

# Chapter 12

## Protocol, Etiquette and Flag Code

### August 2024

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The mark of a true yachtsman, male or female, is not stiff adherence to nautical terminology or procedure but a circumspect understanding of traditions of the sea as they relate to today's world. The vocabulary, routines, and traditions of yachting are not only colorful but are based on practicality and order. It is the occasional eccentricity of yachting etiquette that both distinguishes the yachtsman and binds him to others who share his expertise.

## 12.1 General Protocol

### 12.1.1 Order of Precedence

Members are elected or appointed to offices normally on their ability and willingness to perform a service to the organization. To afford clear lines of authority, ranks are attached to most offices and members are authorized to wear insignia of rank on their uniforms. The order of seniority for ranks and positions within United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club is as follows:

- Chief Commander.
- Vice commanders.
- Rear and district commanders.
- Staff commanders.
- Members of national general committees (Rules, Nominations);
- Other members of the Governing Board, viz. general, and emeritus members, squadron commanders, past chief commanders, and past vice commanders who have served two full terms in that rank.
- Aides to the chief commander, including the national chaplain and flag lieutenant.
- Members of standing committees of the Governing Board.
- District lieutenant commanders.
- District first lieutenants.
- District lieutenants and aides, including chaplains and flag lieutenants.
- Lieutenant commanders.
- First lieutenants.
- Lieutenants and aides.

It should be noted that except for past chief commanders, past officers hold no rank or seniority beyond that inuring from some currently active position. Among themselves, recognized past officers may be ranked according to their former position.

### 12.1.2 Senior Officer

At bridge level (squadron, district or national), command flows from the commander to the executive officer to the administrative officer. The educational officer holds a staff (administrative) rather than line (command) position.

At a squadron function, the squadron commander is senior to the chief commander. The chief commander is next in seniority and the district commander is third.

At a district function, the district commander is senior to the chief commander. Other national officers and district commanders of other districts, if not attending as official “featured guests”, need not be accorded placement superior to the bridge officers of the sponsoring entity.

At squadron properties, the commander's flag is flown when he is present regardless of other officers on the premises. At an official rendezvous, it is proper for a member of any rank to fly a courtesy commander flag when the sponsoring unit's commander is on board. On a vessel, the individual in command of the vessel is the ranking officer.

### 12.1.3 Head Table Arrangement

In arranging seating at a head table, use the following guide:

- Master of ceremonies.
- Commander (presiding officer).
- Featured guest(s).
- Chief commander (at a district or squadron function).
- District commander (at a squadron function).
- Other bridge officers of sponsoring entity: executive officer, educational officer, administrative officer, secretary, and treasurer.

The master of ceremonies (or presiding officer if there is no emcee) is seated at the center of the head table or just to the right of the podium. Others are seated to the right and left, alternately. Seating seniority of secretaries and treasurers is determined by the date of their election to the position, by their presumed bridge advancement or, failing those tests, at the direction of the commander. This arrangement should prevail at formal meetings and at squadron meetings where there normally is not a master of ceremonies.

The term “featured guest” is assumed to include a program speaker, an immediately retired commander or commander-elect at a change of watch, or the representative of the chief commander at a district conference. It does not necessarily include “honored” guests, such as a mayor, who have no key role in the affair. They should be accommodated in the audience with such formality as befits their status.

At a change-of-watch banquet, it may not be convenient for the head table to be totally reorganized after the installation ceremony. In these cases, all newly elected and retiring officers should be accommodated, with initial seating arranged according to seniority in the retiring administration.

When there is insufficient room at a head table to accommodate all officials, lower-level officers may be seated at special nearby tables, perhaps with those “honored” guests referred to above.

### 12.1.4 Forms of Address

Anyone who is or has ever been a commander (chief, vice, rear, district, staff, or squadron) should be introduced formally by such rank, adding “past” if appropriate, then addressed conversationally as “Commander”. Lieutenant commanders, district, or squadron, while holding those ranks, are also addressed as “Commander”; first lieutenants and lieutenants (district or squadron) as “Lieutenant.” When a member holds an active rank superior to a past rank, the active rank should be used. In cases where a member holds two active ranks, the senior should be used in all situations.

In the case of a past squadron commander who is presently a district committee chair, he will most likely be addressed as D/Lt in district circles, but his squadron may prefer P/C. Either is correct.

An officer (other than past commander) who holds a current rank lower than a prior rank, such as a former squadron treasurer (past lieutenant commander) who is now a local committee chair (lieutenant), should be referred to by his active rank within the context of his current capacity. These situations include being introduced at a national meeting and in directories.

### **12.1.5 Unofficial Visiting Officers**

The seniority of the multi-functional officer is controlled by circumstances. In an unstructured environment, a member's senior active rank prevails. But at a squadron or district function, members participating in their local capacities are seated and act accordingly, irrespective of positions at other levels.

