

UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS®  
SAIL AND POWER BOATING

2019  
Squadron  
Commander's  
Guide

*"Come for the Education...Stay for the Friends"™*



# UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS®

## SAIL AND POWER BOATING

P.O. Box 30423, Raleigh, North Carolina 27622  
1504 Blue Ridge Road, Raleigh, North Carolina 27607  
888-367-8777 • [www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org)

Dear Commander:

For over 100 years, the United States Power Squadrons has worked to make the water a better place through civic service, education, and fellowship on the water. This continues to be our mission today as it was at our founding in 1914.

Without doubt, the single most important job in USPS is that of squadron commander. Your dedication, your enthusiasm, and your leadership determine the success of your squadron and, by extension, your district and USPS as a whole. Everything we do, we do through our squadrons and you are the key to our success.

Please understand that our mission is important and to accomplish our mission, we need all hands on deck. Please accept this challenge to grow your squadron by recruiting new members and encouraging your current members to remain active and support the squadron. Remember that our primary way of introducing ourselves to new folks is the public boating class. It's not a coincidence that successful squadrons tend to have successful boating classes.

Leadership of your squadron is a daunting task, but you're not alone. Your district and your national organization stand by to help. Be sure to attend your district conferences (and bring your educational officer). You can benefit from the experience of others in your area.

I invite you to come to our next national meeting. Our meetings are fun and educational and help give you the tools you need to succeed. Be sure to take advantage of all that's available at <http://usps.org/>.

The 2019 Directory of Officers will be online soon and be sure to bookmark <http://www.usps.org/php/kits/>. It's a good place to start.

Congratulations, and "Grip and Grin."

In USPS,

Gary Cheney, SN  
Chief Commander

Enclosures

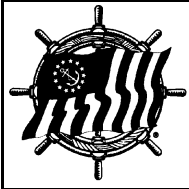
New Commander Kit  
2019/2020

# NEW SQUADRON COMMANDER GUIDE

2019

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*United States Power Squadrons®*  
National Administrative Officer

## **HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE**

This guide has been designed to provide you with important information as concisely as possible. The Quick Reference List is an outline, in date order, of some of your most time critical responsibilities. Next to the due date is a brief explanation of the required action. In the column on the far right are references to pages in this guide where you will find more detailed explanations as well as samples of some forms.

The appendices contain miscellaneous information that you may read at your leisure.

You may use the order form found in the Official Forms Starter Kit to order copies of the other valuable manuals.

**2018 NEW SQUADRON COMMANDER GUIDE  
QUICK REFERENCE LIST**

<b>DUE DATE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>SEE PAGES</b>
1 February	Complete Form OD-2 (list of offices for directory) and send to National HQ by 3 February.	1-4 Appendix A-8
18-24 February	Attend the Annual Meeting at the Rosen Centre, Orlando, Florida, or complete an alternate voter form and give to your alternate voter to take to the meeting.	1-4 Appendix A
1-15 May	Set up a committee to contact all nonrenewals for the 2020 dues year (1 January 2019 - 31 December 2019). Your squadron treasurer should have a list.	1-4 Appendix B-22
21-27 May	National Safe Boating Week	----
1-31 July	Make reservations to attend Governing Board Meeting on 8-15 September at the Galt House, Louisville, KY.	THE ENSIGN, June and July
15 August	If you are unable to attend the Fall Governing Board, authorize an alternate voter by completing and giving to that person the "Designation of Alternate Voter" form that National HQ has sent. <b>Do not mail</b> that form back to HQ; give it to your alternate voter.	Appendix A-7
8-15 September	Governing Board Meeting, Galt House, Louisville, KY.	THE ENSIGN, June and July
October	Make reservations to attend 2020 Annual Meeting, Ponte Vedra, Florida. (9-16 February 2020)	THE ENSIGN, Dec. and Jan..
1-31 Oct	Prepare your Merit Mark recommendations and submit to your Area Monitor.	Appendix A-1
15 November	Merit Mark Recommendations to Area Monitors.	1-3,1-4,1-5 Appendix A-1
December	Complete form HQ 117 (Certificate of Delegates to Annual Meeting.) Give one copy to each delegate and send one copy to National HQ by due date listed on form.	1-4 Appendix A-6
December	Make sure your NomCom has submitted your form ED81 (SEO and Asst SEO.	
15 December	Complete Form ED-1 (local board appointments) are submitted online by 1 January..	1-5 Appendix A-12
9-16 February 2020	Attend Annual Meeting in Ponte Vedra, Florida.	1-4 Appendix A

## HQ Staff

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The Commander

## THE COMMANDER

(The following information has been extracted from the *Operations Manual*, Chapter 5)

The principal officer of each squadron of USPS is the commander (Cdr) who is elected by the active members of the squadron.

The commander presides at all meetings of the squadron, including executive committee meetings, and must be fully acquainted with all the activities and operations of the squadron. While the commander is assisted by a staff of officers, committees and educational boards, he is responsible for the success of squadron administration. He is *ex officio* a member of all squadron departments and committees except as provided in the squadron's bylaws.

Most commanders have a number of years of squadron experience and are acquainted with many squadron procedures. Careful attention to seemingly minor details of squadron operations is essential to a healthy and progressive squadron. Commanders are urged to study the sections which follow and to apply these principles and procedures to their own squadron whenever possible.

The welfare of a squadron is affected by the personality of its commander, who represents the squadron both nationally and in the district. Great care should be exercised in the choice of this officer. A commander should not be chosen solely on the basis of a pleasing personality. The commander must have the time and motivation to carry out the important duties of the office. Nothing can cripple a squadron so effectively as a commander who does not attend meetings and does not have sufficient time for the many duties. In order to be sure of the qualifications of a person to serve as commander, it is desirable to choose from among those who have served as officers of the squadron and whose effectiveness in administration posts has been proven. In most squadrons, it is a general practice to elect as commander the executive officer of the previous administration. While serving as executive officer, he has had an opportunity to learn and observe the duties and responsibilities of a commander. It is a responsibility of the commander to consult and discuss matters with the executive officer in preparation for becoming a commander.

Each commander is a member of the Governing Board [Refer to 2.1 on page 2-1]. Each commander is also a member of the district council [Refer to 4.63 on page 4-19] and the district conference [Refer to 4.64 on page 4-19].

Before each Governing Board and USPS annual meeting, the commander receives a notice of the meeting, agenda and instructions. In the case of matters that are of particular concern to the squadron, the commander should take appropriate steps to determine the desires of the squadron.

To aid newly-elected commanders in their duties and to facilitate the transaction of business, each commander receives from headquarters a "**commander's kit**", which includes the *Operations Manual*, USPS Bylaws, a *Directory of National, District and Squadron Officers* and other materials, such as sample forms necessary to the discharge of his duties. The kit is accompanied by a letter from the national secretary containing information concerning the various services available from headquarters which can simplify and assist him in many ways. Each commander should see that all elected officers have a copy of the *Operations Manual* [Bylaw 19.3].

The first job of a newly elected commander, or even as a nominee prior to election to the office, is the selection of a capable staff of chairs and assistants for all committees. These members, who will serve as lieutenants, should be very carefully chosen for their interest and abilities. The most successful commanders are those who have surrounded themselves with an

excellent staff which conducts squadron activities as a team effort. A squadron cannot be a “one-man” or “one-woman” show either, and a commander who fails to delegate responsibility to his committee chairs invites dissension, disloyalty and the breakdown of the organization.

Squadron bylaws normally provide that the commander may appoint additional lieutenants to assist in carrying out the work of the squadron. These may be chaplain, flag lieutenant, fleet captain and aides as deemed necessary. They perform such duties as assigned them and serve at the pleasure of the commander.

The **chaplain**, in addition to performing invocations and benedictions at meetings of the squadron, is available for advice and counsel to all squadron officers who may require suggestions as to ceremonies, prayers and other activities in their respective spheres.

The **flag lieutenant** may travel with or for the commander and may assist in handling such details as will expedite the duties of the commander.

The **fleet captain** keeps boat-owning members apprised of information relating to boating and local waterways, such as reiterating in the squadron newsletter particularly noteworthy items from *Notice to Mariners*. In squadrons with waterfront facilities he may serve as dockmaster and he may be tasked with coordinating fleet activities outside the purview of the boating activities committee.

**Aides** assume a multitude of special *ad hoc* assignments as directed by the commander, such as arranging meetings, entertaining distinguished guests and visitors, conducting surveys and collecting information.

The new commander should call a special meeting of all newly elected and appointed officers to outline a general plan of operations for the year ahead and to apprise each officer of his duties.

In a very real sense, the commander must be “the first to arrive and the last to leave.” The effort and energy which the average commander devotes to the squadron are very difficult to measure. District conferences and council meetings are held for the benefit of the squadron; attendance by bridge officers and committee chairs should be encouraged by the squadron commander.

The commander should visit all squadron classes. The commander must give careful attention to arrangements for places to hold business meetings and classes of the squadron. He should hold regular monthly meetings of the executive committee and examine the progress made by each chair. He must keep abreast of the correspondence which comes to him. He must be prepared to report to the membership, as well as at district council meetings, and make an annual report to the district executive officer. The commander should make every effort possible to attend the district council meetings and conferences and the annual and Governing Board meetings of USPS.

The commander should see that squadron members wear their uniform insignia in accordance with USPS policy and, when on their boats, fly USPS ensign properly. He should call attention to improper actions by members and should check on non-members who have not earned the right to fly the USPS ensign.

It is the responsibility of the commander to ensure that the squadron does not become officially and improperly involved in legislative matters, whether local, state or national. To determine under what circumstances squadron intervention is permissible refer to 4.22 on page 4-6.

The commander should follow the progress of the squadron apprentices, if the squadron bylaws provide for them. Too frequently, apprentices who are interested in attending squadron

classes, reach membership age but do not become members. A member of the commander's staff should be responsible for periodic reviews of the apprentices' social and educational activities in the squadron.

Before 15 November of each year the commander must file with the area monitor, for review and submission to the chief commander, recommendations for merit mark awards for work performed by members for the squadron during the calendar year.

All commanders are urged to study Chapter 16 thoroughly and well in advance of the submission deadline. In fact, early in the administration, steps should be taken to organize the systematic collection of data on each member's performance as it occurs, instead of waiting until the year-end and relying on memory.

Each area monitor will give an advisory opinion as to the sufficiency of a member's contribution to USPS.

Following is a basic **timetable** for a commander with various forms available from headquarters:

- A. Attend meetings of the Governing Board. If the commander cannot attend, advises the district commander and make appropriate vote authorization.
- B. Attend the district conferences and council meetings. Certify the names of delegates to the district conference.
- C. Submit suggestions for the agenda in ample time for the district conference.
- D. Send merit mark recommendations to the area monitor in triplicate before 15 November. The previous commander should be consulted in order to consider work done for the squadron early in the calendar year.
- E. Send to USPS Headquarters:
  - 1. Information Report (DB2000 or form OD-2) listing information and appointments not otherwise reported.
  - 2. Complaints requiring disciplinary action.
  - 3. Report on elections of officers no later than 15 February each year, for listing in *Directory of National, District and Squadron Officers* (form OD-2).
  - 4. Certify the names of delegates to each annual , governing board or special meeting of USPS. A copy of such certification is furnished to each delegate and is exchanged at the appropriate meeting for voting credentials. Complete instructions are provided with the forms by the national secretary.
- F. Check on improper uniforms, insignia or improper flying of the USPS ensign.
- G. Send to the designated members of USPS Committee on Rules, proposed amendments to squadron bylaws in accordance with procedures.
- H. Arrange for annual re-examination of local squadron honorary member list. Term of honorary membership is restricted by *USPS Bylaws* to one year. If an honorary membership is to be continued, annual re-election is required.
- I. Appoints a "personal contact committee" to contact those who are delinquent on 1June to make certain that they are not lost as a result of their own carelessness, since a dues payment to national not made by midnight 30 June means loss of membership.
- J. Direct that an annual and complete inventory of all squadron materials and equipment be made.
- K. It is the obligation of the retiring commander to pass on to the successor:
  - a. All files concerning squadron business transacted during his term of office, including national and district correspondence and directives from all departments.
  - b. National and district manuals and merit mark recommendations.
  - c. Unused forms.
  - d. Business correspondence with the members of squadron, district or national. These files belong to the squadron. They can be invaluable in assisting the new commander in the discharge of his duties and to maintain continuity in the squadron's work.
- L. In consultation with the SEO, appointments are made for chairs of the local board for boating, local board for advanced grades, local board for elective courses, teaching aids committee and supplemental programs committee. The names of these appointees are listed on form ED-1, Squadron Appointees, along with other data and forwarded to the district educational officer immediately following the change of watch, but no later than 1 April. Whenever a change is made at any other time during the year a new form, available from headquarters, should also be filed.

