adopted in the current budget. Questions differences from the budget.

Expenditures

L) Obtain a copy of the current budget for expenses and any minutes reflecting changes in budget amounts

M) Determine that expenditures are within budget authorizations for account categories

N) Examine supporting documents for any disbursements and determine if authorization is correct.

Other

O) Some squadrons or districts own real property and buildings. The auditing committee assures itself that title is properly held in the name of the organization or trustee(s) of the organization. Checks to see if adequate insurance is provided. If the real property and buildings are being depreciated for financial statement or other purposes, the life of the asset, the depreciation method and depreciation calculation should be tested for reasonableness and accuracy.

P) Other assets, teaching aids, flags, vehicles, should be accounted for by the appropriate bridge officer.

7.27 The **nominating committee** is responsible for selecting a slate of officers. The committee weighs the qualifications of members being considered for elective office and then nominates candidates. Nominations from the floor for elective offices are often unsatisfactory. The size of the nominating committee varies according to the bylaws.

Election of the members of the nominating committee itself is almost as important as the election of officers. The commander points out any

restrictions on nominations imposed by the squadron and national bylaws or procedures. It is undesirable to nominate newer members; however, past commanders are well qualified because of their experience. Furthermore, past commanders have already served, and they usually are not considered for elective office, although they are good candidates for general committees.

The "model" bylaws provide that members of the nominating committee be elected in successive years so that there is continuing experience on the committee. Therefore, each member elected is designated a prescribed term of office. This is desirable for it provides a nucleus of members acquainted with the details of previous considerations of the committee. It is imperative that the committee has extensive knowledge of these qualifications. This comes from years of experience.

There is sometimes a tendency to nominate from the floor the number of members required for the nominating committee and then move to close the nominations, giving the membership little choice as to who is on the committee. This can be avoided if the commander declines to recognize the motion to close nominations until more than the number required for the committee have been nominated.

The Nominating Committee may conduct several meetings while preparing the list of nominees for the next election cycle. The committee may interview prospective nominees, including members who might not be considered candidates for the next election. For example, the most recent past commander might be asked to suggest candidates for elective office and to comment on the abilities of the officers who held key positions during the prior year. The committee needs to conduct such interviews in a way that its decision-making process is not revealed.

The committee weighs the qualifications of members being considered for elective offices. Nominees for bridge officers are chosen on a basis similar to sound business practices. The duties of the job come first. The nominee possesses the requisite abilities, including dependability, willingness, steadiness of work habits and the time to

devote to the job. He is well enough liked to inspire members to work with him. It is important that the committee consider the views of all of the membership, not a select group.

The nominating committee determines if the candidate is willing to stand for election. When the committee reaches a conclusion, but before the nominations are reported, it secures from the national educational officer or his designee approval of the nominees for educational officer and his assistant. After the approval is granted, the committee submits its report to the secretary. The report of the nominating committee is included in the call to the meeting at which the election is conducted. Any member who does not support the nominations of the nominating committee may submit other nominations by petition, as specified by the squadron bylaws, to the secretary. If provided in the bylaws, nominations from the floor by active members may be made to fill a vacancy at the time of election in a properly formulated slate of nominees.

7.28 The **rules committee** is the guardian of adherence to bylaws and USPS policy matters. It does not have the authority to finalize or amend any action pertaining to them. The committee interprets the bylaws and advises the commander on procedural matters. The chair often serves as parliamentarian at the meetings. Committee members have a complete understanding of the bylaws and have copies of both the local and USPS Bylaws. Usually from three to five members serve on the committee, and by electing some of the members each year, the membership on the committee has continuity.

The committee prepares recommendations and changes where necessary to keep bylaws up-to-date. All decisions or actions required to amend bylaws are channeled through the Committee on Rules [Refer to 3.81 on page 3-34].

It is imperative that squadron bylaws be consistent with the policies of USPS. In addition, squadron bylaws must also be consistent with the bylaws of the district to which that squadron is assigned. At frequent intervals the squadron rules committee compares its current bylaws with the

“model” bylaws for squadrons and the district bylaws. A copy of the current model is included in the “kit” provided to commanders upon their election. Printed copies and copies on diskette of the “model” bylaws are ordered from headquarters. Also there are copies, which may be downloaded, on the members’ page on USPS Web Site.

A definite procedure exists when it becomes necessary to amend squadron bylaws, or to change a squadron name, or to adopt bylaws by a new squadron. The usual practice is for the executive committee to discuss and agree on the desired changes. The preparation of the specific amendments is assigned to the rules committee. It is important that an early, informal review by USPS ComRules, before amendments are presented to the membership, be made to avoid any embarrassment arising from issues which may cause the need for a second vote of the membership. The ComRules assignments are listed in *USPS Directory of National, District and Squadron Officers* and on the committee website. Any deviation from the model is underlined in red or highlighted and explained in an accompanying letter. One copy of the current bylaws accompanies any proposed amendment. Prior review by the Committee on Rules helps to avoid ambiguities and other difficulties and expedites subsequent approval by the committee. Following action on changes suggested by the Committee on Rules, the bylaws or amendments are presented to the squadron executive committee which then proposes adoption by the membership. Care is taken during the process that any current bylaw provisions relating to amendments are followed closely.