### **12.1.6 Protocol Aide**

Every squadron is encouraged to have a “protocol aide” or flag and etiquette officer, appointed by the commander to advise him and others regarding proper protocol. A working familiarity with the *Operations Manual* is essential. The protocol aide enjoys the respect of his peers, holds a firm belief that yachting and United States Power Squadrons’ customs are a gratifying part of membership, and could coach members on these matters. Specifically, he should:

- Encourage and counsel on the proper display of flags, afloat and ashore, and the correct wearing of uniforms.
- Be available to answer questions and provide information on all matters of protocol.
- Be capable and willing to lecture in operations training programs; and
- Remain currently informed through communication with the Heritage and Documents Committee.

### **12.1.7 Formations**

In these informal days, it is rare that formal official situations are encountered. In such instances, however, whenever members of unequal rank proceed abreast in an official capacity or formation, junior officers place themselves to the left of their seniors. To this end, juniors enter the right side of vehicles first and leave last, so that their correct position is maintained. Formally, all but crew embark and disembark on the starboard side of a vessel, junior officers boarding first and leaving last. This assumes that the vessel is moored starboard side to the pier or dock.

## **12.2 USPS Flag Code**

Flags are signals. Each flag and signal convey to others something specific about a vessel or its personnel, whether it be nationality, club affiliation, maneuvering situation, office held, or any number of other things. Each flag has a specific location from which it is flown and a specific time for flying. While these customs can occasionally appear involved, their observance is the hallmark of the yachtsman.

Although there are many locations to place the various categories of flags that might be flown, a logical pattern is followed. This is true for both an “order of precedence” and for a sequence of “points of display.” Simply stated, the order of preference begins with one’s national flag and devolves through an

officer flag or private signal on down to miscellaneous signals. “Points of display” relates to the order of importance of the various positions from which one might fly a flag. Obviously, the flag highest in order of precedence should be flown from the point at which it is awarded the greatest honor.

### 12.2.1 Points of Display

There is an “order” of the points of display. In descending order, they are as follows:

- Gaff (on vessel or shore);
- Flagstaff at the stern;
- Bow staff;
- Spreaders/yardarms (starboard superior to port), and
- Truck of the mast (masthead).

The national ensign is only worn from the peak of the gaff while underway. When not underway, it should be worn by the flagstaff at the boat’s stern.

### 12.2.2 The United States Ensign

The official national and merchant flag of the United States is the fifty-star American flag. All United States vessels, whether commercial, governmental or pleasure, whether large or small, are entitled to fly this “ensign” when the vessel is in commission. It is generally flown from the flag staff, at the stern, with two optional alternatives when underway: Where the craft has a gaff-rigged mast (after-most mast in the case of a multi-masted vessel), the United States ensign may be flown at the peak of the gaff; or, in the case of a Marconi-rigged sailboat, the ensign may be flown two-thirds the way up the leech of the aftermost sail. On boats with an outboard motor or an over-hanging boom which prevents the flag staff from being amidships, the flag staff may be offset to starboard (preferably) from the boat’s centerline.

The United States ensign, or any authorized substitute such as the yacht ensign, is flown only between 0800 and sunset, except when entering or leaving port.

### 12.2.3 The United States Yacht Ensign

The United States yacht ensign features a blue canton having 13 white stars and a fouled anchor. It was originally devised as a signal to identify documented yachts to relieve them of certain customs formalities. With changes in customs laws, it is no longer needed for that purpose and has evolved into a yacht ensign.

Some boaters like to fly the yacht ensign instead of the national ensign because they think it is “yachty”; however, the preferred flag is the 50-star national ensign, especially since the yacht ensign must never be flown in international or foreign waters since it has no standing as a national ensign. Its use is limited to recreational boats of any type or size, whether documented, in domestic waters.

When the United States yacht ensign is flown instead of the United States national ensign, the boat should wear it in the same place that the national ensign would otherwise be worn.

## 12.2.4 The USPS Ensign

After spearheading the founding of the United States Power Squadrons, P/C/Cs Roger Upton and Charles Chapman designed a distinctive flag for the organization. Commander Upton filed for patent on the design in 1914 and it was officially adopted by the United States Power Squadrons in 1915. Early on, the USPS ensign assumed much the same dignity as the yacht ensign and was flown in place of the United States ensign while in domestic waters.