# The Squadron



## **NAME AND FORM**

The name of this organization is United States Power Squadrons® (hereinafter referred to as USPS). USPS is composed of separate component squadrons operating as local units grouped into districts. USPS is governed by a Governing Board and is presided over by a chief commander and appropriate assisting officers. USPS is qualified and operated as a non-profit corporation.

## **OBJECTS**

At all levels of organization, the objects of USPS are:

- To associate selectively, as a boating fraternity, congenial persons of good character having a common love and appreciation of yachting;
- To encourage and promote yachting, power and sail, and to provide a practical means to foster fraternal and social relationships among its members interested in yachting;
- To encourage and promote a high amateur standard of skill in the handling and navigation of yachts, power and sail; to encourage and promote the study of the science and art of navigation, seamanship and small boat handling; to develop and promote instructional programs for the benefit of members; and to stimulate members to increase their knowledge of and skill in yachting, through instruction, self education and participation in marine sports activities and competitions;
- To encourage its members to abide by recognized yachting traditions, customs and etiquette and;
- To render and to encourage its members to render, such altruistic, patriotic and other civic service as it may from time to time determine or elect.

## **SQUADRONS OF USPS**

To protect the integrity and non-profit status of USPS, each squadron is required to operate under bylaws approved by the USPS Committee on Rules. Squadron bylaws must also be consistent with the bylaws of the district to which the squadron is assigned. Squadron functions and activities described herein are in accordance with the "model" bylaws for squadrons published by the Committee on Rules. Local squadron bylaws should be consulted as these may differ in some details from those of the "model." Squadrons must at all times comply with all federal, state and local laws.

A squadron of USPS has the same objectives as USPS.

## **SQUADRON MEMBERSHIP**

Admission to membership in USPS is a function of the Governing Board of USPS and is delegated to the squadron subject to the policy and authority of USPS. No membership is valid unless the member meets, and continues to meet, the factual requirements of membership in USPS according to the policies of USPS and the squadron. To qualify for membership in USPS, prospective members must be willing and able to contribute energy and skill to the objectives of USPS and the local squadron, pass the USPS Boating course or authorized equivalent, be at least 18 years of age and be accepted by the squadron.

A squadron may establish associate membership.

## **MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

The squadron membership is the ruling body of the squadron and holds regular, usually monthly, business meetings. The commander chairs the meeting. The executive officer, educational officer, administrative officer, secretary and treasurer assist the commander. All members are encouraged to attend.

Squadrons hold annual membership meetings, typically during the first quarter, at which the election of squadron officers and others, as provided for in the squadron's bylaws, is conducted. The annual meeting and regular membership meetings have the responsibility of controlling the policy and finances of the squadron. This includes consideration and action in regard to dues, assessments, reports and recommendations to the Executive Committee. Appropriate recommendations are to be forwarded to the district and ultimately to the Governing Board. Membership meetings may establish committees and make appointments thereto or delegate the responsibility to the commander or the Executive Committee. The membership has the authority to amend or adopt squadron bylaws (subject to approval of the Committee on Rules acting with the authority of the Governing Board) and conduct such other business as may be appropriate.

## **ELECTED OFFICERS**

The elected officers of a squadron are the commander, executive officer, educational officer, administrative officer, secretary and treasurer; the commander is the ranking officer. The offices of secretary and treasurer may be filled by the same person if permitted by the squadron's bylaws. The bylaws may also provide for the election of an assistant secretary, treasurer, and educational officer. The nomination of SEO and Asst SEO must be approved by the district educational officer as delegated by the national educational officer.

In addition, the membership elects the number of active squadron member's provided for in its bylaws, to serve on the Executive Committee.

## **GENERAL COMMITTEES**

General Committees are elected at the annual meeting as prescribed by the squadron's bylaws. They are responsible only to the squadron membership and are:

- **Auditing Committee:** Audits the treasurer's books at least annually and makes a report to the membership.
- **Nominating Committee:** Selects a slate of candidates for elective offices and committees and any other elective positions which may exist.

- **Rules Committee:** Guards the adherence to USPS bylaws, USPS policy, district bylaws and squadron bylaws. Keeps squadron bylaws up to date and in conformity with current policy of USPS and the law.

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee (ExCom) consists of the bridge officers (Cdr, XO, SEO, AO, Sec and Treas), and three or more members-at-large elected by the membership as provided by squadron bylaws. The immediate past commander may be a member of the committee if so provided in the bylaws.

The Executive Committee usually meets monthly. It has general charge of the policy, management and the finances of the squadron. It has custody of all squadron property, including money. All bills contracted by the squadron that were not previously covered in the budget must first be approved by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee also:

- May approve applications to membership and approves recommendations for associate and honorary membership as well as transfers into the squadron.
- Approves the times and places for educational programs.
- Carries on the normal business of the squadron between membership meetings.
- Establishes committees and makes appointments as may seem advisable in the best interests of the squadron.
- With the advice of the treasurer, designates depositories insured by an agency of the United States government in which the squadron's funds will be kept. Approves the budget for submission to the members.
- Invites the law officer to its meetings when legal expertise is desirable. The law officer has the privilege of the floor at such meetings, but if not an elected member of the committee, is not entitled to vote.
- Exercises the authority granted to it by the squadron's bylaws to promote the best interests of the squadron and USPS.
- Institutes disciplinary proceedings as outlined in squadron or USPS *Bylaws*.

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

The following standing committees are appointed by the commander and approved by the Executive Committee:

- **Finance Committee:** Works in close cooperation with the treasurer, prepares the budget, and, in general, plans the overall financial affairs of the squadron. Is responsible for the presentation annually of a budget to the Executive Committee for approval prior to its presentation to the active members for approval.
- **Housing Committee:** Assists the commander in obtaining rooms and facilities for meetings, educational programs and other squadron activities. If the squadron owns or leases the premises, the committee may be responsible for maintaining the premises. Some or all of these responsibilities may be assigned to the Meetings and Programs Committee
- **Law Officer:** Should be a member of the bar of the state wherein the squadron is located. Sees to proper compliance with state laws, squadron disciplinary

proceedings, etc.

- **Merit Mark Committee:** Compiles and correlates data to assist the Commander in making merit mark recommendations.
- **Personnel Committee:** Maintains an inventory of each member's skills and makes said information available in order to fill staff positions, committee members, chairs, etc. with qualified persons.
- **Property Officer:** Responsible for all squadron property which is not procured for resale to Members.
- **Supply Officer:** Has charge of the procurement and sale to qualified members of ensigns, insignia and other paraphernalia approved by USPS; responsible to the treasurer for all funds received from said sales.

## DUTIES OF OFFICERS

**The commander (Cdr)** is the ranking officer of the squadron and is responsible to the membership, the district to which the squadron is assigned, and to the national organization for all aspects of the squadron's functions. The commander presides at all squadron general membership meetings and Executive Committee meetings. The commander is, *ex officio*, a member of all committees, except the general committees which are the Nominating, Rules, and Auditing Committees. At the expiration of the commander's term of office, all records, reports, communications and documents pertaining to the affairs of the squadron must be turned over to the incoming commander.

The commander is a member of the Governing Board, the District Council, the District Conference and the District Executive Department. Thus the commander has direct access to the district and national organizations. One of the commander's prime functions is to provide liaison between the squadron membership and the district and national organizations. A commander is encouraged to attend as many district and national meetings as possible. The commander must assure the timely selection or designation of delegates and/or proxies as appropriate to provide proper and full representation of the squadron at district and national meetings.

The duties and responsibilities of a commander are many and varied and are discussed in Chapter 11 of the *Operations Manual*. In essence, the commander is responsible for the growth and vitality of the squadron, thus making this position one of the most important in USPS.

**The executive officer (XO)** is in charge of external functions and assists the commander in the discharge of the duties of commander, and, in the commander's absence or short term incapacity, acts as commander. Committees reporting to the XO are: Boat Show, Cooperative Charting, Legislative, Liaison, Public Relations, Radio Technical and Safety. The XO is, *ex officio*, a member of each committee. All records, reports, documents and communications pertaining to the affairs of the squadron must be turned over to the incoming XO at the expiration of the term of office.

**The educational officer (SEO)** assists the commander and manages the squadron's Educational Department. The **SEO** performs such duties as prescribed by USPS. The SEO is a member of the district Educational Department and serves as liaison for information from the district and national levels of organization. All records, reports, communications and

documents pertaining to the affairs of the squadron must be turned over to the incoming SEO at the expiration of the term of office.

**The administrative officer (AO)**, in charge of internal functions, assists the commander in the discharge of the commanders duties and, in the temporary absence or incapacity of the executive officer, acts as the XO. Committees reporting to the AO are: Membership, Member Involvement, Operations Training, Boating Activities, Entertainment and Meetings and Programs. The AO is, *ex officio*, a member of these committees. All records, reports, communications and documents pertaining to the affairs of the squadron must be turned over to the incoming administrative officer at the expiration of the AO's term of office.

**The secretary** heads the Secretary's Department and is responsible for the maintenance of all squadron correspondence, minutes, etc., and for sending out calls for meetings. The secretary is responsible for keeping official squadron records and member data and supervises the historian, Roster Committee, Squadron Publication, THE ENSIGN correspondent and any other committees assigned by virtue of squadron bylaws.

**The treasurer** is responsible for collecting, holding, and disbursing squadron funds, keeping appropriate records, making required reports, preparing tax forms and returns (as directed by the national treasurer) and advising district and national of personnel to be included under the USPS "blanket" bond. Regardless of who actually collects money, the treasurer is responsible for seeing that all funds are property accounted for. The Finance Committee works in close cooperation with the treasurer in financial planning and preparation of the budget. The supply officer and the property officer report to the treasurer.

### **AIDES**

The commander may appoint a chaplain, a flag lieutenant, chairs of various appointive committees of the squadron, and other lieutenants and/or aides as necessary to perform duties the commander or the Executive Committee may assign.

# APPENDIX A

Merit Mark Information

Voting Information

Directory Information

Membership Procedures Information

Squadron Educational Department

## MERIT MARK PROGRAM

Each summer (usually early August) headquarters will send you a packet of information to assist you in preparing your merit mark recommendations which will include:

- A list of all active and family members of your squadron including certificate numbers and the total number of merit marks earned
- A list of area monitors and their addresses
- An order form for the merit mark software or you may download from the USPS Web Site

You should plan to submit your completed recommendations to your area monitor by 15 November.

After reviewing your recommendations, your area monitor should send you a report.

Headquarters will process the awards and mail directly to each member. Each new senior member (someone who has earned five merit marks) will also have a senior member certificate enclosed with the merit mark award.



# UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS®

## SAIL AND POWER BOATING

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2 May

Dear Commander:

Headquarters records indicate that the member or members of your squadron named on the enclosed computer printout have earned 25 merit marks through 2017. As you know, the award of a 25th merit mark for 2018 will make that individual a life member.

