Chapter 5

SQUADRON ORGANIZATION

5.1 Role of the Commander. The principal officer of each squadron of the United States Power Squadrons®, Americas Boating Club®, is the commander (Cdr) who is elected by the active members of the squadron.

A Chart of the Typical Squadron Organization appears at the end of this chapter.
ings, 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 or have held offices, 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. The squadron Nominating Committee exercises great care in the choice of this officer. In addition to a pleasing personality, a commander must have the time and motivation to carry out the important duties of the office. In most squadrons, it is traditional to elect the executive officer of the ending watch as the incoming commander for the next. While serving as executive officer, he or she 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 that officer becoming commander. Likewise, the administrative officer trains under executive officer's tutelage to become the executive officer and, ultimately, the commander.

5.2 Governing Board, District Council and Conference. Each commander is a member of the Governing Board. Each commander is also a member of the district council and the district conference.

5.3 Call to National Meetings. 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.

5.4 Commander's Kit. The Commander's Kit is a collection of useful documents which will aid commanders and their staffs in their duties. Maintained by the Leadership Development Subcommittee of the Squadron Support and Development Committee, the kit is located on the Site Index of the national website. Included in the kit are the USPS Bylaws, the Operations Manual, Squadron and District Officer Guides and Calendars, a Directory of National, District and Squadron Officers and other materials, such as sample forms necessary to the discharge of common squadron duties. The national secretary sends the link in a letter containing information concerning the various the available headquarters services designed to simplify and to assist him in many ways. The wise commander will introduce his bridge officers to the Commander's Kit and encourage them to become familiar with all of the contents - especially the Operations Manual.

5.5 Delegation. 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 interests 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 show either, and a commander who fails to delegate responsibility to his committee chairs invites dissension, disloyalty and the breakdown of the organization.

Appointments. USPS Bylaws allow the Governing Board to establish specific departmental committees as necessary to carry out the responsibilities assigned to the various departments. There is no wording in the bylaws requiring newly established committees to be formed at the district and squadron levels.

At the district and squadron level, the commander may appoint other committees consisting
of those customarily assigned to the various departments of a district or squadron by the policy and authority of USPS. They shall perform such duties as are usual for their responsibilities and as may be directed by their department heads and shall make such reports as are required by their operations. So, except for specific general and standing committees (nominations, planning, etc.), there are no specific requirements that squadrons and districts have the same committees as at the national level. It is implied that if they are appointed, that they should follow the national organization as to departments although they are not required to do so.

Squadron bylaws normally provide that the commander may appoint additional lieutenants to assist in carrying out the work of the squadron. These positions include chaplain, flag lieutenant, fleet captain, port captain and aides as deemed necessary. They perform such duties as assigned to 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 ceremonials, prayers and other activities in their respective spheres. Chaplains should also advise conference planning committees on scheduling conflicts with religious holidays.

- **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 dock master and he may be tasked with coordinating fleet activities outside the purview of the boating activities committee.

- **Port captains** are selected for their local knowledge of the major boating areas in which boating activities take place.

- **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.

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

5.7 **Duties of the Commander.** The duties of the commander are many and varied. 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.

A district holds conferences and council meetings for the benefit of the squadron; the squadron commander should encourage bridge officers and committee chairs to attend these.

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, if they wear uniforms, display their uniform insignia in accordance with USPS policy. Also, the commander should ensure that when members are on their boats, that the USPS ensign, squadron burgee and, if earned, officer flag are displayed 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. Refer to 4.23 on page 4-6 for additional guidance in determining circumstances under which squadron intervention is permissible.

5.8 Squadrons Apprentices Individuals under the age of 18 may join as an apprentice. 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.

5.9 Merit marks. Before 15 November of each year the commander must file with the area monitor, a national evaluator assigned to a district and its squadrons, 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. Recommendations are entered online at www.usps.org/merit mark after first logging into the system.

All commanders should study Merit Marks in Chapter 16 thoroughly and well in advance of the submission deadline. Early in the administration, organization of the systematic collection of data should be undertaken 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.

5.10 Merit Mark Awards. A member having received five merit marks will be awarded the status of “senior member” and the right to wear senior member’s insignia.

Upon the award of the 25th merit mark the member becomes a “life member,” is exempt from payment of national dues and is entitled to wear the distinctive uniform insignia and membership pin.

Upon the award of the fiftieth merit mark, the member becomes a Governing Board emeritus member and is entitled to wear the distinctive insignia and membership pin.

5.11 Annual schedule. Following is a basic list of events with some dates for a commander to follow with various forms available from headquarters:

- Attend meetings of the Governing Board. If the commander can not attend, he advises the district commander and makes appropriate vote authorization;
- Attend the district conferences and council meetings. Certify the names of delegates to the district council/conference to the district secretary on squadron letterhead, memorandum, or email;
- Submit suggestions for the agenda in ample time for the district conference;
- Send merit mark recommendations to the area monitor, a national evaluator assigned to a district and its squadrons, before 15 November. Use www.usps.org/meritmark to enter and submit merit marks. The previous commander should be consulted in order to consider work done for the squadron early in the calendar year;
- Send to USPS headquarters:
  - Report on elections of officers no later than 01 February each year, for listing in Directory of National, District and Squadron Officers online using Form OD-2. Please note that this MUST be done even if the COW falls after that date. Headquarters needs this information for the early versions of the officers address book;
  - Certify the names of delegates to each annual or special meeting of USPS. Provide a copy of such certification to each delegate. The National Secretary provides forms and instructions enclosed in each Call to Meeting; and
  - Information report (Form OD-2) listing information and appointments not otherwise reported.
• Check on improper uniforms, insignia or improper flying of USPS ensign (Chapter 12 and Appendix B);
• The Squadron Rules Committee should review the bylaws on an annual schedule and contact USPS when they are considering bylaw revisions;
• 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 continue, annual re-election is required;
• Appoint a “Personal Contact Committee” to contact those who are delinquent paying their dues to ensure they are not lost as a result of their own carelessness. Please note that if a dues payment is not made by the end of the member's anniversary dues date, it means loss of membership. When members do not pay their dues, they are no longer considered members of USPS and are classified as 'non-renewing.' Paying dues as a non-renewing member does not incur any penalty as there are no reinstatement fees or penalties charged. If non-renewing members pay dues after a one year period, their anniversary date is reset to the date they pay current dues;
• Direct the Property Officer to take and submit an annual and complete inventory of all squadron materials and equipment;
• It is the obligation of the retiring commander to pass on to the successor;
• All files concerning squadron business transacted during his term of office, including national and district correspondence and directives from all departments;
• National and district manuals and merit mark recommendations;
• Unused forms; and
• 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.

In consultation with the SEO, the commander appoints 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 SEO lists the names of these appointees on form ED-1, Squadron Appointees, along with other data and forwards them to the district educational officer immediately following the change of watch and whenever there is a change at any other time during the year.

5.12 Verification. The commander should verify that the treasurer has accomplished his assigned actions as outlined in the Treasurer’s Manual in a timely manner.

5.13 Delegates. At the national annual and special meetings each squadron is entitled to one delegate for every 100 active members or fraction thereof as of 75 days preceding the meeting. The squadron secretary handles notice of such delegate appointments in accordance with USPS bylaws, the Secretary's Manual, and by further instructions from the national secretary. The commander is also entitled to vote at annual or special meetings of USPS.

5.14 Officers. The commander is assisted by an executive officer, an educational officer, an administrative officer, a secretary and a treasurer, each of whom serves with the rank of lieutenant commander (Lt/C). Together this group is the squadron bridge. An assistant educational officer, assistant administrative officer, assistant secretary and assistant treasurer, if authorized, serve with the rank of first lieutenant (1/Lt or 1st/Lt); officers appointed by the commander serve with the rank of lieutenant (Lt).