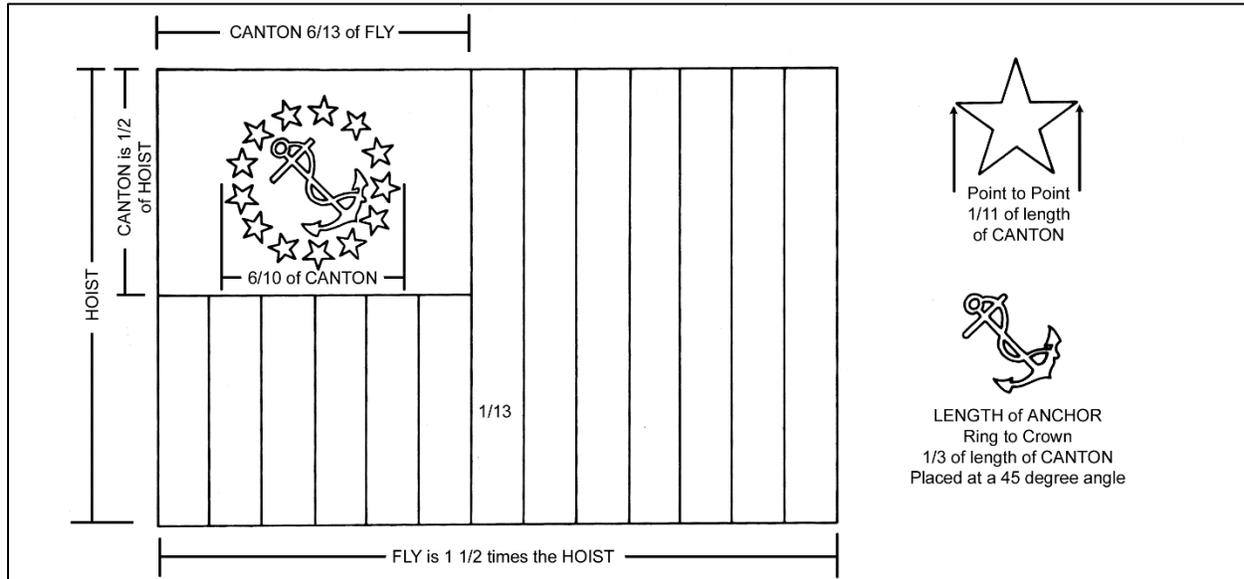


Figure 1. Design of the USPS Ensign.

The USPS ensign may be flown only when the vessel is under direct command of a member of the United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club.

The preferred place to wear the USPS ensign is on the lowest starboard spreader halyard of the foremost mast (main mast for schooners), reserving the flag staff (or gaff or leech) for the national flag. When flown from the flag staff, gaff or leech, as a substitute for the United States flag, the USPS ensign is displayed only from 0800 till sunset. The USPS ensign is never flown in place of the United States ensign in foreign waters.

The design and physical specifications of the USPS ensign are as shown in *Figure 1* and as described in *Bylaws of the United States Power Squadrons*. Note that the canton of the flag extends over six stripes, the first full stripe being blue. In black-and-white representations of the ensign effort should be made to distinguish between the red canton and the adjacent blue stripe by a fine white line.

Material colors for the flag are Old Glory Red (cable number 70180), Old Glory White (70001), and Old Glory Blue (70075). PMS equivalents are 193 (red) and PMS 281 (blue). RGB equivalents are: 191, 10, 48 (red) and 40, 104 (blue).

NAME	CABLE #	PANTONE®	RGB	HEX	CMYK
Old Glory Red	 70180	 193 C	191, 13, 62	#BF0D3E	2, 99, 62, 11
White	 70001		255, 255, 255	#FFFFFF	0, 0, 0, 0
Old Glory Blue	 70075	 282 C	4, 30, 66	#041E42	100, 90, 13, 68
Gold		 123 U	255, 172, 42	#FFAC2A	0, 33, 84, 0
Platinum		 442 U	172, 182, 182	#ACB6B6	31, 12, 19, 3

Figure 2, Material Colors for the U.S. and USPS Ensigns.

### 12.2.5 USPS Ceremonial Pennant

A special ceremonial pennant, in the form of a tapered, swallow-tail USPS ensign, is used only under the direction of the chief commander. The flag is employed in situations such as presentations to heads of state.

### 12.2.6 Squadron Burgee

Nearly all squadrons of the organization, similar to yacht clubs everywhere, have designed burgees to enable their members to identify themselves with their squadron. Normally, these are triangular pennants with the hoist two-thirds the fly. Designs are simple and bold to be distinguishable at a distance and should be such that the pattern reads correctly on both sides.

Squadron burgees are flown from the bow staff of power vessels so equipped and from the foremost masthead of sailing vessels and masted power vessels without bow staff. They are flown in lieu of any other club burgee and only when the vessel is in command of a member of the squadron.

**Both squadron burgees and district flags must be approved by the Governing Board. This responsibility has been delegated to the National Secretary who has empowered the Chair of the Heritage and Documents Committee to authorize squadron burgees and district flags based upon the recommendations of the Flag and Etiquette Team.**

New squadrons and squadrons desiring to modify their design should make an introductory inquiry to the assistant chair of the HADCom to ascertain whether their proposed burgee meets fundamental technical requirements and general United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club guidelines. Following that, except for anniversary burgees, the squadron must garner approval from its district commander. A formal petition may then be made to the chair of the HADCom and must include:

- Certification from the squadron and district commanders (or secretaries) acknowledging approval at those levels, with the dates. (HADCom does not require indication of approval by the squadron membership or district conference).
- A brief description of the design and its significance (its heraldry), and
- Either a digital image of the design, with accurate portrayal of its colors, measuring 540 by 810 pixels (approximately 7 by 10.5 inches), or a picture of similar size that can be scanned into such an image. Transmission of either of these may be by any appropriate method. Should this be

difficult or impossible, the squadron should consult the assistant chairman of HADCom, who will work to achieve a satisfactory result. A HADCom member will edit the depiction as required to render a suitable copy for inclusion in Burgees/Flags & Heraldries database and display on the USPS website.