After action by the membership, the squadron secretary submits the adopted bylaws or amendments to the same member of the Committee on Rules with a request for formal approval. The following documents are included with any such request.

One copy, preferably electronic, of the bylaws or amendments adopted by the membership and one signed copy of the certification should be sent to the member of USPS ComRules with oversight responsibility. Any electronic copy which includes signatures must be scanned or may be mailed as a

single sheet if scanning is not available.

Bylaws become effective on approval by ComRules. The secretary should then notify the membership.

It should be noted that a name change is a change in the bylaws and must follow the same basic procedure. The name change may need to go to ComRules before it goes to the membership. The addition of "Sail and" already has preliminary approval and need not be separately pre-approved by ComRules. A geographical change needs pre-approval by ComRules and final approval by the Governing Board. Again, only one copy, preferably electronic, of the bylaws and the scanned approval sheet need to be sent to ComRules.

7.29 Standing committees report to the executive committee. The following committees are usually standing committees or individuals, appointed by the commander with the approval of the executive committee:

- Finance
- House
- Personnel
- Law officer
- Supply officer
- Property officer

7.30 The **finance committee** works in close cooperation with the treasurer. It prepares the budget and, in general, plans the overall financial affairs. It also investigates and approves any investment of funds. There is no conflict with the operations of the treasurer, who has the responsibility of administration, or the auditing committee, which reviews and verifies the financial transactions. All requests for financial appropriations are sent to the finance committee. Then there is approval by the executive committee or squadron membership, depending on the bylaws.

A budget committee and financial committee are often combined into one committee, and then this committee is responsible for the financial operations of the organization.

7.31 Some squadrons may have need of a **house committee** to manage buildings or premises owned

or leased by the squadron for offices or meeting purposes.

This committee also assists as directed by the commander in obtaining rooms and facilities for meetings, educational programs and other squadron activities. Before the squadron builds or acquires property for any cause, it is required that the commander discuss the situation with the national law officer before the squadron commits itself to any real estate action.

7.32 The members of the **personnel committee** are appointed by the commander with approval by the executive committee. This committee performs two important functions. The first is to maintain an inventory of the skills and interests of each member so that these members may be called on for staff positions, chairs and committee assignments. This committee makes appropriate recommendations to the commander.

The second function is to plan suitable recognition of individuals or organizations which the squadron wishes to recognize. There are many forms of recognition: letters, plaques, flags or certificates. It is important that recognition be carefully considered for it is embarrassing to honor one and neglect others.

7.33 The squadron **law officer**, appointed by the commander, is a member of the bar of the state where he holds squadron membership. He may have an assistant law officer who also is an attorney. The law officer is the legal counsel to the commander and all committees. He supervises disciplinary hearings and maintains a liaison among squadron, district, and national law officers. There is cooperation among all levels. The law officer is concerned with the incorporation of the unit and the compliance with state and local laws which affect the various activities. He also assists or substitutes in the duties of the rules committee or the legislative committee as the situation requires. All squadrons within a state must operate on the same basis with respect to the laws of that state.

Before a law officer takes legal action on any matter involving USPS or any of its squadrons or

members, the national law officer and chief commander must be notified.

One important responsibility of the law officer is to review the process and progress when a squadron desires to become incorporated. It is desirable for squadrons to incorporate, and this is possible as a non-profit organization [IRS Code 501(c)(3)] under the laws of the state in which the organization has its main activities. Consultation with the law officer of the squadron will make known the advantages of incorporation.

Before incorporation papers are filed, a copy of the proposed articles of incorporation is sent to USPS law officer for his approval. If such incorporation requires any change in a squadron's bylaws, such proposed change or changes must also be submitted to USPS chair of the Committee on Rules for consideration and approval.

7.34 The appointed squadron **supply officer** brings to each meeting a small supply of burgees, ensigns, insignia, belts, and tie clips. Most of these items are obtained from the Ship's Store located at headquarters. The supply officer also has catalogs

to which he can refer the members. He is an advisor and is completely familiar with all provisions of the bylaws and the *Operations Manual* which affect these items. He reports to the administrative officer any irregularities concerning articles which have definite specifications or of unauthorized sources selling USPS ensigns or articles bearing its reproduction. The supply officer provides a great service and convenience for members of USPS. This officer may serve the commander as a standing committee or may report directly to the treasurer, depending on the squadron bylaws.

7.35 The **property officer** and members of his committee, appointed by the commander, maintain an inventory of all properties belonging to the squadron. These include films, projectors, slides, flags, teaching aids, computers and awards. It is important to know the location of these items. A report of this inventory is made at least once each year to the executive committee. This annual inventory is necessary for the squadron to provide adequate insurance coverage for its property. This committee may report directly to the commander as a standing committee or may serve in the treasurer's department, depending on the bylaws.