5.15 Squadron Affairs are handled through appropriate committees whose chairs and assistant chairs the commander has selected and appointed for their willingness and ability to serve. Chairs each serve with the rank of lieutenant. Except for general and standing committees, which report to the membership and executive committee, respectively, it is necessary that the commander assign these committees either to the executive, administrative, secretary's or treasurer's department as outlined in the plan of organization and typical
squadron organization chart at the end of this chapter.

5.16 Executive officer (XO). The duties of the executive officer parallel those of the national and district executive officers. The commander may assign the XO various other duties as well.

The national, district and squadron organizational charts list some of the duties relating specifically to those committees handling the external affairs of the squadron. As outlined below, the commander should assign to the executive officer the supervision of those committees similarly assigned to the national and district executive officers.

5.17 Executive Department is under the supervision of the executive officer and is responsible for the functions generally described as external. The committees generally assigned to the squadron executive department are:

- Boat Show
- Cooperative Charting
- Liaison
- Legislative
- Public Relations
- Radio Technical
- Safety
- Vessel Safety Check
- Environmental

In most squadrons, the officers usually advance from executive officer to commander. While such practice would be workable written rigidly into the bylaws, it is generally considered to be in order unless the executive officer has failed to meet the qualifications required for commander. The executive officer should be one who is considered a good candidate for being commander. He should be of a temperament which will make him a willing and conscientious right-hand deputy to the commander. He should have initiative and executive ability. As supervisor of those committees coming within his jurisdiction, he shall also act as liaison, through the commander, with the district executive officer.

5.18 Boat Show Committee is responsible for squadron exhibits at all local boat shows and community fairs. It supervises the design, structure and display of the squadron booth. It prepares material to distribute to the public. These brochures present USPS and the efforts to promote safe boating through education. This committee schedules personnel to staff the booth.

The executive officer should recommend that members staffing a booth or exhibit wear USPS uniform; if this is not possible, he should suggest a USPS blazer, squadron polo or other clothing that will present a good image to the public.

A calendar showing the locations and dates of future public boating courses will promote interest and attendance in this civic endeavor. Copies of the boat show quiz are available from USPS headquarters. The quiz can be used at the show to demonstrate the need for boating education. Potential students can see how much they know, or don't know, about boating by checking their own answers. Also showing the Joe Namath Video Public Service Announcement (PSA) is another excellent way to call attention to the boating booth. The boat show committee is responsible for storing and maintaining the booth and other exhibit materials.

5.19 The Cooperative Charting Committee (CoChCom), under the direction of the committee chair, is responsible for coordinating cooperative charting activities within the squadron. The squadron may report on any area covered by National Ocean Service (NOS) products, but may also have a primary area as assigned by the district. The chair initiates activities such as special cruises, land parties and other activities as may be necessary to encourage participation in the program. The chair also holds training classes, processes all individual reports to the district chair, and checks all reports as prescribed.

In close cooperation with NOAA’s National Geodetic Survey Division (NGSD), the committee maintains a Geodetic Program where members help to verify the accuracy of reference points established on the surface of the earth by local, state, and national agencies.
It is the responsibility of the chair to ensure that his committee prepares articles for the squadron newsletter.

The chair is a member of the district cooperative charting committee.

The squadron chair establishes an awards program for the squadron and maintains whatever records may be required to support such a program.

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

5.20 The Squadron Liaison Committee (SLCom) reports to the executive officer, and consists of the squadron liaison officer (SLO) as chair, appointed by the commander, and other squadron members as he deems appropriate. The SLCom has the same responsibilities and restrictions on a squadron-area basis as those assigned to the DLCom (Chapter 4). The SLO has the responsibility of maintaining all contact records for the squadron. The squadron, the working unit of USPS, furthers the goals of USPS by developing and maintaining good relationships with key individuals of public agencies and other organizations. The committee members refer to USPS Manual for District and Squadron Liaison Officers for a list of suggested individuals and organizations. Each SLO should have an up-to-date copy of this manual which is sent to each squadron commander. Each squadron, under the direction of the SLCom, compiles a liaison directory, a list or file of community VIPs. This important reference initially contains names, addresses and phone numbers of local contacts (Red Cross director, mayor, commissioners, Department of Natural Resources personnel) and any person or organization interested in furthering boating safety and education. The public relations, safety, legislative and educational committees also contribute pertinent data. This network effort will help publicize the educational program and enhances the image and work of the squadron. The directory should be current, on-going and updated with additional records of new resources. When a person is invited to speak at a squadron function, the SLO prepares a fact sheet about USPS and the squadron so that the guest will have some knowledge about the organization, its goals and activities. Following an event it is valuable to record notations in the directory as to the date of appearance and subject expertise of the guest speaker. The directory now becomes a more valuable resource for future planning. It is important to nurture the relationships among local, state and national maritime organizations. The squadron directory is submitted to the DLO to become part of the district liaison directory. The SLO, or members of the SLCom, should be well acquainted with key individuals connected with organizations concerned with maritime recreational activities. The SLO recommends to the commander, without being asked, the names of possible invitees to any phase of squadron activities. The SLO or members of the SLCom will serve as host to the commander’s invited guests, as directed by the commander. The SLCom has the responsibility for presenting and retiring the colors. In matters relating to flag etiquette and protocol, the SLO is encouraged to refer to Chapter 12. The SLO makes timely reports to the district liaison officer (DLO) (Chapter 4), when requested, covering the squadron's liaison activities. These reports should include, but are not limited to, the specific liaison goals for the watch year, identity of guests and speakers at squadron functions, names of all organizations and individuals who have helped the squadron.

5.21 The Squadron Legislative Committee (SLegCom), under the leadership of the squadron legislative officer (SLegO), monitors and reviews enacted or proposed legislative matters affecting boating in the squadron area in order to keep the commander and membership informed. The squadron legislative officer works with the district legislative officer to keep the membership advised through communications with the district, and the district, in turn, with the national legislative committee, so that determination can be made concerning any action that can be taken on any given matter related to enacted or proposed legislation.
While legislation affecting boating may be of interest to USPS and its members, taking a position on matters of legislation as an organization or as a member of USPS is not in the member's best interests. Any member may appear as a private citizen at any hearing at which he desires to testify or to be heard, provided he does not intimate that he is representing USPS or any of its units. USPS stationery must not be used to write individual letters to legislative or political bodies or entities except to issue an invitation to a squadron activity or to confer honorary membership. Whenever there is any doubt concerning the propriety of action on any legislative matter, the district legislative officer must be consulted (Chapter 4).

The squadron legislative officer has the following duties:

- Effectively monitors all local legislative activity in the squadron's area. Some of this may be delegated, but responsibility for its satisfactory completion remains with the legislative officer;
- Attends all district council meetings and conferences to ensure that all information on legislative activity in the district is available to him and to his squadron. This responsibility should not be delegated to another squadron member;
- Forwards copies of all legislative reports to the district legislative officer so that the district benefits from his efforts;
- Keeps the squadron law and executive officers informed at all times about any legislative changes or modifications affecting recreational boating in the squadron's area. Such changes can range from local ordinances to national laws and regulations;
- Maintains records of legislative activity of the committee so that appropriate merit mark recommendations may be made each year.