HADCom will take the proposed design under advisement and will endeavor to work with the proposing squadron if it deems the design unacceptable. Ultimately, it will report its final decision and action to the NSecy. Although not an absolute requirement, newly approved burgees are customarily presented for review at each Governing Board and the NSecy's concurrence occurs at that time.

In addition to design criteria noted above, a squadron burgee should not contain a spelled name. Its motif should be based on the squadron's name, some local geographic or historic feature or in some other way reflect the squadron's area of operation. Color combinations should be selected from the standard basic colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, white, and black. Intricate designs and a multitude of colors should be avoided from the standpoint of costs of manufacturing and reproduction on printed matter. A proposed burgee must not conflict with any other burgee of a United States or Canadian squadron or with a burgee or private signal already recorded in a recognized reference work such as the former *Lloyd's Register of American Yachts*. Further, it should be remembered that arranging for manufacturing and supply of burgees is solely the responsibility of the individual squadron.

When a squadron dissolves, merges or consolidates, its burgee is deemed to be retired unless through merger or consolidation the design is adopted by the surviving unit. HADCom is to be consulted in the latter event.

### 12.2.7 District Flag

A district may adopt a distinctive flag to identify itself and its squadrons. The flag must be rectangular and must prominently display the district number. Examples are Arabic numerals with or without being preceded by "D/", Roman numerals or an array of symbols of an appropriate number. The latter is feasible with lower numbered districts but not realistic with higher numbers.

**NOTE: A district flag is an "association flag", not a club burgee and is not to be worn without a squadron burgee from that district. As an association flag, it is worn on a spreader halyard and is inferior to the burgee, whether on a separate halyard or multiple hoisted. The procedure for obtaining approval of a district flag is the same as for a squadron burgee.**

### 12.2.8 Anniversary Burgee or Flag

Squadrons or districts which have attained their fiftieth or seventy-fifth anniversaries may embellish their burgee or flag with a border of gold or platinum, respectively. The border consists of a band (gold or platinum) measuring 1/24th of the hoist in width and extending along the outer sides of the burgee or flag, i.e., not on the hoist. The band must not obscure any existing elements of the design which then would constitute a change in its heraldry. It is suggested that HADCom be contacted if such is the case. The procedure for obtaining approval is the same as the first steps of approval for ordinary burgees or flags. [Refer to Figure 2 in 12.2.6]

### 12.2.9 Officer Flags

Like officers of most yacht clubs, United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club officers are accorded the privilege of flying officer flags. Moreover, United States Power Squadrons, America's

Boating Club goes somewhat beyond yacht club practice in authorizing distinctive flags, not only for the customary elected officers but also for appointed lieutenants and a variety of past officers.

The privilege of flying an officer flag (not “officer's flag” - that's any flag belonging to an officer) should not be confused with the term “flag officer”. That term is applied only to incumbent elected officers. In the organization they are the only ones entitled to fly a rectangular flag. Appointed position holders such as, lieutenants, aides, and fleet captains, fly tapered swallow-tail flags. Note, too, that members of squadron executive committees, district councils, Governing Board or general committees at any level, although elected, do not enjoy individual authority in that capacity and are not considered to be officers.

Generally, an officer flag is rectangular and embodies the same officer insignia worn on the sleeve of the uniform. Field colors reflect the seniority of the officer within each of the three levels of the organization: blue for commander, red for vice or lieutenant commander and white for first lieutenant, rear commander or staff commander. On blue and red flags, tridents are white; on white flags, tridents are blue for elected officers and red for appointed.