Life membership in United States Power Squadrons is a significant achievement. For this reason, and to avoid possible disappointment at the end of the year, I urge you to make a personal effort to assure active participation in squadron affairs by the named individual(s) to an extent which will clearly justify your recommendation for a 2018 merit mark.

I also request that in preparing your write-up to the area monitor you specifically mention that this recommendation is for the 25th merit mark.

Because of the long lead time needed for preparation of life member plaques, I will send a letter to each of the potential new life members in August, requesting personal information in regards to life member certificates and special membership cards, and concerning plans to attend the February 2019 Annual Meeting for presentation of the certificate. The life member plaques and card will be shipped to your district commander for presentation at your district's 2019 spring conference.

I ask your support in making the 2018 life member program work.

Cordially,

Gary Cheney, SN  
Chief Commander

Enclosure



# UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS®

## SAIL AND POWER BOATING

20 September

Dear Squadron Commander:

A merit mark is the only pay we get for the contributions we make to USPS. Of all the awards conveyed by the organization, the merit mark is the most prestigious. It may be only a small gold bar to adorn our uniform but its significance is greatly coveted. Indeed, five merit marks bring senior member status and 25 merit marks accord a member life membership, exempt from national dues.

A merit mark is awarded to a member by the Chief Commander based upon a recommendation by the member's squadron commander. *You, as that commander, have the responsibility of assuring that every one of your members who has contributed substantially to your squadron's mission is rewarded with a merit mark.*

This imposes a great obligation on you to decide impartially who among your members has truly earned this award. You must be sure that each recommendation is factual and worthy.

That process begins in October as you prepare to send your merit mark recommendations. It's done electronically through a proprietary computer program called "DB2000". The mechanics of that process are contained in a separate article, "Working with DB2000", accompanying this letter.

By 15 November, your first set of recommendations must be submitted. This could be your only submission, but if efforts by other members come to light at a later date one or more "supplemental" submissions may be made. There can be only one "original" submission; all subsequent new recommendations must be "supplemental".

Your recommendations are not sent directly to the Chief but are routed by DB2000 through a reviewer known as an "area monitor" (see the list on the accompanying disk). He or she evaluates each recommendation to ensure that they rise to a level worthy of a merit mark based on criteria outlined in the appendix to this letter. A recommendation which falls short will be sent back to you with an explanation of its deficiency, with the hope that inclusion of additional information will allow it to be returned as a "resubmission".

All recommendations favorably reviewed by the area monitor are passed to the Chief Commander for his final review. In most cases, a merit mark will be awarded. Except for a first merit mark, which is mailed, a certificate is sent to a member as a PDF attachment to a congratulatory e-mail from the Chief.

You should make yourself aware of any members who, if awarded a merit mark this year, will attain life membership in USPS (25 merit marks) or become a member emeritus of the Governing Board (50 merit marks). These members should be encouraged to attend the ensuing national annual meeting, where they will be personally recognized by the Chief Commander and presented a plaque at a special ceremony. A list of those eligible are available at <https://www.usps.org/dues/reports/mms.php> then log on to view the list. Although it is your responsibility to make merit mark recommendations, many commanders

find it helpful to appoint a merit mark chairman to compile data on members' activities throughout the year and compose the actual DB2000 submission for your okay. *You should share this letter with that individual.* It's most helpful if this chairman remain in that position for multiple years.

Ideally, your predecessor will have given you the passcode you'll need for accessing the merit mark system on DB2000. If you don't have it, you can obtain it (or change it) through this link: <https://www.usps.org/tools/cpw/USPSCPW.htm>. The passcode should be disclosed to your merit mark chairman to facilitate his/her formulating your recommendations.

You must not recommend yourself; that's the prerogative of your District Commander. Furthermore, you, yourself, are not eligible for a merit mark until you have submitted an original recommendation for your own members.

Your original submission and any supplemental submissions or resubmissions are for work performed over the period of the current calendar year, although supplemental recommendations may be submitted through 31 March of the ensuing year. If it becomes known that a member's contributions for up to three years earlier were not suitably recognized at the time, a separate "retroactive" submission may be made. That's covered in the accompanying article on working with DB2000.

Finally, it's imperative that you review the provisions of Operations Manual chapter 16, Merit Marks, accessible on the national website at <http://www.usps.org/images/secretary/opman/opsman16.pdf>, except that any reference to submissions by paper or e-mail should be ignored. Only DB2000 is used today.

The concept of merit marks was conceived by Chief Commander A. B. Bennett, who presented the first awards in 1920. His vision has proved to be one of the most revered customs of USPS. It's up to you to preserve and perpetuate this longstanding tradition.

## VOTING AT MEETINGS

**Prior to each Annual Meeting and Governing Board, you will receive a form HQ-117\*, Certificate of Delegates,\* from headquarters. The number of delegates your squadron is entitled to is written in the upper right corner. Please follow the accompanying instructions so that your squadron can have its "voice" in USPS.**

**Prior to each Governing Board Meeting, you will receive a Designation of Alternate Voter\* form. Please follow the instructions on the form so that your squadron can have its "voice" in USPS.**

**Some important points:**

- **As a squadron commander, you are automatically a voting member of the Governing Board,**
- **A squadron commander may NOT also be a delegate,**
- **Members of the Governing Board may NOT be delegates,**

**\*Sample Enclosed**



# UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS®

SAIL AND POWER BOATING

P.O. Box 30423, Raleigh, North Carolina 27622  
1504 Blue Ridge Road, Raleigh, North Carolina 27607  
888-367-8777 • [www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org)

13 November

Dear Squadron Commander:

The USPS Annual Meeting and two short meetings of the Governing Board will be held at the Rosen Centre, Orlando, Florida. As a squadron commander you are a member of the Governing Board. You or an alternate you designate are entitled to act and vote at both meetings of the Governing Board and at the annual meeting. If you are unable to attend these meetings personally, you may use the *gray* alternate voter designation form enclosed to designate another active member of your squadron who will attend, or your district commander, to act in your place. Please note that the member you designate to act on your behalf may not also be named as a squadron delegate to the annual meeting. To designate an alternate, simply complete the *gray* form and give it to the person you have designated. Your alternate must present the form to the voter registration desk at the hotel to obtain voting credentials.

Your squadron is also entitled to one delegate to the annual meeting for each 100 active members or fraction thereof as of 75 days before the meeting. Only active members of your squadron may be delegates and they must be present at the meeting in order to vote. No member of the Governing Board may act as a delegate, nor may your alternate be a delegate. Members of the Governing Board include the C/C, V/C's, R/C's, D/C's, DEO's, squadron commanders, general members of the Governing Board, members of the Governing Board emeritus, members of the national Committee on Rules and Committee on Nominations, P/C/C's and most P/V/C's.

If your squadron will have delegates attending the, complete the *buff*-colored form, HQ-117. Give one copy of the form to each delegate and mail one copy to USPS Headquarters. Each delegate should present his or her copy at the voter registration desk at the hotel along with proper identification to receive voting credentials.

New Commander Kit  
2019/2020



United States Power Squadrons®

P.O. Box 30423  
Raleigh, NC 27622

Phone: (888) 367-8777

Fax: (888) 304-0813

**CERTIFICATE OF DELEGATES  
USPS ANNUAL MEETING**

I, the undersigned commander of \_\_\_\_\_ Power Squadron, District \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby certify that the following members, as provided in the bylaws of said squadron, have been duly appointed delegates to the Annual Meeting of United States Power Squadrons to be held on

Annual Meeting

(Please print or type)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Squadron Commander)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Power Squadron, District \_\_\_\_\_

Give one copy of this form to each delegate and mail one copy to:

United States Power Squadrons  
National Secretary  
P.O. Box 30423  
Raleigh, NC 27622

so as to arrive no later than 1 December.



## DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS

Each December you need to update Form OD-2 for the national directory. This information is critical — and not only for the directory. You can submit the OD online at <http://www.usps.org/php/hqforms/>.

The information is also used to build specialized mailing lists. For example, a dues collection package must be sent to all squadron treasurers. Headquarters must have the information to prepare that mailing.

The information is also added to a computer data base of squadron job history. Headquarters can maintain good "Nominating Committee" information when the OD-2 forms are properly and timely submitted.

**\*Sample enclosed**



# UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS®

P.O. Box 30423 - Raleigh, NC 27622 - Fax (888) 304-0813  
Listing of Squadron Officers and Committee Chairmen for year of \_\_\_\_\_

DISTRICT # \_\_\_\_\_ SQUADRON \_\_\_\_\_ ACCT # \_\_\_\_\_

Bridge Officers Will be Installed (Date): \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION AND CERTIFICATE NUMBER	NAME AND GRADE
31000 - Commander Cert #	
32000 - Executive Officer Cert #	
33000 - Educational Officer Cert #	
34000 - Administrative Officer Cert #	
35000 - Secretary Cert #	
36000 - Treasurer Cert #	
30300 - Law Officer Cert #	
32100 - Liaison Officer Cert #	
32200 - Cooperative Charting Chairman Cert #	
32300 - Ch-Safety Cert #	
32500 - Squadron PRO Cert #	
32700 - Ch/Vessel Safety Check Cert #	
32800 - Ch/New Squadron Development Cert #	
33001 - Assistant Educational Officer Cert #	
34100 - Ch/Boating Activities Cert #	

POSITION AND CERTIFICATE NUMBER	NAME AND GRADE
34500 - Ch/Membership Committee Cert #	
34600 -Ch/Operations Training Cert #	
34800 - Ch/Member Involvement Committee	
34900 - Ch/Member Benefits Cert #	
35300 - Ch/Squadron Newsletter Committee	
35500 - Ch/Ship Store Cert #	

Page 2 of 2

Note: Please insure all certificate numbers are correct. Use the enclosed envelope to mail Form OD-2 to Headquarters before 1 February .

Date completed \_\_\_\_\_  
OD-2

\_\_\_\_\_  
Squadron Commander's Signature

2010

## **PROCEDURE FOR COMPLETING APPLICATION (MemCom 1)**

1. **PRINT ALL INFORMATION EXCEPT WHERE A SIGNATURE IS REQUIRED.**
2. **The application will be filled out by the active, additional active and family member applicants. Only ONE application per household is necessary.**
3. **The applicant for active membership will complete and sign the "Applicant" section.**
4. **The additional active applicant or adult family applicant will complete and sign the "Additional Applicant" section of the SAME application.**
5. **Instruct the applicant to specifically mark the question inquiring about previous affiliation with USPS. The form asks for prior certificate number, if the applicant cannot remember, state the type of membership and approximate year of joining. Applicant should fill out who most influenced him to join our organization.**
6. **The active member applicant and additional active member applicant must be endorsed by an active USPS member. This name is to be signed at the bottom of the application. The line under the endorsement is to be marked as to whether the squadron executive committee approved the applicant. The date the applicant passed the exam needs to be noted.**
7. **A squadron executive committee member or a representative of this committee should review the application, and upon completion of all qualifications and the receipt of dues is to sign the application and note the date of this signature. **THIS DATE WILL BE THE OFFICIAL DATE OF MEMBERSHIP.****
8. **The completed and signed application is to be returned to the Membership Chair and /or any bridge officer.**
9. **Any application that is not signed by a squadron executive committee member or representative will not be accepted by USPS Headquarters.**
10. **Upon completion and collection of money, the application (3 part form) is to be distributed as follows:**
  - top copy - to Headquarters (if you fax the application, DO NOT also send to Headquarters.)
  - second copy - to Squadron Secretary/Treasurer (with a check.)
  - third copy to the Squadron Membership Committee.

## SQUADRON EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT

The forms ED 1\* and ED 80\* must be submitted online at <http://usps.org/national/eddept/files/ed1.pdf> and <http://usps.org/national/eddept/files/ed80.pdf>.