5.22 The Squadron Public Relations committee (SPRCom) is chaired by the squadron public relations officer (S/PRO). This officer is critical to the growth and well-being of the squadron. The S/PRO is an active, seasoned member who is a self-starter with a creative imagination, communication skills, initiative and a desire to excel in promoting the squadron and its image. This officer and the PR committee members, who may include the SEO and XO, have two primary duties:

- Publicize information pertaining to the America's Boating Course dates, times, location(s) through various types of media (posters, flyers, newspapers, radio, TV); and
- Implement a year-round public relations program to enhance the squadron's image and increase public awareness of the contributions that the squadron and USPS make to boating safety through education. The PR committee is the most important link between USPS and the public.

Since the squadron executive committee may be the prime source of information that it should convey to the public, the executive officer should invite the S/PRO to attend executive committee meetings.

In addition to being selected for initiative and ability to serve in this position, consideration should be given to the candidate's willingness to remain in office for several years because of the time it takes to establish effective contacts and develop well-coordinated public relations programs. The S/PRO reports to and works under the direction of the squadron executive officer and is a member of the district public relations committee. The S/PRO makes use of the PRO-Log (PR Manual) and all products and material available from the National Public Affairs Committee (PA-Com). It is the duty of the S/PRO to collect descriptions and receipts of the various projects that promote and advertise the public boating classes. He must maintain a list of local media (newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations, and the editors, and program managers. A new S/PRO should visit each and become known. Another activity which is designated to the squadron public relations committee is the fostering of entries in the three PR competitive contests: the Charles F. Chapman PR Award for compiling the best squadron scrapbook; the Carl C. Mahnken Commander's Cup Award for excellence in developing a slide presentation; and the Roger Upton Video Contest for creating a video production explaining a particular concept and
using a variety of visual images. The S/PRO and his committee have the responsibility and specific duties of promoting classes, image building and promoting the benefits of USPS to the public. However, every member of the squadron shares these responsibilities in telling all boaters who we are, what we do and why they will benefit by being involved with USPS.

5.23 The Squadron Radio Technical Officer (SRTO) is a member of the district radio technical committee (DRTCom) [Chapter 4]. The individual selected for this office should have a broad technical background in maritime electronic systems, including telecommunications, computer systems, and information technology; however, this knowledge may be augmented by assistant RTOs. The SRTO has the following responsibilities:

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

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

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

D) Attends, or has a representative attend, meetings of the district radio technical committee. When any squadron member with an interest in radio technical activities attends a Governing Board meeting, he should attempt to attend open meetings of the elective courses division and the boating activities committee to determine which national committee has responsibility for his area of interest. The SRTO, in his role as liaison between the DRTCom and his squadron, is alert for articles on maritime electronics in squadron publications, reports, correspondence and minutes of RTCom activities and brings them to the attention of the district chair and national chairs of committees concerned with these issues.

Increasingly, committee members may have information technology, computer and Internet/website skills. Many squadrons have established a computer systems committee under the secretary to manage the website.

5.24 Squadron Safety Officer (SSO) The squadron commander appoints a safety officer on the basis of his interest in marine or industrial safety and carries on an informative program during the year in class work and during the boating season.

He should work closely with the educational staff to relate the teaching of certain subjects in their application to the promotion of safer boating. He is responsible for distribution of bulletins, posters, safety literature, etc., received from the National and District Safety Committees. It is the SSO's job to inform and advise the squadron membership in conjunction with the Squadron Legislative Officer of any state legislation pertaining to boating. The executive officer should encourage him to become a certified Vessel Safety Examiner.

He should write and submit safety articles to the squadron newspaper. It is his duty, together with the Public Relations Officer, to promote National Safe Boating Week and make the public aware of safe boating practice all year, thereby performing a civic service. He should originate information and news applicable to his local area. He should organize an adequate safety patrol at squadron rendezvous. He should initiate such safety special events as will educate and interest the members of the squadron. He is expected to communicate with other safety organizations in his/her area and serve as a member of the District Safety Committee. [Chapter 4]. The SSO is responsible for the completion and submission of the Safe Boating Week Campaign Activities Report and the Unites States Power Squadrons/Motor Boating Chapman Safety Award reports. Squadron members should be cognizant of any deserving member on an individual basis, company or organization on a squadron/district area-wide basis as a recipient of this award and bring it to the attention of the SSO and the DSO [Chapter 4.]

5.24.1 Environmental Committee promotes
coastline, beach and waterway clean-up. For more information on "America's Water-way Watch," the National Weather Service and the Environment see Chapter 3.

5.25 Vessel Safety Check Committee. The executive officer should encourage squadron members to become vessel safety examiners.

There are various requirements before a person is qualified for this important function. A member must have classroom training, pass a proctored exam and conduct five safety checks under supervision. Each Vessel Examiner (VE) makes a difference in recreational boating safety by making certain that boats meet the federal and state requirements for safety equipment.

After the VE determines a boat passes the inspection, the VE may affix an appropriate decal on the port side of the vessel.

An official uniform identifies those USPS members who are VEs in the VSC program [Chapter J].

The environmental committee promotes coastline, beach, and waterway clean-up efforts through the volunteer efforts of squadron membership. Boaters help especially by removing trash and debris found in waterways that cannot be accessed directly from the shore.

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

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

Because the administrative officer may progress to executive officer and to commander, great care should be taken by the nominating committee in assessing the qualifications and selection of a nominee for this office.

He is next in line in command in the event of absence or incapacity of the commander and the executive officer. As in the case of the executive officer, it is desirable to assign definite duties and responsibilities to the administrative officer to provide the background and experience that will make a good executive officer and commander.

5.27 The Squadron Membership Committee (SMemCom) is under the leadership of the squadron membership chair, an outstanding member dedicated to USPS, appointed by the commander. He reports to the administrative officer. This committee plays a large role in the future growth and success of a squadron. The committee is concerned with the acquisition of new members. The ability of USPS to protect its private status and the integrity of its educational programs depends on strict adherence to membership procedures set forth in the Membership Manual. Refer to Chapter 23. The membership committee reviews, evaluates and processes applications for membership. Under guidelines approved by the Operating Committee, its prime function is to accept applications and recommend these applicants to the squadron's executive committee for approval. After that, membership responsibility passes to the member involvement committee for familiarization of the new members and their assimilation into the squadron. The key to successful acquisition of a prospective member is in the timing and expeditious processing of the required paperwork. Procedures have been designed to eliminate time consuming delays which can result in the loss of potential new members. From the moment the individual indicates a desire to join USPS, time is critical. A knowledgeable, well organized and efficient membership committee translates into a greater number of acceptances. The squadron membership committee can be small, perhaps consisting of a chair and just three or four others. Trained interviewers, when needed, may be recruited from the member involvement committee. Interviewers are trained by the membership committee for this purpose and supplied with the necessary forms and pamphlets. The membership committee must make a con-
certed effort to select and train interviewers in the procedures and techniques used in conducting an interview in the most efficient and expeditious manner. Because interviewing time is often limited, the interviewer should:

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

B) Evaluate the individual's desirability as a member. Effective interviewing requires skill and expertise. These qualities determine the success of the squadron in acquiring members and identifying particular expertise which may be beneficial to the squadron.

The Squadron Member Involvement Committee (SMIC) is composed of a group of enthusiastic squadron members who are responsible for the involvement both in educational and social activities of all members. They must encourage new and active members, as well as inactive members, to participate fully in squadron educational and social activities.

This committee shall be large enough to involve ALL members, for example, one (1) committee member for each fifteen (15) squadron members.