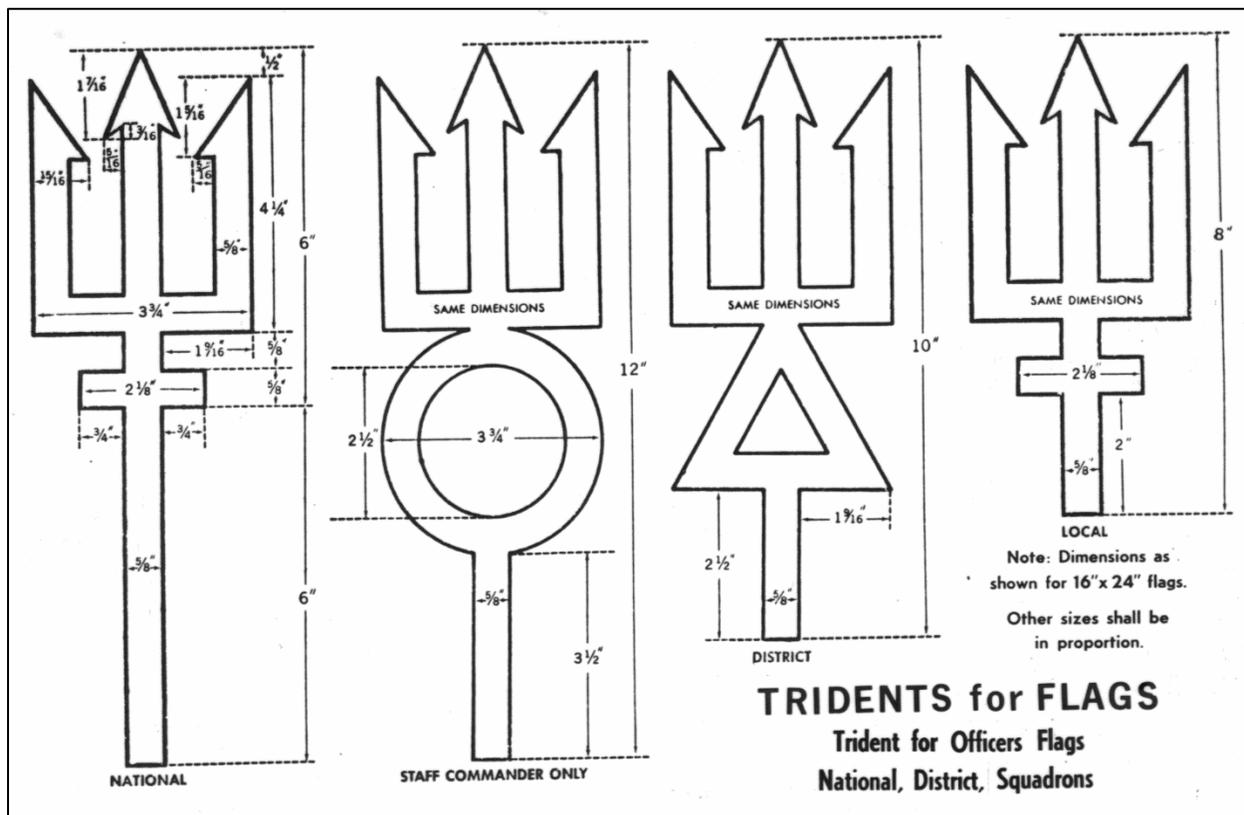


Figure 3, Trident Measurements for 16" x 24" officer flags.

Officer flags are flown on board from the masthead (after most masthead for multi-masted vessels). If a vessel has no mast, the flag may be flown from a radio antenna at the same height as if from a signal mast. Inasmuch as the organization’s officer flags are unique designs and differ from the generic “commodore” style flags employed by many clubs, it is improper to fly a United States Power Squadrons, America’s Boating Club officer flag while flying the burgee of another organization.

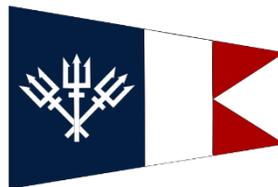
It is a respectful courtesy that whenever a flag officer visits the vessel of a lower-ranking member, the former's officer flag is displayed from the bow staff in lieu of the burgee or the forestay while he is on board. It never replaces the flag of the officer in command of the vessel. Apart from that, only one officer flag may be flown at any given time.

Flags for officers are as set forth below. Where specifications call for tridents, these are to be in the proportions as designated in Figure 3. A long-staffed trident is three-quarters of the hoist of the flag in length, an inter-mediate-staffed trident is five-eighths the hoist and a short-staffed trident is one-half the hoist. A “delta-trident” is an intermediate-staffed trident with a Greek delta superimposed in lieu of the normal crossbar.

### 12.2.9.1 National Officers



**The Chief Commander** displays a blue rectangular flag with three crossed long-staffed white tridents placed centrally, with the middle trident vertical and the shafts of adjacent tridents intersecting at an angle of 45 degrees, one-third the distance from their base.

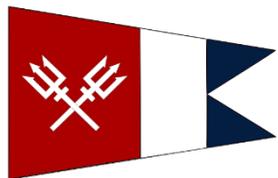


**Past Chief Commander** flag: Past-officer flags are authorized to be flown during active membership by those who are entitled to wear a past-officer insignia on their uniforms. These flags are tapered swallowtail pennants having a fly one and one-half times the hoist. A main field adjacent to the hoist, with a width of one-half the fly, is opposed by two vertical bands, each measuring one-quarter the fly. The trident insignia for the respective former office is placed centrally in the main field, in a color and on a field color corresponding with the flag of the former rank. The color of the adjoining band is white where the main field is blue or red, and blue where the main field is white. The color of the outer band is red where the main field is blue or white, and blue where the main field is red.

On these flags, long-staffed tridents are seven-sixteenths the length of the hoist, intermediate staffed tridents are eleven thirty-seconds the length of the hoist and short-staffed tridents are nine thirty-seconds the length of the hoist.