These forms should be used to report the staffing of your critical educational department offices.

# **APPENDIX B**

## **Miscellaneous Information**

- ..Annual Squadron History Request**
- ..Income Tax Consequences of Expenses Incurred**
- ..IRS Form 990 and 990T Letter**
- ..Memo**
  - City and State Sales Tax Vendor Licensing**
- ..New Member Letter**
- ..New Member Pledge**
- ..Parliamentary Procedures**
- ..Policies for Squadron/District Ownership or Leasing of Real Property**
- ..Law Committee - Annual Legal Checklist**
- ..Squadron Counselor Program**
- ..Timetable - 2016 Dues**
- ..Your Educational Opportunities**



## NATIONAL HISTORIAN

### **ANNUAL SQUADRON HISTORY REQUEST**

**Congratulations to you as a new squadron commander. When you finish your term of duty, the Historian's Committee needs a concise record of what your squadron did during your term of office.**

**At the beginning of your term, you should appoint a historian to record all squadron events on a current basis. Events such as sponsoring a district meeting, winning an award, having an outstanding rendezvous, exceptional growths in membership or any other outstanding accomplishment are suggested. The historian should not wait until Change of Watch to try to reconstruct the whole year's events from memory. (As commander, you should keep a page in your notebook with records of events you consider important, just in case the historian fails.)**

**Before Change of Watch, the squadron historian should present to the commander a full report of the year's recorded events, with copies for the district historian, so that the district historian can assemble these reports from each squadron in the district and forward these with a summary to the National Historian's Committee for preservation. This form can be downloaded from the USPS Web site at <http://www.usps.org/national/historian/historianform.htm>.**

**It is sometimes difficult for the outgoing officers to pass their records and files on to the incoming officers. The importance of having your district's history in an easily accessible location should be obvious, as it is not unusual for local records to be misplaced, lost, or accidentally destroyed.**

**Your help will be greatly appreciated.**

**NATIONAL HISTORIAN'S COMMITTEE**

## **INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES OF EXPENSES INCURRED ON BEHALF OF CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS**

A person who performs services or incurs expenses on behalf of a charitable organization which qualifies as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code may deduct certain expenses as charitable contributions on his Federal income tax return. One must itemize his deductions to take advantage of these contributions.

Although the value of the services themselves are not deductible, expenses which are incident to the performance of such services and are not reimbursed, may be deducted. Acting in an official capacity for a charitable organization such as an officer or delegate, qualifies as rendering services to the organization.

The following are examples of types of expenses which would be deductible if incurred while rendering charitable services. If one uses his car or other transportation, the out-of-pocket expenses are deductible. In connection with the use of his car, a person may either take a standard allowance of \$.14 per mile plus parking fees and tolls or may deduct the actual operating and maintenance costs, such as gas and oil, directly attributable to the charitable services. In neither case may items such as depreciation or premiums for automobile insurance be deducted as charitable contributions.

Travel expenses, such as reasonable expenditures for meals and lodging, are deductible but only if a person is away from home overnight on behalf of the charity. Thus, the cost of meals eaten while performing services does not qualify for deductions if the person is not away from his residence overnight. If an individual purchases uniforms which are worn while performing services for the organization, but which have no general usefulness for other purposes, the cost of the uniforms is deductible.

Entertainment expenses incurred directly on behalf of the charitable organization, such as hosting a luncheon meeting of the organization's officers, are deductible. However, the portion attributable to the individual's own consumption of food and drink would be considered personal expenses and nondeductible. Other miscellaneous expenses, e.g. postage, telephone bills, supplies, incurred for the charity are also deductible. Of course, none of the above expenses may be taken as charitable contribution deductions if the taxpayer is reimbursed for his cash outlays.

Dues paid to a charitable organization are deductible only to the extent they exceed the value of benefits received. If no special benefits or privileges are bestowed upon members of the organization for payment of dues, the entire amount would be deductible.

The items discussed here are not an exhaustive list of expenses which may be deducted as charitable contributions, but they are representative of the types of costs which may be considered incident to the performance of services to a charitable organization.

In addition to this type of deduction, a deduction may be taken for direct contributions of money or property to a charitable organization. When property is contributed, a person generally is entitled to deduct the full fair market value of the property which includes any appreciation in value of the property which has occurred while the person has owned the property. But if the person would have had ordinary income or short-term capital gain if he had sold the property instead of contributed to it, then the amount of the charitable contribution deduction allowed must be reduced by the amount that would have been ordinary income or short-term capital gain.

Other limitations on the deduction allowed may apply if a person wishes to make a bargain sale to a charity, to contribute only a partial interest in property or to contribute tangible personal property to an organization for a use which is unrelated to the organization's tax-exempt function. For special situations such as these an individual should check the Internal Revenue Code provisions thoroughly before proceeding with his contribution.



## United States Power Squadrons®

P.O. Box 30423

Phone (888) 367-8777

Raleigh, NC 27622

Fax (888) 304-0813

22 June

TO: All Treasurers – District, Squadron, and Auxiliary

SUBJECT: IRS Form 990 - Return of Organizations Exempt from Income Tax

USPS is exempt from Federal Income Tax as a 501(c)(3) organization. However, USPS, districts, squadrons and auxiliaries are required to file with the IRS regardless of whether they receive a form or reminder from the IRS or not. You are required to file IRS Form 990 or 990-EZ if gross receipts each year exceed \$50,000. If annual gross receipts are \$50,000 or less, you may file electronically the abbreviated IRS Form 990-N, also known as the e-Postcard. Please refer to at [www.irs.gov/eo](http://www.irs.gov/eo), under Annual Reporting and Filing to determine which form you should file. Enclosed is a document explaining the definitions of gross receipts.

The IRS has begun revoking tax exempt status for non-conforming entities. Information on revocation of tax exempt status is also available at [www.irs.gov/eo](http://www.irs.gov/eo).

IRS Form 990T is used to report income from an unrelated business activity. Unrelated business activity is broadly defined as any activity regularly carried on and not substantially related to the purposes of USPS. It does include, among other things, revenues from advertising space.

USPS units that solicit advertising space in their newsletters published on a regular basis are required to file IRS Form 990T and perhaps pay income tax on such income if the total advertising income is more than \$1,000. In determining whether there is taxable income, directly related expenses are deductible against the advertising income. Even if there is no taxable income from an unrelated activity, you must file IRS Form 990T if the receipts are \$1,000 or more.

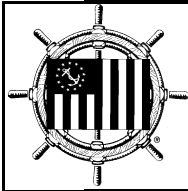
Please complete the enclosed TR-1 form and return it in the envelope to the National Treasurer, c/o USPS Headquarters by **1 August 2017**. You must report your group's gross receipts, the IRS form that you were required to file, and lobbying expenditures. Squadron expenditures should not include district dues collected and paid to the district or National dues collected and paid to headquarters. Filing the TR-1 form with USPS Headquarters does not preclude any IRS requirements.

If you are required to file an IRS Form 990 or 990-EZ, you must include the Group Exemption Number assigned to USPS by the IRS. This number is 1041.

If you have questions, you may contact: Ruth Witztum, JN, National Law Committee, 212-308-8505, x 1227 (office); 718-788-5882 (home); 347-834-4679 (cell); [rwitztum@akabas-sproule.com](mailto:rwitztum@akabas-sproule.com)

Sincerely,

V/C Lee Popham, JN  
National Treasurer



United States Power Squadrons®  
 P.O. Box 30423  
 Raleigh, NC 27622

You must return this form to National Headquarters by 1 August

25 June

TO: National Treasurer

Dear Sir:

We have filed the checked form below for our fiscal year ending \_\_\_\_\_  
 Month/Day/Year

- IRS Form 990 (our gross receipts were greater than \$50,000)
- IRS Form 990EZ (our gross receipts were greater than \$50,000)
- IRS Form 990-N or "e-postcard" (our gross receipts were \$50,000 or less)

Total expenditures for the most recent fiscal year ended are: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of any lobbying expenditures included in total expenses for the most recent fiscal year ended are: \_\_\_\_\_

The following information is accurate and correct:

District/Squadron Treasurer

District # \_\_\_\_\_, Squad # \_\_\_\_\_, Power Squadron

Squadron Federal ID#

- Our squadron is incorporated
- Our squadron is not incorporated

Squadron Officer Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

You must return this form to National Headquarters by 1 August

TR-1

## DEFINITION OF GROSS RECEIPTS

### SQUADRONS

#### Includes:

1. Sales of educational material.
2. Squadron dues not including district assessments or national dues.
3. Net amounts (i.e. after expenses) received from dinners, dances, etc., if a member, not the squadron, collects money and pays the bills.
4. Gross receipts (i.e. before expenses) from dinners, dances, etc., if money is paid to the squadron and the squadron pays the bills.
5. Investment income.
6. Advertising revenue for ads in rosters and newsletters.
7. Gross receipts from fund raisers.
8. Sales of Ship's Store merchandise.
9. Any other monies raised for use in attaining or accomplishing USPS goals.

#### Does Not Include:

1. National dues which are collected by the squadron treasurer and remitted intact to the national treasurer.
2. Assessments collected by the squadron treasurer and remitted intact to the district treasurer.

### DISTRICTS

#### Includes:

1. Sales of educational material.
2. Assessments collected by the squadron treasurers and remitted intact to the district treasurer
3. Net amounts (i.e. after expenses) received from dinners, dances, etc., if a member, not the district, collects money and pays the bills.
4. Gross receipts (i.e. before expenses) from dinners, dances, etc., if money is paid to the district and the district pays the bills.
5. Investment income.
6. Advertising revenue for ads in rosters and newsletters.
7. Gross receipts from fund raisers.
8. Sales of Ship's Store merchandise
9. Any other monies raised for use in attaining or accomplishing USPS goals.

## Roadmap to Annual Squadron and District Income Tax Questions

### Filing Requirements - Common Questions

#### Unrelated Business Income Tax - Public Disclosure Requirements

##### *Filing Requirements*

- There is no Form 990 or Form 990-EZ filing requirement unless gross receipts, including unrelated business income, are more than \$25,000. Gross receipts are the total amount received from all sources, except annual National or District dues collected and not retained by the Squadron, during the annual accounting period without subtracting any costs or expenses.
- File Form 990-EZ (short Form) if gross receipts from related and unrelated income are more than \$25,000 but less than \$100,000 and if gross assets at the end of the year are less than \$250,000.
- File Form 990 if your gross receipts, including unrelated income are more than \$25,000 and if gross assets at the end of the year are \$250,000 or more.
- If a squadron or district received a “preaddressed form from the IRS,” and the squadron or district is not required to file, check the box in the heading of the Form 990-EZ or Form 990 to indicate that the organizations’s gross receipts are normally not more than \$25,000, sign the return, and send it to the Internal Revenue Service Center in Ogden, Utah.
- File Form 990-T if gross income from an unrelated trade or business is \$1,000 or more. “Gross income” is gross receipts minus the cost of goods sold. “Unrelated trade or business income” is the gross income derived from any trade or business that is regularly carried on, and not substantially related to, the organization’s exempt purpose or functions. Filing Form 990-T with taxable income will require the issuance of a check for the appropriate tax.
- Filing Form 990-EZ or Form 990 must contain the “Group Exemption Number” assigned to USPS by the Internal Revenue Service. That number is “1041”. It goes in the related header block on page 1 of Form 990-EZ or Form 990.
- Forms 990-EZ, 990, and 990-T must be filed by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month after the end of the tax year unless an extension to file is granted.
- Forms 990-EZ, 990, and 990-T should be mailed by CERTIFIED MAIL, RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED, on or before the filing due date, including extensions, to the following address:

Internal Revenue Service Center, Ogden, Utah 84201-0027

- While it is not necessary to file by certified mail, return receipt requested, it is good practice to file by this method to show proof of delivery.