The squadron member involvement committee is responsible for the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

G) Presenting the squadron orientation programs;

H) Encouraging youth, ages 6-14, to participate in the annual USPS Poster Contest. READER: WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THE POSTER CONTEST? [Chapter 3]. Youth involvement leads to adult membership;

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

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

K) Assisting yearly with contacting non-renewals. The national membership committee sponsors a youth poster contest [Chapter 3]. Squadron winners, first, second and third place in each category will be announced at the district spring conference or summer rendezvous and will be entered at the national level. All participants at the national level will receive certificates of appreciation. It is also suggested that all participants be recognized by their squadrons. There is a William Selden IV Member Involvement Retention Award - MIRA [Chapter 3] developed by the national membership committee. The committee is endeavoring to accumulate retention and involvement ideas so that these may be disseminated to all USPS squadrons. The following rules describe this award:

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

5.28 The Squadron Boating Activities committee (SBACom) plans and organizes various boating activities. Participating in these events fosters fun and friendships. Plans might include rendezvous, raft-ups, cruises, picnics or other on-the-water activities. Boating unites the squadron members in a cohesive unit. The SBACom has the responsibility for coordinating and implementing the boating activity programs in the squadron.

The SBACom meets and selects dates and locations for rendezvous and cruises and clears these with the chair of the district committee so that as few conflicts as possible will occur with cruises of nearby squadrons, district gatherings or local yacht clubs to which members may belong. The SBACom submits these plans early in the boating season to the squadron executive committee for approval.

The chair ensures that at least one port captain is designated for each major boating area and that all areas within the squadron's geographic regions are covered. Designated committee members are very knowledgeable and articulate about local waters, marinas, repair facilities, and other shore-side facilities and services of interest to cruising members [Chapter 3]. In some squadrons there are two sub-committees, one to take charge of cruises and nautical contests and the other to be in charge of rendezvous. At all times consideration is given to the safety and well-being of all who participate.

Once the executive committee approves of these suggested cruises and rendezvous, the committee works closely with the editor of the squadron newsletter in order to make all members aware of dates and details as early as possible.

Such information as to what arrangements are being made for overnight stops, fuel and meal accommodations, time and place of departure, details of courses to be followed and events to be held will all help to ensure the success of these undertakings. The chair encourages all members holding an amateur radio license to participate in USPS-CPS amateur radio network activities every Saturday at 1700 GMT on 14.323MHz. The squadron boating activities chair is to maintain close liaison with the district chair and to support each program of the boating activities effort. He works with squadron officers on program content and member selection of the committee. Guidance and assistance may be obtained from the district boating activities committee chair and from related national committees. Forms for each program may be obtained from USPS headquarters or the national boating activities committee.

5.29 The Squadron Meetings, Programs and Entertainment Committee plays an important part in the success of the squadron. Affairs, such as anniversary parties, change of watch dinners and commander's balls, require much attention to detail. A large committee might be divided into three smaller committees or sub-committees, each with specific responsibilities. Various detailed tasks are easier to manage and can be delegated to a smaller working group. The meetings sub-committee secures the meeting place, arranges for the conduct of the meeting such as size of the head table, rostrum, number of seats and microphones, tickets, menus, decorations and flags.

The program sub-committee is responsible for obtaining the guest speaker or the “program for the evening.”

The duties might entail requesting the “biography” of a speaker and preparing his introduction. It also might prepare announcement posters or the news article about the program plans which will appear in the squadron newsletter and local newspapers. The entertainment sub-committee arranges for an orchestra or some type of music, obtains equipment for showing a movie or secures any necessary equipment and works out details in cooperation with the program committee. It is important that the meetings, programs and entertainment chair informs the commander of all plans prior to making final arrangements, and it is the commander's privilege to finalize seating arrangements.

5.30 The Leadership Development Committee (LDCom) conducts the squadron operations
training and leadership development programs in accordance with standards set forth by the national operations training committee [Chapter 3]. It is responsible for recruiting and training other members of the squadron and for providing trained instructors for conducting its many courses and programs. The LDCom chair reports to and consults with the district LDCom chair [Chapter 3]. This committee has the responsibility to employ two important programs. The operations training program is a management tool which offers members the opportunity to learn about the workings of USPS, including the relationship among squadrons, districts and the national organization. It includes insight into squadron education, training, staffing, planning, conducting a meeting, USPS protocol and communications. The program, presented in modules, normally takes about twelve hours in class; however, there is no exam. Each squadron offers the program at least once each year and encourages all members to complete it. It is a pre-requisite for becoming commander, unless waived by the district commander under extenuating circumstances. The leadership program presents workable tools for a practical approach to leadership. It provides a means of identifying and choosing the proper course of action in using situational leadership and various leadership styles. The program consists of three parts: leadership, communications and motivation. This program normally takes about three hours in class; however, there is no exam. It is recommended that the program be offered at least every other year. The OT chair requests from headquarters on forms OT-2 and OT-3, certificates of completion for each member completing the operations training and leadership development programs. Presenters Guides for the OT and LD programs are available as tools for squadron chairs and presenters to aid and facilitate their presentations. Both contain important tips for each topic and include PowerPoint slides and speaker notes, OT and LD program manuals, forms and this Operations Manual (used extensively in OT) which may be downloaded from the LDCom web-site.

5.31 Educational Officer. Each squadron is to have a squadron educational officer (SEO), who supervises the educational program of the squadron as directed in [Chapter 6]. Nominees for this position must be approved by the District Educational Officer or his designee.

5.32 Assistant SEO. If authorized by the squadron bylaws, there may also be an assistant squadron educational officer (ASEO) to assist the SEO as directed in [Chapter 6]. Nominees for this position must be approved by the District Educational Officer or his designee.

5.33 Squadron Educational Activities are found in [Chapter 6], which contains the necessary information to execute the position of SEO. This Chapter is currently under revision.

5.34 Secretary. The duties of the secretary (Secy) are referred to in USPS Bylaws and are outlined in detail in squadron bylaws. A stand-alone Secretary's Manual and the Squadron Job Descriptions appended to this Operations Manual contain the necessary information to execute the position of squadron secretary. Additional duties of the secretary have developed as a result of need.

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

- Historian
- Directory (roster)
- Calling (telephone)
- Newsletter (publications)
- The Ensign correspondent
- Computer systems committee (website)

5.35 The Squadron Historian. For the preservation and indexing of valuable historical material, each squadron should have an historian. The commander appoints a member willing to serve in the office more than one year so that the historian becomes a link between changes of watch.

The squadron historian has the rank of lieutenant (Lt). Files of correspondence, records and reports from all officers and committee chairs will attain considerable bulk and are submitted to the historian for retention in the archives. The Historian may dispose of those with no historical value. Discretion is used to decide which files to retain; however, it is a requirement that membership
records be kept for five years. Much of the routine correspondence concerning address changes, transfers and resignations quickly lose value and can safely be destroyed. However, there are records and reports which are kept because they are the history of the squadron. The historian prepares and files the annual squadron reports the Historian’s Form, sometimes referred to as Form H-701 which is currently being redeveloped. It is due 30 days after the squadron's change of watch. Two copies of the printed or electronic reports are forwarded to the district historian who retains one copy for the district files and forwards the second to the national historian committee representative. Squadron historians must archive the completed report using the designated history archive function. With the report data archived, prior year history reports can be recreated. The historian is responsible for publishing articles in the newsletter which relate to the history of the organization, particularly to commemorate USPS Founders’ Day (2 February) or anniversaries.

The squadron historian's records include:

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

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

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

5.37 The Squadron Telephone Calling Committee is a very important and valuable group. This special committee is probably unique at the squadron level. This committee is the personal contact, a real person, notifying the squadron members by telephone of coming events and inviting them to participate in these activities. An oral invitation to a meeting, rendezvous or social has special meaning when it is a personalized message. Remember that some members do not have or do not use email communications. Usually one person is designated as chair, and the committee members are assigned various members to contact on a regular schedule. This committee has the dual role of also being part of the membership involvement committee under the administrative department.