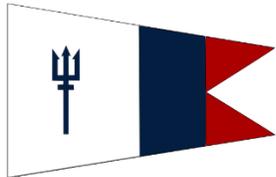
**Vice commanders** display a red rectangular flag with two crossed long-staffed white tridents, placed centrally, with the shafts of the tridents intersecting at a right angle, fifteen thirty-seconds the distance from their base.



**Past vice Commander** flag (see Past Chief Commander flag description for details on Past-Officer Flags)



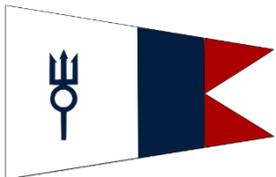
**Rear commanders** display a white rectangular flag with one long-staffed blue trident placed vertically and centrally.



**Past rear commander** flag (see Past Chief Commander flag description for details on Past-Officer Flags)



**Staff commanders** display a white rectangular flag with one long-staffed blue trident placed vertically and centrally. In place of the trident's normal crossbar is a circle, tangent to the base of the spearhead, with outside diameter equal to the width of the trident.

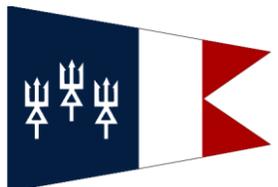


**Past staff commander flag** (see Past Chief Commander flag description for details on Past-Officer Flags)

### 12.2.9.2 District Officers



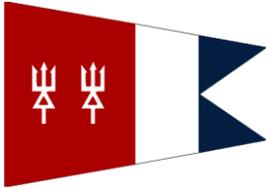
**District commanders** display a blue rectangular flag with three vertical white delta tridents arranged centrally at the corners of an imaginary isosceles triangle whose base is one-half the fly of the flag and whose altitude is one-quarter of the base.



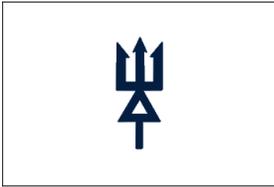
**Past district commander** flag (see Past Chief Commander flag description for details on Past-Officer Flags)



**District lieutenant commanders** display a red rectangular flag with two white delta tridents placed vertically and centrally, with the distance between centers of the shafts of the tridents equal to one-third the fly of the flag.



**Past district lieutenant commander** flag (see Past Chief Commander flag description for details on Past-Officer Flags)

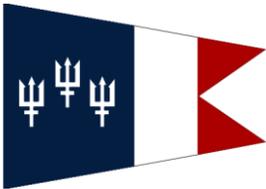


**District first lieutenants** display a white rectangular flag with one blue delta trident, placed vertically and centrally.

### 12.2.9.1 Squadron Officers



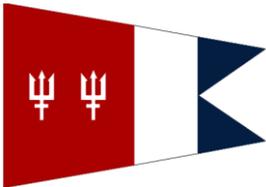
**Commanders** display a blue rectangular flag with three vertical white short-staffed tridents, arranged centrally at the corners of an imaginary isosceles triangle whose base is one-half the fly of the flag and whose altitude is one-quarter of the base.



**Past commander** flag (see Past Chief Commander flag description for details on Past-Officer Flags)



**Lieutenant commanders** display a red flag with two white short-staffed tridents, placed vertically and centrally, with the distance between centers of the shafts of the tridents equal to one-third the fly of the flag.



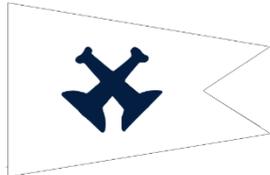
**Past lieutenant commander** flag (see Past Chief Commander flag description for details on Past-Officer Flags)



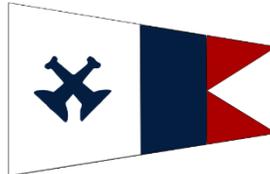
**First lieutenants** display a white rectangular flag with one blue short-staffed trident placed vertically and centrally.

## 12.2.10 Job Flags

Generally, a job flag is swallow-tailed and embodies the same insignia worn on the sleeve of the uniform. Lieutenants and district lieutenants are junior officers and have job flags while they serve.



**The national flag lieutenant** displays a white tapered swallowtail flag on which are depicted two crossed blue speaking trumpets of length three-quarters of the hoist, placed centrally with mouthpieces upward and the center lines of the trumpets at an angle of 45 degrees to the vertical.



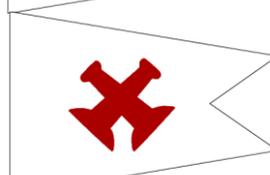
**Past national flag lieutenant** flag (see Past Chief Commander flag description for details on Past-Officer Flags)



**The national chaplain and aides to the chief commander** display a white tapered swallowtail flag on which is depicted a blue binocular, eyepieces upward, of a height one-half the hoist, placed vertically and centrally.



**District lieutenants** display a white tapered swallowtail flag with one red short-staffed trident placed vertically and centrally.