## **Audit Approach**

- 1. Members of an audit committee do not need to be experienced auditors, although it would be helpful if they were.**
- 2. Devise a written plan to be used by the committee now and in the future. The plan should provide for flexibility.**
- 3. If you use a professional auditor as well, determine what he would like done by your committee so as to save fees.**
- 4. Prepare a bank reconciliation agreeing book balance with checkbook balance.**
- 5. Select a list of disbursements, perhaps 5% of checks issued. Compare check with supporting documents (invoice, reimbursement request) for amount, approvals, receipt of merchandise, and endorsements.**
- 6. Check mathematic accuracy of a list of disbursements and account reasonableness.**
- 7. Test cash received to deposits on the bank statement. Consider correctness of classifications (dues, meeting income, advertising, etc.).**
- 8. Test mathematical accuracy of the receipts ledger.**
- 9. Compare treasurer's report to books of entry. Consider reasonableness of the report.**
- 10. Make a report to the membership stating work done and conclusions reached.**



## National Treasurer

21 April

**TO: District, Squadron and Auxiliary Treasurers**

**SUBJECT: Form 990T - Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return**

**Form 990T is used to report income from an unrelated business activity. Unrelated business activity is broadly defined as any activity regularly carried on and not substantially related to the purposes of USPS. It does include, among other things, revenues from advertising space.**

**USPS units who solicit advertising space in their newsletters published on a regular basis are required to file Form 990T and perhaps pay income tax on such income if the total income from such advertisements is more than \$1,000. In determining whether there is taxable income, directly related expenses are deductible against the advertising income.**

**Even if there is no taxable income from this unrelated activity, you must file 990T if the receipts are \$1,000 or more.**

**You may be required to file Form 990T even though you are not required to file Form 990.**

**For information, contact R/C Gregory E. Korstad, AP at 763-553-6111 or 952- 896-3292 .**



## National Law Officer

### MEMORANDUM

**RE: Request for Description of Responsibility in Regards to Sales Tax and License Laws**

**All districts and squadrons should re-examine their status with local municipal and state laws concerning private organizations/non-profit companies and the requirements for payment of Sales Tax and License Taxes. Your district law officer or squadron law officer should be of assistance. Concern has developed over taxation of sales to students of the public boating course and members of the public who purchase the Boating Video Course. The various states and local governments have different laws and it could be costly for a district or squadron to learn of a tax obligation after the completion of a public boating course and all students have completed the course. The national law officer will be available if your district or squadron does not have a law officer.**



## National Administrative Officer

**TO: New Squadron Commanders**

**SUBJECT: New Member Letter**

**Dear Commander:**

The Rochester Power Squadron has a letter which is sent by their commander to each new member. The Board of Directors believes that this is an excellent way to reach out to new members and make them feel part of the USPS family.

A copy of the letter is enclosed. I recommend you adapt it to your own squadron and give it a trial if you are not already using a similar approach.

The members of the Board of Directors welcome any comments on your experience with this welcoming letter:

**Mr. John Q. Boatman  
Rochester Power Squadron  
123 Main Street  
Rochester, NY 01234**

**Dear John:**

It is a sincere pleasure, indeed, for me to welcome you to Rochester Power Squadron.

I'd like you to know that we are all committed to help you attain the objectives you formed when you joined the squadron, whether they were to continue your boating education, participate in squadron activities or enjoy the camaraderie of its members.

Meeting other members is important and is accomplished easily by attending our monthly general meetings and social events. Dates, times, and locations are published in our monthly publications, *The Chart* and *The Flyer*.

I highly recommend and encourage you to enroll in our Operations Training Program, which is designed specifically to acquaint you with the squadron's organization, tradition, and constitution. You will, I'm sure, find the course invaluable as you continue your association with the squadron.

And be sure to take advantage of our Advanced Grade and Elective Courses which offer a wide range of subjects to strengthen your knowledge and sharpen your boating skills.

I feel privileged to be serving with you this year as commander, and ask that you call me if I can assist you in any way to make your squadron fellowship

and experience a more rewarding and pleasant one. I can be reached most any time at (phone number.)

Sincerely yours,

## **THE USPS<sup>®</sup> PLEDGE**

**"I do solemnly pledge to:**

**Abide by the Bylaws of the United States**

**Power Squadrons<sup>®</sup>;**

**Promote high standards of navigation and seamanship;**

**Maintain my boat and operate it legally;**

**Render assistance whenever possible;**

**And conduct myself in a manner that will add prestige, honor, and respect to the United States Power Squadrons."**

## PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Parliamentary law was the name given originally to the rules and customs for conducting business in the English Parliament and the procedure was developed through a continuing process of decisions and precedents. The general principals of Parliamentary Law are referred to as "Rules of Order."

**ORDER OF PRECEDENCE.** Within USPS, Rules of Order are recognized according to the ranking, or the order of precedence, of their source, as follows:

**USPS Bylaws - District Bylaws - Squadron Bylaws.**

Consult the latest approved District or Squadron Bylaws to resolve questions regarding a particular provision. The final authority in USPS procedure is the Chairman of the Committee on Rules, or his designee.

**MOTIONS AND THEIR USAGE.** The successful presiding officer must understand the categories of motions, their precedence, their purposes and the basic rules which govern their correct handling. Robert's Rules of Order is a volume of over 500 pages and most of them deal with the subject of motions. The table on the reverse is a one-page abbreviated summary of motions encountered most often in USPS meetings. Familiarity with this table is recommended as an initial study. Sufficient familiarity with "Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance" (below) to look up rules quickly should be the minimum study.

**REFERENCES.** The most widely used authority on parliamentary procedure is Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

**Scott, Foresman and Company  
1900 East Lake Avenue  
Glenview, IL 60025**

An authoritative reference which enables the chairman to used "Robert's Rules" effectively without committing the rules to memory is "Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance" by O. Garfield Jones.

**Hawthorn/Dutton  
2 Park Avenue  
New York, NY 10016**

A variety of publications and tables are available which provide simplified summaries of parliamentary procedure. Most, including the above cited authorities, are available in most bookstores. Another example is an 8 ½" x 11" plastic "Quick Chart", available from Data-Guide, Inc.  
154-01 Barclay Avenue  
Flushing, New York 11355

A "slide rule" of motions and procedures is used by the "Toastmasters" organization.

**SELECTED MOTIONS AND THEIR USAGE**

<b>Motions by Category and Precedence</b>	<b>Purpose Of Motion</b>	<b>May Interrupt Speaker</b>	<b>Needs Second</b>	<b>Amendable</b>	<b>Debatable</b>	<b>Required Vote</b>
<b>Privileged Motions: Arise from questions of meeting arrangements, comfort, member's rights; requires immediate attention.</b>						
1. Fix next meeting	Close meeting	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj.
2. To adjourn	Close meeting	No	Yes	No	No	Maj.
<b>Incidental Motions: Relate to questions which arise from other motions or business. (No order of precedence within this group.)</b>						
3. Point of order	Assert rights	Yes	No	No	No	Chair
4. Appeal decision of the Chair	Assert rights	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Maj.
5. Withdrawal of a motion	Prevent action	No	No	No	No	Maj.
6. Divide the House	Count vote	Yes	No	No	No	--
<b>Subsidiary Motions: Act upon motions in order to dispose of them; do not amend.</b>						
7. To table	Delay action	No	Yes	No	No	Maj.
8. Order previous question	Close debate	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
9. Refer to committee	Further study (delay)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj.
10. Amend	Modify motion	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj.
<b>Principal Motions: Directly endorsing a proposition, idea or Main Motion. (No order of precedence within this group.)</b>						
11. Take from the table	Renew discussion	No	Yes	No	No	Maj.
12. Main motions	New business	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj.

## SUMMARY OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

To participate effectively in the proceedings of meetings, each voting member needs to be familiar with the fundamental rules of parliamentary procedure. These rules enable the members to transact business with expediency and efficiency, with the least possible friction, and in a manner fair to all. The minority, as well as the majority, are enabled to express their views, to make motions and to vote.

The parliamentary rules followed by USPS are generally *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* wherever applicable and not inconsistent with the USPS Bylaws.

### RULES OF DEBATE

*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* contains the following rules of debate that should be enforced during business meetings.

- All debate must be relevant to the question immediately before the meeting.
- Only active members may introduce motions, debate and vote.

### MAIN MOTIONS

A main motion introduces a new item of business. Until this is disposed of, no other main motion may be considered, as there can be only one main motion pending at a time. The making of a motion comes first, discussion follows.

The steps relating to obtaining the floor and handling a main motion are:

- The member seeks recognition.
- The Chair (presiding officer) recognizes the member to speak.
- The speaker states name and position, and introduces the motion. The form is, "(Name), (position), I move that \_\_\_\_\_."
- Any active member may second the motion if needed by calling out, "I second the motion." (Committee motions, proposals, and amendments contained in the "Call to the Meeting" do not usually require a second.)
- The Chair (presiding officer) states the motion by repeating it.
- The Chair then asks for discussion, giving the maker of the motion the first opportunity to speak. Thereafter, the Chair recognizes others wishing to speak, alternating between those in favor and those against.

An active member may, during the discussion and when recognized by the Chair, introduce a subsidiary, incidental or privileged motion. The discussion at all times must relate to the immediate pending question.

After the discussion, or as it appears appropriate, the Chair asks "Are you ready for the question (motion)?"

- The Chair repeats the question (motion) and calls for the affirmative vote, then calls for the negative vote.
- The Chair announces the result of the vote. If the vote is on any motion made subsequent to the main motion, the discussion is directed to the next ranking motion until there has been a decision concerning the main motion.

## **SUBSIDIARY NOTIONS**

Subsidiary motions are those that modify, delay or expedite action on the main motion. Such motions are in order while the main motion, or a motion of lower rank, is still pending (in the debatable stage), and must be voted on before the main motion. Subsidiary motions have a definite order of precedence from the lowest to the highest. The lowest in rank yields to motions that are higher in rank. If several subsidiary motions are pending at one time, the vote is taken first on the motion with the highest rank, then on the motion next lower in rank, etc.

The seven subsidiary motions follow. Number 1 is the lowest and 7 is the highest ranking.

1. **Postpone Indefinitely.** The purpose is to reject, or kill, the main motion. The form is "I move to postpone indefinitely the motion that \_\_\_\_\_". It requires a second, is debatable, cannot be amended and requires a majority vote. Only an affirmative vote can be reconsidered.
2. **Amend.** Amend is used to change the wording of a motion. The form is "I move to amend the motion by \_\_\_\_\_" (inserting, adding, striking out, striking out and inserting or substitution). It requires a second, is debatable, can be amended, requires a majority vote and can be reconsidered.

An amendment to the main motion is called a primary amendment. An amendment to the primary amendment is called a secondary amendment. Only these two degrees of amendments are permitted. A primary amendment must relate to the main motion. A secondary amendment must relate to the primary amendment. Only one primary amendment at a time, or one secondary amendment at a time, can be pending. As soon as an amendment is disposed of by vote, another of the same degree is in order.

3. **Refer to Committee.** The purpose of this motion is to get more information or to get the main motion into more satisfactory form. The form is "I move that the motion be referred to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee" or "I move to refer the motion \_\_\_\_\_ to a committee of \_\_\_\_ (number) and to report back at the next meeting." It requires a second, is debatable, can be amended, requires a majority vote, cannot be reconsidered after the committee has taken up the subject.
4. **Postpone Definitely.** This motion is used to delay action on the pending question until a definite time, to provide more time for the members to consider the issue. The form is "I move that the question be postponed to \_\_\_\_\_." In convention, the time to which the question is postponed must be within the present convention. It requires a second, requires a majority vote and can be reconsidered.
5. **Limit or Extend Debate.** It is sometimes desirable to limit or extend the time a question may be discussed. The purpose of this motion is to change the regular limits of debate, The form is "I move that the debate on the pending motion be limited to \_\_\_\_\_" or "be extended to \_\_\_\_\_." This motion can be applied to one or more pending motions. It requires a second, cannot be debated, can be amended, requires a two-thirds vote and can be reconsidered.