Increasingly, squadron members use email and text messaging which is fast and convenient. However, do not dismiss the value of a member to member conversation with a real person. Not all members have computers or smart phones. The committee should identify these members.
The following are guidelines for the telephone committee:

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

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

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

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

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

Most squadron newsletters are published monthly, with the possible exception of July and August.

In addition to the normal distribution of publications to the squadron membership, the secretary or editor should send copies to the national bridge officers, the chair and assistant chair of the national publications committee [Chapter 3] and to the chair of the district publications committee [Chapter 4].

Squadron newsletters that are outstanding and follow specific accepted rules of good publication receive recognition from the national publications committee.

The squadron newsletter must conform to national communications committee graded criteria. The criteria contain mandatory requirements and suggested items. The editor sends four issues before 31 October to a designated advisor assigned to a district and its squadrons. The advisor will determine if the publication is worthy of the Distinctive Communicator Award (DCA), a special logo that appears on newsletters the following year [Chapter 3].

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

- Writes and solicits articles of noteworthy activities such as cruises, rendezvous, public relations, cooperative charting efforts and other information of national interest and forwards them to The Ensign editor
- With the assistance of the squadron or district photographer, obtains pictures to accompany
such articles, as well as photos suitable for The Ensign cover pages

- Solicits advertising for The Ensign and may earn commissions for the squadron
- Becomes familiar with The Ensign monthly feature and deadline schedule
- Checks the squadron newsletter distribution list to see that the appropriate member of The Ensign committee receives a copy of all publications.

5.40 Many squadrons have established Squadron Computer Systems Committees (SComSysCom) and the number continues to increase. These committees are valuable in promoting continuity in the use of computers within USPS and also alerting the public to the location and work of USPS. The SComSysCom has four main functions:

- Maintains the local roster
- Locates local help-desk for USPS supported software
- Creates the local website
- Interacts with district ComSysCom [Chapter 4] and the Information Technology Committee [Chapter 3].

Many squadrons have designed their own website. The squadron website must conform to national communications committee graded criteria. The criteria contain mandatory requirements and suggested items. A model website is available from headquarters that includes all of the graded features. The webmaster should contact his designated web advisor who is assigned to a district and its squadrons. The advisor will determine if the website has mandatory items displayed and is worthy of the Distinctive Communicator Award (DCA), a special logo that appears on websites the following year. The squadron website can be thought of as a giant marketing tool, not just for the squadron, but for the public boating community as well. On the site, the webmaster may list information about the squadron, such as the location of the unit, the dates and places of the various public boating courses and a contact person. In addition, pictures, articles and other newsworthy items show not only why safe boating is important, but also why America's Boating Club is fun and a family oriented organization.

Secretaries and treasurers easily maintain their records with their counterparts, district secretaries and treasurers, using the on-line resources available from national headquarters. Each squadron and district is able to establish an electronic mailing list. This mailing list can be used to post notices, exchange ideas or supplement the squadron newsletter. Many of the forms used in USPS are maintained on the ever-expanding and improving USPS members' website. The national committee counterpart is the information technology committee [Chapter 3] which is available to assist squadrons with their web pages.

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

- Member name
- Current job within USPS
- Address
- Rank and grade of member
- Telephone number
- Name of boat
- Spouse name

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

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

A) USPS news groups
B) Mailing list (email)
C) Members’ email directory
D) Course descriptions, advanced and elective
E) USPS graphics, clip art, approved logos with copy right and trade mark information
5.41 Printing. The squadron may require a good deal of printing such as letterheads, envelopes, application blanks, bylaws, tickets and menus for meetings and rendezvous, programs and possible yearbooks and squadron newsletters.

Unless someone is especially designated to arrange for this work, ordinarily it will be the secretary's duty. The squadron can save money by using good judgment in selecting a printer, deciding whether a given job should be done by printing or some other process, and estimating quantities required. The National Secretary may be of help to squadrons requiring this service.

5.42 Duties of the Treasurer. The duties of the squadron treasurer are referred to in USPS Bylaws and squadron bylaws. A stand-alone Treasurer's Manual and the Squadron Job Descriptions appended to this Operations Manual contain the necessary information to execute the position of squadron treasurer.

5.43 The Executive Committee handles the business of the squadron. This committee usually consists of the bridge officers (commander, executive officer, educational officer, administrative officer, secretary, and treasurer), and three or more members-at-large elected by the membership. In addition, a squadron may, if its bylaws so provide, permit its immediate past commander to serve as a voting member of the executive committee. All members of the executive committee must be elected by the squadron's membership.

This committee acts as a board of directors and advises the commander on most aspects of squadron activities. The squadron bylaws usually define the powers and functions of the executive committee.

The executive committee has general charge of the policy, management and finances of the squadron. It has custody of all property of the squadron, including money. All bills contracted by the squadron must first be approved by the executive committee and its recommendations for the following year must be presented to the membership for vote in time for dues notices to be prepared and mailed by headquarters.

Another responsibility of the executive committee is the approval of applications to membership. Candidates are recommended by the membership committee, and these recommendations are acted upon by the executive committee. This committee also approves nominations for associate membership, honorary membership and for transfers into the squadron.

The executive committee may approve a selection of apprentices as provided for in USPS and squadron bylaws.

The executive committee interests itself in the educational program of the squadron and approves the times and places for instruction.

Any vacancy in an elective office in the squadron may be filled by the executive committee until the next meeting of the squadron or until a successor shall be duly elected.

5.44 There are certain squadron functions performed by committees designated in the squadron plan of organization as either General Committees or Standing Committees. By the nature of their duties and responsibilities they report to the membership (general committees) or the executive committee (standing committees).

5.45 The chair and all members of the following General Committees are elected by the squadron in the spring or fall, depending on the bylaws of the squadron:
• Auditing
• Nominating
• Rules

5.46 The Auditing Committee audits funds and records on the basis of the fiscal year established in the bylaws. Usually the committee consists of a chair and two members who are elected annually. The committee, experienced in finance and record keeping, is responsible for auditing and verifying the financial status and procedures of the treasurer's department.

The auditing committee furnishes a detailed report of performance and accuracy to the membership before it accepts the annual treasurer's report. Procedures for auditing the treasurer's records are in the Treasurer's Manual.

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

Election of the members of the nominating committee itself is almost as important as the election of officers. The commander points out any restrictions on nominations imposed by the squadron and national bylaws or procedures. It is undesirable to nominate newer members; however, past commanders are well qualified because of their experience. Furthermore, past commanders have already served, and they usually are not considered for elective office, although they are good candidates for general committees.

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

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

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

The committee weighs the qualifications of members being considered for elective offices. Nominees for bridge officers are chosen on a basis similar to sound business practices. The duties of the job come first. The nominee possesses the requisite abilities, including dependability, willingness, steadiness of work habits and the time to devote to the job. He is well enough liked to inspire members to work with him. It is important that the committee consider the views of all of the membership, not a select group.

The nominating committee asks the candidate if he is willing to stand for election.

The nominees for squadron educational officer and his assistant require special handling. The committee sends these to the national educational officer or his designee for approval. After receiving approval and when the committee reaches a conclusion for a slate of nominees, it submits its report to the secretary. It may report on the nominations to the membership when called on to do so.
When the committee reaches a conclusion, but before it reports the nominations to the secretary, the nominating committee chair secures from the national educational officer or his designee approval of the nominees for educational officer and his assistant.

When the national educational officer or his designee approves of the nominees, the committee submits its report to the secretary. The secretary includes the report of the nominating committee in the call to the meeting at which the election is conducted.