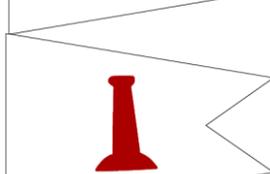
**District flag lieutenants** display a white tapered swallowtail flag on which are depicted two crossed red speaking trumpets of a length five-eighths of the hoist, placed centrally with mouthpieces upward and the center lines of the trumpets at an angle of 45 degrees to the vertical.



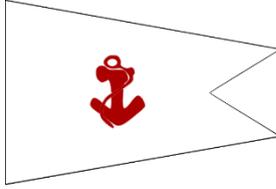
**District chaplains and aides to the district commander** display a white tapered swallowtail flag on which is depicted a red binocular with eyepieces upward, of a height one-half the hoist, placed vertically and centrally.



**Lieutenants and aides to the commander** display a white tapered swallowtail flag with one red short-staffed trident placed vertically and centrally.

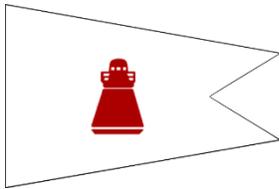


**Flag lieutenants** display a white tapered swallowtail flag on which is depicted a red speaking trumpet, mouthpiece upward, of a length five-eighths the hoist, placed vertically and centrally.



**Fleet captains** display a white tapered swallowtail flag on which is depicted a red fouled anchor of a length five-eighths the hoist, placed centrally and vertically, ring upward.

**Port captains** display a white tapered swallow-tail flag on which is depicted a red lighthouse, of a length five-eighths the hoist, placed centrally.



## 12.2.11 Other Flags

### 12.2.11.1 Officer-In-Charge Pennant

At an official gathering, the officer in charge of the event may display on his vessel, above his usual officer flag, a triangular officer-in-charge pennant of blue material whose hoist is one-half the hoist of the accompanying officer flag and whose fly is six times its own hoist.



The officer in charge is commonly not the commander but a rendezvous chair, fleet captain, or other official charged with organizing the event, although the commander may be present and would be the ranking officer.

### 12.2.11.2 Cruise Pennant

The original USPS identifying pennant, flown by Roger Upton and other early members above their yacht club burgee before the USPS ensign was designed, was reconstituted as a cruise pennant for *Excitement* '85, the first modern day national rendezvous and cruise, out of Baltimore. It was subsequently approved for use by members of the United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club while participating in any organized on-the-water activity such as a cruise, rendezvous or marine parade.



The pennant is the same 6-to-1 size and shape as the officer-in-charge pennant. The flag is composed of red, white, and blue sections in proportions of 10:11:15, respectively from the hoist outward.

A white, 5-pointed star whose diameter is two-thirds the pennant's hoist is centered on the red portion of the pennant. The pennant may be flown day and night from the highest practical position for best visibility, whether on an antenna or forward starboard spreader halyard. When flown in conjunction with USPS ensign, it is to be flown above the ensign.

### 12.2.11.3 Private Signals

Many individual yachtsmen or their families have adopted a distinguishing personal flag known as a private signal or house flag. Tradition holds that this flag occupies the same position as an officer flag on masted vessels or it may be flown from the bow staff of a mastless power boat. A private signal and officer flag are not both to be flown at the same time. Private signals are normally swallowtail shape and many can be found illustrated in reference works such as the former *Lloyd's Register of American Yachts*.

### 12.2.11.4 Courtesy flags

It is customary, in some areas virtually mandatory, for yachts visiting foreign waters to display the civil ensign of the country visited. Mastless vessels fly this “courtesy flag” at the bow staff in lieu of a squadron or yacht club burgee, others at the out-board signal halyard of the foremost star-board spreader (main starboard spreader in the case of schooners). In the latter case, the USPS ensign, normally flown there, is moved to the inboard starboard halyard or, if none, to the port spreader halyard.

A foreign ensign is also often flown when a vessel is visited by a distinguished foreign guest. In this case, the foreign ensign is displayed from the bow staff or forestay, similar to a courtesy officer flag.

Do not fly a foreign courtesy flag after you have returned to United States waters. It is not to be used as a badge of accomplishment for having cruised to another country.

### 12.2.11.5 Union Jack

The United States union jack is a flag made up entirely of the canton from the American flag. It is flown mostly by government vessels and rarely on yachts, as it is displayed only on vessels with more than one mast and is flown on a jack staff, a staff rising vertically from the deck at the boat's peak. It is flown only on Sundays, holidays, and when dressing ship, and when not underway.

### 12.2.11.6 Coast Guard Auxiliary Flags

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary blue ensign may be worn on a boat that has been approved as a current “facility” by the USCGAux. By mutual agreement, the USPS ensign and USCGAux (blue) ensign may be flown simultaneously by those who are members of both organizations. If a member meets that requirement, he may fly the USPS ensign on the starboard spreader, but never in lieu of the national ensign. The current “facility” must wear the national ensign whenever the auxiliary ensign is worn. During the time that the USPS ensign is displayed in lieu of the national ensign, the boat may not wear the auxiliary ensign.