6. **Previous Question.** The object of this motion is to close debate at once. The form is "I move the previous question." This motion requires a second, is not debatable, cannot be amended, requires a two-thirds vote and cannot be reconsidered after a vote has been taken. If adopted, discussion and amendments are halted, and the vote is taken immediately on the pending motion or on ALL pending motions if so stated by the mover.
7. **Lay on the Table.** The object of this motion is to delay action temporarily, usually in order to attend to more urgent business. The form is "I move to lay the question on the table." It requires a second, is not debatable, cannot be amended, requires a majority vote and cannot be reconsidered.

## **INCIDENTAL MOTIONS**

**Incidental motions are pertinent to, take precedence over and must be decided before the pending question. Some also originate out of business which has just been pending.**

**Some of the incidental motions, and those most used in meetings follow:**

**Point of Order.** Is used to call attention to a breach of the rules, does not require a second and can even interrupt a speaker. A point of order must be made at the time the breach occurs. The form is "I rise to a point of order." The Chair asks that the point be stated and the member replies. The Chair then decides the point.

**"In ordinary meetings it is undesirable to raise points of order on minor irregularities of a purely technical character, if it is clear that no one's rights are being infringed upon and no real harm is being done to the proper transaction of business." - *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised***

**Appeal from the Decision of the Chair.** An appeal can be made from a decision of the Chair but only at the time the ruling is made. A second is required. The form is "I appeal from the decision of the Chair." The Chair states the point at issue. An appeal is debatable when the pending question is debatable. The Chair puts the question as "Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained?" A majority vote or a tie vote sustains the Chair. There is no appeal from the decision of the assembly.

**Division of a Question.** The motion to divide a question can be applied only to main motions and amendments. If a motion has several parts, each one capable of standing alone if the others are taken away, it can be divided into two or more parts. Then, each part is voted on separately. The exact method of dividing must be specified in the motion. The form is "I move that the question be divided into \_\_\_\_\_." The motion to divide requires a second, is not debatable, may be amended, requires a majority vote and cannot be reconsidered.

**Division of the Assembly.** After the Chair has announced the result of a vote (taken by voice or show of hands), a member who does not agree may, without obtaining the floor, say "I call for a division." The Chair then takes the vote again, asking the affirmative and then the negative to stand (or other standard procedures of the assembly.) This does not require a second, cannot be debated or amended or reconsidered. A majority vote is required to order the vote to be so counted or taken by ballot.

**Parliamentary Inquiry.** When a member wants information about the use or effect of a motion, parliamentary procedure or law, the member says "I rise to a parliamentary inquiry." The Chair answers the inquiry. The inquiry should be pertinent to the pending business.

**Point of Information.** A request for information must be pertinent to the pending business. The form is "I rise to a point of information." If information is desired of the speaker instead of the Chair, say "I would like to ask the speaker a question." All remarks, questions asked, and answers given should be addressed through the Chair, as members cannot directly address each other in assembly. If the speaker consents to answer, the time consumed is taken out of the speaker's time. A point of information must always be stated in the form of a question. It cannot be used as a means of debate.

#### **PRIVILEGED MOTIONS**

Privileged motions, although not related to the pending question, are motions that need special attention and take precedence over the other motion.

The category most likely to be needed is Raise a Question of Privilege. Questions of privilege concern the rights and privileges of the assembly or of a member, such as a report being read that cannot be heard; a speaker who cannot be heard; discomfort of members with respect to heating, lighting, ventilation, seating, noise, disturbances, etc.; the conduct of any individual present; accuracy of published reports.

The form is "I rise to a question of privilege affecting the assembly," or "I rise to a question of personal privilege." It does not require a second, is not debatable, cannot be amended and is decided by the Chair. If a question of privilege requires immediate attention (e.g., a speaker - cannot be heard) the member may interrupt the speaker. If the question does not require immediate attention, the member cannot interrupt the speaker.

#### **MOTIONS THAT BRING QUESTION AGAIN BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY**

- **Take from the Table.** This motion is used to bring tabled questions back before the assembly. The form is "I move to take from the table the question \_\_\_\_." It requires a second, is not debatable, cannot be amended, requires a majority vote and cannot be reconsidered.
- **Reconsider.** The purpose of this motion is to bring a question already acted upon before the assembly again so that the vote may be changed. The form is "I move to reconsider the vote on \_\_\_\_." It requires a second, is debatable when the motion to be reconsidered is debatable, cannot be amended, requires a majority vote and cannot be reconsidered. This motion must be made by one who voted with the prevailing side. It must be made the same day, or next succeeding business day, as the vote to be reconsidered was taken.
- **Rescind.** When an assembly wishes to annul action previously taken and it is too late to reconsider the vote, use the motion rescind. Any member may make this motion. There is no time limit (provided no subsequent action or implementation has occurred). The form is "I move to rescind the action on the motion \_\_\_\_." It requires a second, is debatable, can be amended, requires a two-thirds vote (or a majority vote if notice of rescinding was given at the previous meeting). An affirmative vote (to rescind) cannot be reconsidered.

#### **USE OF GENERAL CONSENT**

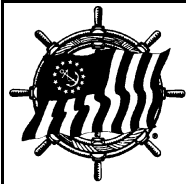
To expedite business, the presiding officer may sometimes use the procedure of "general consent" - in cases where there seems to be no opposition in routing business matters, on questions of little importance, where discussion has indicated little or no opposition to the issue.

**"Under these conditions, the method of general consent can be used either to adopt a motion without the steps of stating the question and putting the motion to a formal vote, or it can be used to take action without even the formality of a motion. - *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised***

The Chair asks: "Is there any objection to \_\_\_\_\_?" Then, if there is no objection, the Chair announces the result by saying: "There being no objection, \_\_\_\_\_ will be done" or "\_\_\_\_\_ is approved by general consent." If one member objects to the action's being taken in this manner, the vote must be put in the usual formal way as a single objection defeats a request for general consent.

**"No member should hesitate to object if he feels it is desirable to do so, but should not object merely for dilatory purposes." - *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised***

(Thanks to the Girl Scouts of the USA for this summary, taken from their "Workbook" distributed in connection with the Girl Scouts of the USA 43rd National Council Meeting.)



# National Law Officer

## POLICIES FOR SQUADRON/DISTRICT OWNERSHIP OR LEASING OF REAL PROPERTY

The following policies relate to the acquisition by a USPS “Unit” (a squadron or district) of an interest in “Real Property” (bare land as well as land with improvements of any type, such as buildings, tents, parking spaces, docks, piers and any other structure or portion of a structure that may be occupied or used by members of a district or squadron) and the exercise of the rights to occupy that Real Property. These policies do not apply to a Unit occupying Real Property for a term of one month or less, commonly referred to as a “month to month lease.”

### ACQUISITION

1. Prior to entering into an agreement to purchase or lease Real Property for a term of more than one month, the Unit must obtain the written approval of the acquisition from the national law officer: In this regard, the Unit shall submit to the national law officer the following:
  - a) The name, address and phone number of the law officer or private attorney representing the Unit in negotiating the purchase or lease,
  - b) A copy of the proposed contract for purchase and deed, or proposed lease agreement,
  - c) A written description of any other terms, conditions, obligations and contingencies not included in the proposed contract for purchase, deed or lease, and, if applicable, written escrow and title-closing instructions,
  - d) A written analysis of any state or local laws, regulations or ordinances applying to the Real Property,
  - e) A written physical description of the Real Property, including but not limited to any environmental concerns, and, if applicable, title insurance reports or similar title search reports,
  - f) A written analysis of the Unit’s ability to pay the acquisition and on-going costs of maintaining the Real Property, including required liability insurance coverage, and
  - g) A certificate from the Unit’s treasurer certifying that all bylaw requirements have been met for the approval of the acquisition of the Real Property by the Unit’s membership.

2. The national law officer may specify such additional terms and conditions he/she deems appropriate in granting permission for the acquisition of the Real Property.
3. The Unit may appeal to the Board of Directors if approval is denied by the national law officer or if the Unit is of the opinion that any term or condition imposed by the national law officer is unreasonable.
4. Upon receiving written approval from the national law officer or Board of Directors, the Unit may proceed with the acquisition of the Real Property upon the terms and conditions agreed upon and as specified by the national law officer or Board of Directors.

#### **OCCUPANCY OF REAL PROPERTY**

**During ownership and/or occupancy of any Real Property, a Unit shall:**

1. **Maintain personal and property damage liability insurance coverage of a least \$1,000,000 per claimant and \$2,000,000 per occurrence naming USPS and, if applicable, the district of which the Unit is a part, as additional named insureds.**
2. **Provide the national treasurer annually with a certificate of insurance for the liability coverage required by the preceding paragraph and require the insurance carrier of such insurance to give the national treasurer 30 day s advance notice of the termination of such insurance.**
3. **Maintain fire and extended casualty insurance coverage in an amount sufficient to cover losses of the property owned by the Unit.**
4. **Pay promptly when due all mortgage and lease payments, taxes and assessments, and other obligations of ownership, as may be applicable.**
5. **Comply with all national, state and local laws and regulations and all legally enforceable terms and covenants governing the occupancy.**

## Annual Legal Checklist

At each change of watch, the new commander should conduct a comprehensive legal review.

The commander should:

- **Appoint a law officer**
- **Check any contracts that may need to be reviewed**
  - **leases for building space**
  - **meeting locations**
  - **boat shows**
- **Tax documents or filings**
  - **sales tax**
  - **IRS**
  - **local property taxes**
- **Incorporation filings**
- **Review squadron minutes for proper appointments**
  - **make sure all appointments are in the record**
- **Check any cooperative agreements with other organizations**
- **Review/renew any bond contracts**
- **Review any insurance policies**

## **Commander's Legal Checklist**

**Squadron and district commanders have the power and the responsibility to act on behalf of their group. As the commander, you will see any number of documents and situations that may or may not have legal implications. In today's society pretty much everything does. This doesn't mean sticking your squadron's head in the sand. It just means that you, with the help of your squadron or district law officer need to be aware of what these implications are.**

**Some are obvious; others are not. If it requires a signature on behalf of the squadron (other than routine correspondence), then it clearly needs legal review. This means not only the commander, but also anyone acting on behalf of the squadron. Frequently the monthly meeting planner or the chair of boating activities makes restaurant or marina reservations.**

**If a financial commitment is required, even with bridge approval, a lawyer should be in on the decision. Lawyers are trained to look at transactions from all sides and assess the value of the transaction for the squadron. There's nothing inherently adversarial about having your law officer offer his/her opinion. The other side of a deal, particularly if they supply the contract, has had its lawyers assess the plan. It's only smart to be equally armed.**

**Many squadrons have lawyers that are members. If not, one may be found in an adjoining squadron. There is also help available from the district law officer.**

**Situations that involve relationships with other groups would need legal review. These could be private industry or governmental agencies. The National Law Officer should also clear any use of USPS copyrighted logos.**

**Contact your squadron or district law officer for advice or input if/when:**

- **Any contract is entered into**
  - hotel**
  - restaurant**
  - marina**
- **Any transaction for property, real or personal, is contemplated**
  - whether for money or by donation**
  - land purchase or sale**
  - lease**
  - rental**
  - option**
- **Communication is received from any governmental official or agency**
  - United States Coast Guard**
  - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**
  - Environmental Protection Agency**
  - State natural resource agencies**
  - State or local water quality management agencies**
  - EEOC or its state equivalent**

- Anytime the use of alcohol is considered
  - Changes in legal status such as incorporation are considered
  - Name change is considered
  - When fund raising activities are planned
    - sales
    - solicitations
    - gambling/raffles
  - Anytime grants are sought
  - Any report of injury or damage
    - at squadron functions
      - to members or their property
      - by members or their property
      - to non-members or their property
      - by non-members or their property
    - by squadron property
    - to squadron property
  - Any communications or documents from an attorney
  - Any time a gift is received or offered - refer to National Law Officer
    - land
    - personal property (boats, appliances, furniture, etc.)
    - cash
    - securities
1. Any time a claim is made against the squadron
    - For damage
    - For inappropriate activity
  2. When relationships are considered/consummated with businesses
    - marinas
    - boat dealership
    - manufacturers
    - marine suppliers
  3. When insurance is purchased
    - property
    - liability
    - special event coverage
  4. When approached for organizational support or endorsement
    - by citizen groups
    - by businesses
    - by special interest groups
    - by lobbyists
  5. When a cooperative effort with another/agency is contemplated
  6. When the use of USPS copyrighted symbols (ensign, logo, etc.) is considered being used in conjunction with co-sponsored events
  7. Anytime a planned activity goes so wrong that resources (squadron, member or non-member) are lost or expended beyond what was expected.