Any member who does not support the nominations of the nominating committee may submit other nominations by petition, as specified by the squadron bylaws, to the secretary. If provided in the bylaws, nominations from the floor by active members may be made to fill a vacancy at the time of election in a properly formulated slate of nominees.

When the national educational officer or his designee approves of the nominees for educational officer and his assistant.

Also there are copies, which may be downloaded, on the members' page on USPS Website.

A definite procedure exists when it becomes necessary to amend squadron bylaws, or to change a squadron name, or to adopt bylaws by a new squadron. The usual practice is for the executive committee to discuss and agree on the desired changes. The preparation of the specific amendments is assigned to the rules committee.

It is important that an early, informal review be made by USPS ComRules, before amendments are presented to the membership, to avoid any embarrassment arising from issues which may cause the need for a second vote of the membership.

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

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

It is imperative that squadron bylaws be consistent with the policies of USPS. In addition, squadron bylaws must also be consistent with the bylaws of the district to which that squadron is assigned. At frequent intervals the squadron rules committee compares its current bylaws with the "model" bylaws for squadrons and the district bylaws. A copy of the current model is included in the "kit" provided to commanders upon their election. The rules committee may order printed copies and copies on diskette of the "model" bylaws from headquarters.

The ComRules assignments are listed in USPS Directory of National, District and Squadron Officers and on the committee website. Any deviation from the model is underlined in red or highlighted and explained in an accompanying letter. One copy of the current bylaws accompanies any proposed amendment. Prior review by the Committee on Rules helps to avoid ambiguities and other difficulties and expedites subsequent approval by the committee. Following action on changes suggested by the Committee on Rules, the bylaws or amendments are presented to the squadron executive committee which then proposes adoption by the membership. Care is taken during the process that any current bylaw provisions relating to amendments are followed closely.

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

One copy, preferably electronic, of the bylaws or amendments adopted by the membership and one signed copy of the certification should be sent
to the member of USPS ComRules with oversight responsibility. Any electronic copy which includes signatures must be scanned or may be mailed as a single sheet if scanning is not available. Bylaws become effective on approval by ComRules. The secretary should then notify the membership.

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

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

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

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

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

5.51 Some squadrons may have need of a House Committee to manage buildings or premises owned or leased by the squadron for offices or meeting purposes.

This committee also assists as directed by the commander in obtaining rooms and facilities for meetings, educational programs and other squadron activities.

Before the squadron builds or acquires property for any cause, the commander shall discuss the situation with the national law officer before the squadron commits itself to any real estate action.

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

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

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

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

Before the law officer files incorporation papers, he sends a copy of the proposed articles of incorporation to USPS law officer for his approval.

If such incorporation requires any change in a squadron's bylaws, such proposed change or changes must also be submitted to USPS chair of the Committee on Rules for consideration and approval.

5.54 The appointed **Squadron Supply Officer** brings to each meeting a small supply of burgees, ensigns, insignia, belts, and tie clips. Most of these items are obtained from the Ship's Store located at headquarters. The supply officer also has catalogs to which he can refer the members. He is an advisor and is completely familiar with all provisions of the bylaws and the Operations Manual which affect these items. He reports to the administrative officer any irregularities concerning articles which have definite specifications or of unauthorized sources selling USPS ensigns or articles bearing its reproduction. The supply officer provides a great service and convenience for members of USPS. This officer may serve the commander as a standing committee or may report directly to the treasurer, depending on the squadron bylaws.

5.55 The **Property Officer** and members of his committee, appointed by the commander, maintain an inventory of all properties belonging to the squadron. These include films, projectors, slides, flags, teaching aids, computers and awards. It is important to know the location of these items.

The property officer makes a report of this inventory at least once each year to the executive committee. This annual inventory is necessary for the squadron to provide adequate insurance coverage for its property. This committee may report directly to the commander as a standing committee or may serve in the treasurer's department, depending on the bylaws.

5.56 **Business Meetings.** Each business meeting of the squadron should be well planned. All squadron meetings are held in squadron buildings, marinas, schools, available buildings or other appropriate facility. After the place has been selected, notice should be mailed to members. The commander presides at the meeting and is flanked by the lieutenant commanders and such national and district officers as may be present. The various officers and committee chairs should prepare reports for the membership. The meetings committee, entertainment committee or other group should make arrangements for post-meeting entertainment.

5.57 **Squadron Annual Meeting.** The squadron's annual meeting is the meeting at which squadron officers are elected. Many squadrons conduct their annual meeting between October 1st and December 31st. This allows newly elected officers to attend the USPS Annual meeting normally conducted at the end of January. The timing of this annual meeting Change of Watch (COW) should be in the squadron bylaws. This timetable also permits smooth transition at the national, district, and squadron levels. The period between election and assumption of command permits orderly completion of the old administration's affairs and preliminary organization time for the new.

It is desirable to have good attendance at the annual meeting as this is the principal business meeting of the squadron year. The retiring commander should make the program for the annual meeting sufficiently interesting to attract good representation.

Squadron meetings are sometimes followed or preceded by a dinner for which a charge is made; however, a member must be allowed to attend any
meeting itself without charge. A member cannot be required to pay for the privilege of voting.

At the annual meeting the order of business outlined in USPS Bylaws should be used. All elected and appointed officers should render complete reports on activities within their purview. The commander's report should outline what has been accomplished by the squadron generally and include a brief resume of what USPS has accomplished in the interest of boating.

The treasurer shall submit for acceptance a complete financial report after approval of the report by the auditing committee. To aid the secretary, all reports should be in writing and submitted in electronic format.

All appointed officers should be discharged with thanks by the retiring commander, in deference to selections which may be made by his successor. The chair should then be surrendered to the senior national or district officer present, or to a past commander of the squadron for conducting the election of officers for the ensuing term.

The nominating committee chair should read the report to the membership present.

The secretary should then be asked for any nominations as prescribed under the bylaws. The balloting for office should then begin and continue until all elective offices have been properly filled. Polls should remain open only for the first hour after the election has been initiated as an order of business, and all contested offices must be decided by secret ballots cast in person. If no offices are contested, the election may be approved by a motion for unanimous consent by a show of hands. If passed, the election is completed.

Upon election to office, the new squadron bridge, other elected officers, and new members of the executive committee should be introduced to the general membership. In squadrons whose bylaws provide for those elected to assume their new duties immediately, the newly elected officers are called to their proper places on the dais and are inducted by the senior official present. After an acceptance speech by the newly-elected commander, new business is taken up and the squadron moves forward under its new leadership.

In many squadrons, bylaws and long-standing custom call for the new bridge and others to be installed at a formal change of watch ceremony. Where that concept is used, the time between the annual meeting and the change of watch should be a reasonable period so as not to delay the programs of the incoming administration. It should be noted that newly elected officers are not officially recognized until they are pledged in.

5.58 Disciplinary Action. Any member may file a charge of misconduct against any other member. The charge must be filed with the secretary of United States Power Squadrons and subsequent actions taken as prescribed in USPS Bylaws and [Appendix E].

5.59 Squadron Bylaws. It is imperative that squadron bylaws be consistent with the policies and bylaws of USPS and the bylaws of the district to which the squadron is assigned. At least annually a squadron's Rules Committee should compare its current bylaws with the current published version of Model Bylaws for Squadrons of USPS® which can be found on and downloaded from the Committee on Rules (ComRules) on the national website. The current squadron bylaws should also be compared with the bylaws of its assigned district which can also be found on the ComRules website.

Once it is determined that a chartered squadron's existing bylaws are to be amended, the entire proposed bylaws, together with material supporting and explaining deviations from the model should first be sent for formal review to the ComRules oversight representative assigned to support squadrons in that district. These committee representatives are listed in the USPS Directory of National, District and Squadron Officers, on the ComRules website under “Oversight” and in the introduction to the squadron model bylaws. Any proposed deviation from the model wording must be explained in documentation. Deviations from the model may be permissible for a variety of reasons as long as they do not violate the USPS bylaws or USPS policy. The ComRules representa-
tive will review the entire bylaws as proposed, to ensure that they will be consistent with USPS bylaws and policy if adopted. The representative will indicate any modifications which should be made and may also make some optional suggestions from experience with other squadron or district bylaws.

It must be emphasized that whenever a modification of squadron bylaws is contemplated, even including just a name change, the entire document must be in consonance with USPS bylaws and USPS policy. This may mean that portions of previously approved bylaws no longer meet USPS policy or are now out of compliance with changes in USPS bylaws, and therefore also need to be changed. It is much easier to accomplish this and keep up to date with USPS bylaws and policy changes by downloading the current squadron model bylaws and tailor them to meet the squadron's present needs than it is to attempt to force existing bylaws to conform to the model.

After incorporation of any changes suggested by ComRules, the squadron Executive Committee should endorse the bylaws or amendments and then propose them to the squadron membership for adoption. Care should be taken during this phase to ensure that the steps below and the provisions of the squadron's current bylaws relating to amendments are followed precisely.

When a bylaws proposal is to be voted upon, members must be informed of the proposed changes in either of two ways:

1) Publishing a full, verbatim disclosure of the amendments or changes in a timely notice of the meeting at which a vote is to be taken; or

2) Making available multiple copies of the current and proposed bylaws for inspection at two successive regular or special membership meetings. The second of these meetings may be the one at which the vote is to be taken. During the voting meeting, additional amendments and/or changes may be introduced from the floor and require only a simple majority vote to be included into the proposal. However, after all such additions have been decided, the final vote for adoption requires a two-thirds majority vote to adopt the proposed bylaws. The notices of these meetings must provide a statement of the means of notification to be made available so that members may understand the proposed changes and specifically indicate the meeting at which the vote to adopt will be taken.

After adoption by the membership, the squadron secretary should submit to the ComRules representative a request for final approval. This request must be accompanied by the following material:

- One complete copy of the bylaws as adopted by the squadron. This copy may be sent by U.S. mail, but sending it electronically in MS Word DOC format is cheaper, much faster and easier for ComRules to process.

- Three paper copies (not folded) or one electronic copy of the Certification and Approvals page, shown as page x in the introduction to the squadron model, properly signed and dated by the squadron secretary, attesting to the bylaws' adoption.

The ComRules representative will review the amended bylaws in their entirety and if no defects are found, grant final approval by signing and dating the approval block on the signature page. That date becomes the effective date of the revised bylaws. If ComRules detects a flaw in the adopted bylaws, such as a failure to incorporate modifications suggested at time of preliminary review, the squadron may be required to repeat the amendment process to correct the defect before final approval can be granted.

Following receipt of final approval by ComRules, the membership should be so advised through a notice in the squadron's newsletter or by other broad-based media.

It should be noted that throughout the bylaws amendment process correspondence between the squadron and the ComRules representative can be significantly expedited if email is employed. Email addresses for all ComRules representatives are given on the committee's website and in the national directory. All transmittal of bylaws and all
documentation may be by email attachment, in which case only single copies of each are required as long as any signatures are faithfully reproduced.

Once approval is granted, if not already done by the ComRules representative, the squadron should perform final housekeeping on the document, including showing the effective date on the cover and page footers, and sending it back to the ComRules contact for uploading to the ComRules website's repository of squadron bylaws and to the USPS headquarters squadron bylaw files.

5.60 Changing a Squadron's Name. Changing the name of a squadron is effected by amending its bylaws. A squadron name must include its geographical significance followed by the words Power Squadron (Inc.) or Sail and Power Squadron (Inc.). The amendment procedure may differ from the above process depending on the type of change intended. To preface “Power Squadron” with the words “Sail and”, the normal bylaws amendment process as described above should be followed, keeping in mind that the entire bylaws will still be reviewed, not just the name change. However, to change the geographic component of the name - that part which distinguishes it from other squadrons - the district council must review and agree to the change prior to contacting ComRules for their review. The final approval of a change to the geographic portion of a squadron’s name must be granted by the USPS Governing Board. If there are no negative findings, the Chairman of ComRules will act as the squadron’s advocate and present the name change request to the Board of Directors. At the next meeting of the Governing Board the national executive officer can move to approve the name change.

Finally, a squadron which is incorporated should remember that when it changes its name it may also be required to amend its state articles of incorporation. The district law officer or an appropriate state agency should be consulted in this regard. In no case may a squadron amend its state articles with respect to its name prior to USPS approval of its name change.

5.61 Establishing a New Squadron. A group of 25 active members of USPS can apply for a charter to establish a new squadron, unless otherwise approved by the Board of Directors, by submitting a written application, addressed to the Governing Board, to the chair of the Committee on Rules, accompanied by a set of bylaws proposed for that squadron, and by meeting such other requirements as the Governing Board from time to time prescribes. Members signing the application attach letters of transfer to such new squadron endorsed appropriately by the commander or secretary of the squadron from which the member wishes to transfer, or by the national secretary regarding any unattached member who wishes to transfer.

Unless otherwise ordered by the Governing Board, a charter becomes effective as of the date upon which its issuance is authorized and it bears that date. Names of charter members appearing on the charter are in alphabetical order without rank or title except grade designation.

The squadron charter is issued by the national secretary upon approval by the Governing Board of the application together with its accompanying bylaws. Such charter may be revoked, withdrawn or suspended by the Governing Board when in its judgment continuation of the squadron is not in the best interests of USPS.

Incorporation of squadrons. It is desirable for a squadron to incorporate, and it may do so as a non-profit organization [IRS Code 501(c)(3)] under the laws of the state in which it has its main activities. Consult the law officer of the squadron or district for information on the advantages.

Before incorporation papers are filed, a copy of the proposed articles of incorporation must be sent to USPS law officer for his approval, if such incorporation requires any change in squadron bylaws.

5.62 Gifts, bequests and grants. USPS or any of its divisions, committees, districts or squadrons, may accept gifts and bequests directly or indirectly. For Endowment and Educational Fund information, refer to [Appendix F].

The Board of Directors must approve acceptance of:
• A non-designated gift having a monetary value of $10,000 or more;
• A gift of any size designated for a specific purpose, when offered to USPS national organization; and
• A gift having a monetary value of $5,000 or more designated for a specific purpose, when offered to a squadron or district.

All pertinent information regarding the proposed gift, especially any conditions attached to it, is to be furnished to the Board of Directors for evaluation. The value of the gift is considered to be the total value, whether the gift be made in installments or otherwise. If desired by the donor, determination of the value of a gift may be made by an independent appraiser whose fee will not be paid by the intended beneficiary. No certificate of value is to be furnished to any donor by the receipt of a non-monetary gift. The term “gift” includes, but is not limited to, any gift donation, legacy, bequest, grant or assignment of beneficial interest in, to or of any property of any kind whatsoever.

It is emphasized that USPS does not advise on the making of wills or the planning of estates: the testator or donor, in an inter vivos transfer, should obtain the advice of an attorney in the state of his residence. It is also emphasized that USPS cannot be bound in advance to accept any gift or bequest upon conditions such as to name a building for the donor. A gift or bequest should be forwarded to the Board of Directors using whichever of the following formats describes the gift or bequest intended by the donor.

5.63 Unconditional cash contributions: I hereby give to United States Power Squadrons (USPS), a North Carolina corporation, the sum of $.......... to be used for the general purposes of USPS at the direction and in the discretion of its Board of Directors.