**As the commander of the District or Squadron you are responsible for making sure that the minutes of all your meetings reflect the actions taken at those meetings. Thus, any motions made at your meetings (ExCom, membership, council or conference meetings) should be included in the minutes of the meetings, and especially those relating to legal obligations, such as the purchase or sale of property, the authorization for a member or officer to act on behalf of the squadron, the authority for and approval of any contracts with outside parties, the amendment of the bylaw of the corporation or any filing with the state of incorporation, and the appointment of officers. Actually the authority for any of the topics listed above can and usually should be recorded in the minutes. Particularly authorized squadron activities, such as on-the-water activities, should be the subject of note in the minutes, naming those who are in charge of the activity and generally stating what the activity will entail, this could be very important if insurance coverage of the activity is ever sought. As commander you should request that the secretary, or whom ever takes the minutes, submit a copy to you before the minutes are distributed. These minutes when approved at the next meeting of the body should be included in the official record of the squadron or district. It would be a good idea to send a copy of the minutes of all meetings to the squadron or district law officer for his or her review, whether or not he or she attended the meeting. If any questions of liability is raised the first thing that the attorney representing the squadron or district will want to see is the minutes of the squadron or district for a substantial period in the past. Any documents, such as contracts, entered into by the squadron or the district should be included with the official records. The commander should insist that copies of all correspondence sent by any of the officers or persons authorized by the body to carry out certain functions and activities on behalf of the body be sent to the commander.**

**This list is not all-inclusive. There will be situations that may arise, not mentioned, that should require legal counsel. Don't be shy about asking your law officer for advice. Lawyers don't exist to prevent you from taking action. They will let you know what the potential legal consequences of your action could be. It's better to go into a situation informed as to the potential problems than to blindly go forward. It's always easier to do damage control, if necessary, on the front end.**

## **Incorporation of Districts and Squadrons**

**Each district and squadron that is not already incorporated should make an independent decision as to whether or not to incorporate. In making such a decision, the following factors would be important:**

- 1. For Districts: Determine Common: To the status and decision of the state(s) in which the districts operate, whether or not the district is (or should become) an entity separate from National USPS. Districts hold meetings, have members, optional membership dues, elect officers, spend funds, execute contracts and invest assets. In most jurisdictions, districts would be considered distinct from National. A District is generally viewed as unincorporated associations unless it has obtained a corporation charter in one of the states where it operates.**
- 2. For Squadrons: A squadron will be viewed as separate entity from national and an unincorporated association unless it has obtained a corporation charter from the state where it operates. Since it is generally disadvantageous to be an unincorporated association, for the reasons stated below, all squadrons are encouraged to incorporate.**
- 3. For Districts and Squadrons: Generally, a group of individuals would not wish to be members of an unincorporated association for various reasons among them:**
  - A. Many states limit the rights of associations to sue or to be sued.**
  - B. Many states have provisions in law that drastically reduce the rights of an association to make contracts and to enforce contractual rights.**
  - C. Members of an association are generally held liable for the acts of the officers and directors of the association that were undertaken on their behalf or with their authority directly given or implied. This includes tort liability; for example, an accident occurring while an officer of the unincorporated association is driving an automobile pursuing association business, or where an officer libels or slanders a third party.**
- 4. For Districts and Squadrons: Most states have statutes granting substantial immunity to officers and directors of a non-profit, non-stock corporation. Such immunity may not exist for those persons acting on behalf of an unincorporated association. Some states have passed recreational immunity statutes that may grant greater rights to members of an incorporated entity.**
- 5. For Districts: States have substantial differences in their**

requirements for the filings with and the authority given to the various Secretary of State offices with regard to “foreign corporations.” Where a district that has squadrons (and thus potential members) in two different states, it may be possible to incorporate in the state with the foreign corporation filing requirements and thus avoid filing in the other state which has no such filing requirements. For example, District 10 has squadrons located in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Wisconsin does not require foreign non-profit corporations to register but Minnesota does. Therefore, District 10 may wish to incorporate in Minnesota and thus avoid the necessity of filing as a foreign corporation.

**Gifts and Grants:** It is important that all districts and squadrons follow the policy established by the Governing Board relative to reporting of and approval of gifts and grants. Remember LawCom and the Board of Directors are not trying to prevent squadrons from obtaining the fine benefits that these gifts and grants provide. The purpose of the approval policy is to help district and squadron recipients and to prevent future legal problems:

- A. Board of Directors approval is required for any gifts to a squadron or district in excess of \$5,000 where a condition is attached or where the gift is given for a specific purpose.**
- B. As for undesignated gifts (those without any conditions attached) over \$10,000 Board of Director approval is required.**
- C. As to grants, any application for a grant needs to be submitted to the National Law Officer if the amount of the grant request exceeds \$5,000. The NLO will look over the grant applications and give any suggestions about legal issues, towards the end of preventing future problems should the grant be accepted.**

## Squadron Counselor Program

Despite the best intentions and efforts, some squadrons become so weak and problem--ridden that their existence is imperiled. This Squadron Counselor Program is designed to help your district provide support to squadrons showing signs of trouble, and to assist them in becoming fully-functional, productive units of USPS. The program is based on one used successfully in several districts.

The first step is to develop a procedure that will alert the district bridge to incipient problems long before a squadron arrives at the brink of extinction. Establish a committee of seven persons to assess the Squadrons in the District. The committee should consist of the D/C, the D/Exec/O, the D/EO, immediate P/D/C and three other senior members who are at least P/C's. The committee should meet at least twice each year, more frequently if necessary.

Every squadron should be evaluated by each committee member with a free exchange of thoughts and questions about the squadron's overall activities. Reports submitted as part of the Star Squadron Awards Program, or a similar squadron achievement program, could provide input for the discussions -- or the lack of submissions may well raise a red flag. If a squadron achievement program has not been implemented in your district, consider the following criteria to analyze the health of the squadron:

- Activity in the Educational Department
- Are Boating Classes conducted?
- Membership trends -- both new members and membership retention
- Are squadron meetings well managed and well attended?
- Reports to district from squadron officers and squadron chairmen
- Social activities
- On-the-water activities, including Co-Op Charting
- Attendance at District Council meetings, conferences, seminars, rendezvous
- Regular publication of a squadron newsletter
- Esprit de corps of the squadron's members

The assessment of squadrons on a regular basis will bring to light any squadron that cannot be considered healthy and should give the district bridge an early opportunity to provide support to the squadron before it gets to the point of no return. The earlier remedies are applied, the quicker will be the response.

The district commander has the responsibility of taking the initial steps to rescue a squadron. The district bridge should meet to discuss the situation, and the D/C should then appoint one person to work with the squadron. In one district, the practice has been to appoint an active P/D/C to handle the assignment. Questions regarding "squadrons at risks" should be directed to the R/C of the Squadron Development Committee.

In effect, the designated person will serve as a counselor, or mentor, to the ailing squadron. Ideally, the counselor should be a statesman, psychologist, motivator and adjudicator - and should have had a long love affair with USPS. A squadron on the brink of extinction probably has only a few members left, and it may be expected that none of these members has any idea of the great opportunities USPS has to offer.

The counselor should first meet as many members of the squadron as possible to determine the cause of the squadron's decline and to find a core of members on which to build. The members must be imbued with a sense of crusade to help raise their morale and make them excited about the prospect of returning the squadron to a happy level of USPS activity. They must be shown there is something worth saving, and must be encouraged to be in on the ground floor of that stimulating project.

Bear in mind that the district cannot do the work of the squadron -- and that the squadron's members must be convinced it is worth their commitment to save the squadron.

The counselor must try to determine all of the problems that afflict the squadron, and then find solutions to correct them. Some of the questions that should be addressed are:

- Morale?
- Why has membership declined?
- Are the incumbent bridge officers the right people?
- Are there people willing to work hard for a few years to rescue the squadron?
- Is there understanding of what USPS is about?
- Educational program?
- Are there cliques, or influential members who frown on any new ideas?
- Are there adverse external forces -- e.g., area economy causing high unemployment?

Every aspect of USPS life must be touched on. In all probability, at first there will have to be face-to-face meetings almost every week, plus phone calls to encourage, to answer questions and to lead, "How do I do this?" and "Where do I get this from?" are the most frequently asked questions. Another often-asked question is: "What are or should be my priorities?" A squadron in trouble must first focus on critically important items.

The squadron's members must be made aware that the district bridge honestly cares about them and that someone is available to help them out no matter what the problem. This includes the possible need to find instructors for Operations Training, the Boating Course and educational classes, as well as full access to other squadrons' educational programs to help the ailing squadron reacquire an Educational Department of its own.

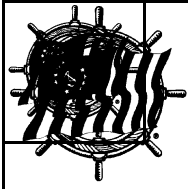
The selection of the revitalized squadron bridge is the most difficult stage of the rescue operation. Enthusiasm, motivation and leadership qualities are among the most desirable talents. It may be necessary to combine certain jobs until an adequate membership base is developed so all bridge positions can be filled. Officers should be encouraged to wear blazers or uniforms at all squadron functions to show pride in USPS. Every officer also should have an *Operations Manual*, and the counselor should give a short class on how to use it.

Every USPS member understands that the primary objective of the organization is the self-education of members. What is rarely realized is the social, civic and many other benefits of membership. It is part of the counselor's job to let the nucleus of the reborn squadron know the worth of these usually unperceived benefits.

The counselor should report regularly to the district bridge on the progress being made with the squadron, and should be open to suggestions from the district bridge. Further, the counselor should not hesitate to request aid from anyone who might care to help with ideas and with assistance in conducting training sessions.

The counselor's task will not be easy. But the person who is privileged to take on the project will have a unique opportunity to make a lasting contribution to the district and USPS - and an opportunity to enrich the lives of squadron members.

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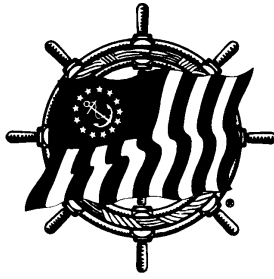
## Timetable for Dues

**1 June- 31 May**

- 31 January**      **Headquarters sends dues update requests to squadron treasurers. This request is for 1 June - 31 May.**
- 28 February**      **Squadron treasurers will send dues update request forms to headquarters by this date.**
- 28 April**          **Headquarters will mail dues notices to every member or household by this date.**

### HQAB Schedule

**HQAB invoices are mailed 2 months prior to members anniversary date.**



## **UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS® Educational Department**

**TO:** New USPS Member  
**FROM:** The National Educational Officer  
**SUBJECT:** Your Educational Opportunities

Welcome to America's largest nonprofit private boating organization. In joining USPS you have given yourself the opportunity to acquire an outstanding education in a variety of important and interesting subjects relating to safe recreational boating.