5.64 Unconditional property contributions: I hereby give, transfer or deliver to United States Power Squadron (USPS), a North Carolina corporation, ... shares of capital stock of... (Corporation), represented by certificate number... which I have duly endorsed.

5.65 Unrestricted endowment fund: I hereby give to United States Power Squadrons (USPS), a North Carolina corporation, the sum of $..., the principal thereof to be invested, and the net income thereof to be used for the general purposes of USPS at the direction and in the discretion of its Board of Directors. For purposes of investment, this fund may be combined with other funds of USPS.

5.66 Unrestricted memorial endowment: I hereby give, transfer and deliver to United States Power Squadrons (USPS), a North Carolina corporation, the property described in the annexed schedule to constitute an endowment fund which shall be known as the "... Memorial Fund". This property shall be held by United States Power Squadrons, with power of sale and reinvestment, and the income therefrom shall be used for the benefit of USPS in such manner as its Board of Directors may direct. For purposes of investment, this fund may be combined with other funds of USPS.

5.67 Unconditional general legacy: I give and bequeath to United States Power Squadrons (USPS), a North Carolina corporation, the sum of $... to be used for the general purposes of USPS at the direction and in the discretion of its Board of Directors.

5.68 Unconditional specific legacy of corporate share: I give and bequeath to United States Power Squadrons (USPS), a North Carolina corporation, ... shares of the capital stock, common, of ... (Corporation). If the capital stock of said corporation shall be increased or reduced by stock splits, spin-off or otherwise, then this bequest shall be, and is, of a number and type of shares bearing the same proportion as the present stock issue, and shall include all such stock splits or spin-offs, if any.

-or-

I give and bequeath to United States Power Squadrons (USPS), a North Carolina corporation, ... shares of the capital stock preferred, of ... (Corporation).

-or-

I give and bequeath to United States Power Squadrons (USPS), a North Carolina corporation,
the following described bonds. (Description) General legacy, endowment fund:

-or-

I give and bequeath to United States Power Squadrons (USPS), a North Carolina corporation, the sum of $... which shall be invested and the net income therefrom be used for the general purposes of USPS at the direction and in the discretion of its Board of Directors.

Specific legacy real estate: I give, devise and bequeath to United States Power Squadrons (USPS), a North Carolina corporation, the following described real property in ... County, (state), to be used for the general purposes of USPS at the direction and in the discretion of its Board of Directors. If sold, the proceeds of sale shall be used for general purposes of USPS at the direction and in the discretion of its Board of Directors. (Follow with legal description taken from most recently recorded deed.)

Either of the above bequests must be supplemented with the following: “This bequest shall be used for general purposes of USPS at the direction and discretion of its Board of Directors.”

5.69 Guidelines on squadron ownership of property, including leasehold interest. Any squadron interested in purchasing or leasing real property should obtain a copy of “Guidelines on Squadron Ownership of Property, including Leasehold Interest”, available at headquarters, before negotiating for the property. All squadrons that have an ownership, whether in fee, leasehold or any other fashion, should regularly review these guidelines to ensure that they are in compliance. A brief summary follows:

A) Insure against liability; name the district and United States Power Squadrons as insured;

B) Insured ownership should be in fee simple:
   1) No reversion;
   2) No restrictive covenants which would interfere with anticipated squadron use;
      a) If any exist, submit in full to the national law officer for review;
      b) If zoning regulations apply, submit copies with definitions of zones.
   C) Seek services of an attorney very early in negotiations to guarantee title and otherwise protect the squadron;
   D) Accept no gifts on conditions:
      1) No reversion if use changes;
      2) No estimate of value given;
   E) Where land is leased, make sure life of lease significantly exceeds life of improvements at time improvements are made:
      1) Accept no lease provisions which interfere with internal squadron affairs;
      2) Lease should permit subletting and assignment;
      3) Lease should require sixty days' notice of default prior to termination by reason of any default;
      4) If lessor is a public entity, lease must be an “arm's length” transaction;
         a) Rent must be the same as a private person would pay for premises. If any doubt, get an appraisal;
         b) Lease must not contain any provisions that would affect internal affairs of squadron; and
         c) Lease must be for a fixed term; not at will of lessor.

   E) Submit all proposed acquisitions, either by lease, gift or purchase, to the national law officer. Include all details of transaction. He must be informed of method of payment;

   F) If law officer approves, then acquisition may proceed. If he disapproves, he will report the matter to the Board of Directors which may overrule him;

   G) Title may be in the name of the squadron, but preferably in a separate corporation whose directors are members of the executive committee of the squadron.

5.70 Income tax - personal deductions. Members who participate in the functions of USPS in an official capacity may deduct on their Individual Income tax return certain expenses as charitable contributions, as USPS is an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Deductible expenses include transportation, parking fees, tolls, reasonable expenditures for meals and lodging while away from home, uni-
forms (including cleaning and insignia maintenance), postage, telephone bills, supplies, dues and miscellaneous cash expenditures which are directly and demonstrably related to a squadron activity.

Also, direct contributions of cash or property are deductible. The foregoing list is simply representative of expenditures which may be deductible. For additional assistance, contact the national treasurer.

5.71 Dissolution of a Squadron. Should a squadron for any reason discontinue its organization or cease to function, any recent officer may send notice to that effect in writing to the district commander of the district to which the squadron is assigned.

Should the district commander determine that the charter of the squadron should be revoked, he shall report such action in writing to the national executive officer.

In the absence of such notice from a squadron officer, the district commander or district secretary, upon receiving approval of the district council, shall notify the national secretary for reference to the national executive officer. The national executive officer shall report the action, with recommendations, to the Board of Directors for its determination.

In the event of the dissolution and voluntary surrender or revocation of a squadron charter, all assets then belonging to the squadron are assigned to USPS or to an institution which qualifies for tax exemption under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or such other section of the code by which USPS is exempt. The receipt of such assignment is selected by the squadron's executive committee or other comparable body of the squadron. In the absence of such election, the selection is made by the Board of Directors.

5.72 The Squadron Legislative Officer (SLegO) works with state and federal elected officials in the states that have been assigned to them by their National Government and Partner Relations Committee Team Leaders. They report to, and receive direction from District Legislative Officers.

5.73 The Squadron Liaison Officer (SLO) is a member of the District Liaison Committee and carries out duties as assigned by the DLO. The SLO may also function as the Homeland Security Officer and reports to the DLO on matters pertaining thereto.
United States Power Squadrons®
Typical Squadron Organization Chart

Squadron Membership

- Squadron Commander
- Squadron Flag Lieutenant
- Aides
- Merit Marks
- Fleet Captain

Executive Committee
- General Committees
  - Auditing
  - Nominating
  - Rules

Standing Committees
- Budget and Finance
- Housing
- Law
- Personnel
- Planning

Property Officer *
- Supply Officer

Executive Officer
- Boat Show
- Cooperative Charting
- Public Relations
- Radio Technical
- Safety
- Vessel Safety Check
- Homeland Security Liaison
- Legislative

Educational Officer
- Assistant Educational Officer
- Local Board Public Boating
- Local Board Advanced Grades
- Local Board Elective Courses
- Local Board Learning Guides
- Local Board Seminars
- Teaching Aids
- Educational Property

Administrative Officer
- Assistant Administrative Officer
- Boating Activities
- Meetings
- Member Involvement
- Membership
- Operations Training

Secretary
- Assistant Secretary
- Computer Systems
- Editor
- Historian
- Roster
- Telephone
- The Ensign Correspondent

Treasurer
- Assistant Treasurer
- Property Officer *
- Members-at-Large

* Check your bylaws as these responsibilities may be assigned elsewhere