The USPS Educational Program is diverse and challenging. It offers you the promise of greater enjoyment and safety in your own boating activities, the satisfaction of personal accomplishment, and the opportunity to share with others the knowledge and skills you have acquired.

There are currently three major parts of the USPS Educational Program for members:

<b>Advanced Grades</b>	<b>A series of five courses in seamanship and navigation.</b>
<b>Elective Courses</b>	<b>Six non-sequential courses in diverse marine-oriented topics.</b>
<b>Learning Guides</b>	<b>A collection of short, home-study guides on special subjects.</b>

Each of these courses is described briefly in this letter. All of the courses and programs are available through your squadron or another squadron in your vicinity. To be eligible to take these courses, you must maintain your status in USPS as an Active Member, a Life or Sustaining Member, or a Family Member associated with an Active Member in good standing. Family Members must have passed the USPS Boating Course or USCGAux BS&S or S&S to be eligible to take additional USPS courses.

There are currently two educational awards in the USPS Educational Program for those who have successfully completed selected courses:

**Educational Proficiency Award - Recognizes individuals who have passed Seamanship, Piloting and Advanced Piloting plus any three (3) Elective Courses.**

**Educational Achievement Award - Recognizes individuals who have passed all the Advanced Grades and Elective Courses in effect when the candidate completes his last course.**

Your fellow USPS members are proud to share these educational opportunities with you and encourage you to take full advantage of them. Your local squadron educational officer will be happy to provide you with full details about these courses and programs and to help you lay out your own schedule of educational development. Since not all squadrons offer all courses every year, it's important that you plan ahead.

Now it's up to you to take advantage of these USPS educational opportunities.

Good luck and smooth sailing!

## ADVANCED GRADES

### *Seamanship (S)*

Building on the basics taught in the Boating Course or Boat Smart, Seamanship is the recommended first course for new members, both powerboaters and sailors. Students learn practical marlinespike, navigation rules, hull design and performance, responsibilities of the skipper, boat care, operating a boat under normal and abnormal conditions, what to do in various emergencies and weather conditions, nautical customs, and common courtesy on the water. This course provides a needed introduction to the USPS Educational Program and a strong foundation for members going on to other Advanced Grades courses and/or Cruise Planning or Sail.

### *Piloting (P)*

Piloting is the first of a two-part program studying inland and coastal navigation. It focuses on the fundamentals of piloting -- keeping track of a boat's movements, determining position at any time, and laying out courses to a planned destination. Included are such subjects as: charts and their use, aids to navigation, the mariner's compass, variation and deviation of the compass, plotting and steering courses, plotting and labeling charts, and dead reckoning.

### *Advanced Piloting (AP)*

This is the second part of the inland and coastal navigation series. It emphasizes the use of modern electronic navigation systems and other advanced techniques for finding position. Among topics covered are: tides and currents and their effects on piloting, finding position using bearings and angles, simple use of the mariner's sextant, and electronic navigation -- radar, loran, GPS, etc.

### *Junior Navigation (JN)*

Junior Navigation is the first of a two-part program of study in offshore (open-ocean) navigation. It is designed as a practical how-to course, leaving the theoretical and more advanced techniques for the Navigation Course. Subject matter includes: basic concepts of celestial navigation; how to use the mariner's sextant to take sights of the sun, moon, planets, and stars; the importance and techniques of accurate time determination; use of the Nautical Almanac; how to reduce sights to establish lines of position (LOPs); and the use of special charts, plotting sheets and other navigational data for offshore positioning and passage planning.

### *Navigation (N)*

This is the second part of the study of offshore navigation. It further develops the student's understanding of celestial theory. The student learns additional sight-reduction techniques and develops greater skill and precision in sight taking, positioning and the orderly methods of carrying on the day's work of a navigator at sea. Of particular interest and importance is the study of offshore navigation using minimal data and/or equipment, such as when on a disabled vessel or lifeboat.

## ELECTIVE COURSES

### *Cruise Planning (CP)*

Cruise Planning is designed for members who plan to cruise for just a day, a few weeks, or even a year in either a sailboat or powerboat. It covers such topics as planning a voyage, financing a voyage, managing a voyage, managing commitments back home, equipping a cruising boat, selecting the crew, provisioning, entering and clearing foreign ports, emergencies afloat, and security measures.

### *Engine Maintenance (EM)*

Engine Maintenance makes students more self-reliant afloat, with mechanical trouble diagnosis

and temporary remedies given special emphasis. It covers both marine gasoline and diesel inboard engines, including concepts of operation, maintenance and repair of cooling systems, electrical systems, fuel systems, lubricating systems, powertrain components, outboard engines, and ancillary propulsion components.

***Instructor Development (ID)***

Unlike other USPS courses, this one isn't designed to enhance boating skills. Rather, it deals with effective communications for speaker and teacher -- a quality that benefits the individual in all walks of life. It offers practical instruction in preparing for meeting presentations, preparing for teaching assignments, effective teaching techniques, conducting efficient meetings, and selecting and using audiovisual aids.

***Marine Electronics (ME)***

Marine Electronics teaches essential knowledge about a boat's electrical and electronic systems including: proper wiring, grounding, corrosion and electrolysis control, batteries and their maintenance, depth finders, marine radiotelephones, radar, loran, GPS, and other electronic positioning systems.

***Sail (Sa)***

Sail provides a thorough study of the terminology and dynamics of sailing. Material covered includes: types of hulls and rigs; running and standing rigging and their adjustment, hull and water forces caused by wind and waves, forces versus balance, the theory of sailing, points of sail, sail handling, sailing under various wind conditions, and navigation rules unique to sailboats.

***Weather (W)***

Weather is designed to help a student make weather observations and predictions for more enjoyable boating. Topics include: awareness of weather phenomena, how to read the weather map and sky, how to understand and anticipate weather developments, structure and characteristics of the atmosphere, factors considered in weather forecasting, sources and use of weather reports and forecasts, and instruments and visual observations the skipper can make.

## LEARNING GUIDES

Developed to extend members' knowledge in boating-related fields, these home-study guides may be ordered through your squadron educational officer, or you can order directly from USPS Ship's Store at headquarters. You may take any of these programs, in any order, and a certificate of completion is available.

**Amateur Radio:** Explains the procedures for obtaining radio licensing and information regarding shipboard radio operation.

**Compass Adjusting:** Describes time-tested methods of compass adjusting used by professional adjusters. Instructions are in an easy-to-follow, step-by-step pattern for the do-it-yourselfer.

**Navigational Astronomy:** A pleasant, non-mechanical introduction to the wonders of the night sky. No prior familiarity with astronomy is needed to enjoy this easy-to-read guide to stars, planets, and major constellations.

**Skipper Saver:** A blend of two USPS objectives -- education and safety. This program helps students acquire basic boat-handling ability without frills or superfluous information.

**Introduction to Sailing:** Covers the basics of small-sailboat handling, including nomenclature, relationship of wind to moving boat, action of the keel or centerboard, leeway, lee, and weather helm.

**Predicted Log Contest:** Introduces predicted logging for the novice and provides advanced techniques for the experienced logger.

**Oceanography:** Describes the ocean environment in non-mechanical terms. Topics include earth crusts, tectonic plates, fractures and movement, ocean chemistry, the effect of weather on water, the physical aspects of tides, currents and waves, and marine ecology.

**Water Sports:** A how-to guide for water-skiing, board sailing, and personal watercraft.

**Calculators for Navigation:** A guide to the use of pocket calculators for computations related to navigation, from coastal piloting to celestial navigation.

**Sight Reduction Methods:** A self-instruction guide to five popular methods of sight reduction: Law of Cosines, Nautical Almanac (NASR), Modified Ageton, HO-229 and HO-249.

**Knots, Bends and Hitches (Marlinespike):** A practical guide with illustrations to tying a variety of useful and decorative knots, bends, hitches, and splices.

**Radar:** Basic explanations of how radar works, how to select the right unit for your boat, integration of radar with other onboard electronics, and what the future may bring in system integration.

**GPS (Global Positioning System):** Provides an overview of the basic operation principles, accuracy, and output display messages of GPS, the major navigation system now used by boaters worldwide.

**Boat Insurance:** Providing information on the types and availability of insurance for boaters, this program addresses basic homeowners' coverage, additional coverage, and yacht policies.

**Plotting and Labeling Standards:** Describes nautical plotting and labeling techniques and provides recommended standards for navigational use.

**USPS Glossary:** A handy reference to more than 1,300 nautical terms.

**How to Fly Flags:** A how-to guide on how to properly fly flags on boats, land, both indoors and out.

# **APPENDIX C**

**Meetings Program Planning Workbook  
Membership Committee Guidelines  
Operations Manual  
Squadron Job Descriptions  
Squadron Model Bylaws**

**Each manual listed above may be requested on the perforated order form in the back of this manual. A brief explanation of each follows.**

# **Meetings Program Planning Workbook**

**..A handbook that provides the framework, guidance and helpful suggestions for the critical task of program planning.**

**It discusses nine topics related to squadron program preparation:**

- 1) Squadron Meeting Programs Function**
- 2) Program Planning**
- 3) Subject Selection**
- 4) Involving the Family**
- 5) Sources of Programs**
- 6) Emergency Programs**
- 7) Recycling Programs**
- 8) Meeting Arrangements**
- 9) Fund Raisers**

**It also includes 101 program ideas and an appendix of sample worksheets on the following:**

- 1) Annual Program Calendar**
- 2) Program Planning Checklist and Critique**
- 3) Bright Idea! I'd Like a Program On**
- 4) Facility Information Checklist**
- 5) Sharing Ideas**

**This handbook is recommended for the Squadron Meetings Program Chairman but may be useful to any USPS member involved in planning squadron programs.**

## **Membership Committee Guidelines**

**A guide to provide efficient and effective processing of the applicant for membership.**

**It contains sections on the responsibilities of a membership chairman; guidelines for completing a membership application; guidelines for Boating classes; membership requirements, and classes of membership.**

**It also contains sample membership forms and explanation of their use. Also included is a list of common questions and answers.**

**This manual is recommended for all USPS members, but specifically any member at the national, district or squadron level whose primary responsibility is member acquisition.**

## ***Operations Manual***

**A guide for all members.**

**The *USPS Operations Manual* is a supplement to the *USPS Bylaws* detailing guidelines and information. It includes Governing Board policy and actions by the Board of Directors not otherwise reflected in the bylaws.**

**The current *USPS Operations Manual* includes *USPS Bylaws* as amended.**

**You may download the Operations Manual from the Web at:**

**<https://www.usps.org/index.php/departments/15000/15100>**

## Squadron Job Descriptions

A manual that provides general descriptions of squadron job assignments.

It covers fifty squadron jobs ranging from squadron commanders to squadron photographers. Each job is treated individually and indexed for easy reference.

This manual is recommended for all USPS members assuming unfamiliar squadron assignments.

The latest copy of Squadron Job Descriptions can be found on the web at:

[https://www.usps.org/images/admin/LeadershipDev/Job\\_Descriptions/Squadron\\_Job\\_Descriptions\\_Revised\\_November\\_2016.pdf](https://www.usps.org/images/admin/LeadershipDev/Job_Descriptions/Squadron_Job_Descriptions_Revised_November_2016.pdf)

## **Squadron Model Bylaws\***

**A manual designed to expedite the formation of new squadrons and provide uniformity among squadron bylaws.**

**It contains text which squadrons may duplicate by replacing blank lines with appropriate squadron information.**

**It is recommended that all squadron commanders maintain a copy of this manual to ensure compliance with *USPS Bylaws*.**

**\*Download at <https://www.usps.org/index.php/committees/general/10400/10400-squadron-bylaws>**