### 12.2.11.7 Association Flags

Flags of associations, e.g., a cruising club or a USPS district, are generally rectangular and may be worn on a spreader halyard. Many flags or signals are flown from the spreader halyards but usually only one should be worn on each halyard. If the boat is rigged with one starboard halyard and one port halyard, fly the signal of superior dignity on the starboard side and signal of lesser dignity on the port side. If there is

more than one halyard on each side of the boat, fly the superior signal from the outboard starboard halyard, with other signals to its left, in order of decreasing dignity. They may be balanced, insofar as possible, starboard and port.

#### **12.2.11.8 Regatta Flag**

The traditional large blue flag with red or white RC is generally required to be flown by yachts while engaged in race or predicted log committee activities. The flag is often outsized for visibility and is permitted to be flown from a conspicuous place such as a radio antenna while the vessel is engaged in official committee activities.

#### **12.2.11.9 Diver Down Flag**

When a boat is engaged in diving operations, prominently display the internationally recognized dive flag, a red flag with a diagonal white stripe. Most states and provincial jurisdictions provide that, when this flag is displayed, divers must stay within certain radius of the boat (typically 1000 feet) and other boats may not intrude into that area. If divers venture beyond that radius, they should take a buoy displaying the diver down flag with them. Display the diver down flag only when divers are in the water. Do not fly it routinely as the hallmark of a dive boat.

#### **12.2.11.10 Restricted In Ability To Maneuver Due To Diving**

Whenever a small vessel is restricted in her ability to maneuver due to underwater operations (such as dredging or diving) and cannot display the lights and shapes prescribed in Rule 27(d), Rule 27(e)(ii) provides that she is to display rigid replica not less than one meter (about 40 inches) high of International Code flag A (alpha), a swallowtail flag with the half nearest the hoist white and the outer half blue. This is not to be confused with the “diver down” flag as described above. The vessel thereby gains a special privilege under the rules and may not be impeded by ordinary vessels not entitled to a higher class of privilege. This flag is only for vessels and is not carried on buoys, as the diver-down flag. At night, three vertically-arranged, all-round lights, red over white over red, invoke the same privilege as the flag. In lieu of an actual flag, small craft may display a rigid replica not less than 1 meter high.

#### **12.2.11.11 Skier Flag**

Some state laws require that vessels towing person(s) on water skis or similar devices carry and use a bright red or brilliant orange “skier-down” flag, at least 12 x 12 inches in size and mounted on a pole at least 24 inches long, whenever the towed person(s) is preparing to ski or has fallen into the water. This is usually a hand carried flag as it is seldom exhibited long enough to warrant positioning on a signal halyard. It would be wise to check the state law concerning towing persons on water skies before doing so in that state.

#### **12.2.11.12 Speed trial**

The International Code of Signals (publication HO-102) provides that the flag combination SM may be hoisted when-ever a vessel is under-going speed trials. Accordingly, it is proper to fly this signal whenever one is engaged in running a measured mile or even while participating in a predicted log contest. With only slight license, one might also extend usage to periods when swinging ship. However, it must be remembered that display of this signal in no way absolves the vessel from her duty to observe all rules of the road, regardless of the consequences to the “speed trial” itself.

### 12.2.11.13 Quarantine

International Code flag Q is used when entering a foreign port (except Canada and a few others) to indicate to customs officials that clearance (pratique) is requested.

### 12.2.11.14 Tender

International Code flag T, frequently together with a sound signal, is used in many yacht club harbors to request transportation to shore by club launch.

### 12.2.11.15 Owner Absent

A rectangular blue flag, often somewhat diminutive in size, signifies that the owner is absent. It is flown from the starboard spreader. At night, a blue light on the starboard spreader also is used for this purpose.

### 12.2.11.16 Guest

The guest flag, a blue rectangle with white diagonal stripe, is flown from the starboard spreader to indicate that the vessel is occupied by and in the charge of guests or charterers. It is appropriate that the guest operator fly all the flags to which he would normally be entitled were it his boat, except that the national flag of the vessel is retained.

### 12.2.11.17 Man Overboard

International Code flag O (Oscar) is recognized to mean someone has fallen overboard. It should be flown conspicuously until the person is retrieved or efforts are abandoned. The flag is also flown from buoys used to mark the location of the incident as an aid to recovery.

### 12.2.11.18 Gag flags

Yachting may not be as stuffy as it once was, but gag flags, such as those depicting martini glasses (happy hour), bunnies (owner sleeping), battle axes (mother-in-law aboard) and the like are viewed as unbecoming of any member of the United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club.

## 12.2.12 Flag Display

### 12.2.12.1 When Flags Are Flown

In the past, all flags, except a flag officer flag, were to be flown only from 0800 until sunset. In order to afford greater identity, the New York Yacht Club, once the acknowledged guardian of American yachting etiquette, decided in the mid-seventies that only the national flag (or yacht ensign) need be taken in at dusk. United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club acceded to the change shortly thereafter. USPS ensign, when flown in lieu of the United States ensign, is to be brought in at sundown. The ability to show one's colors at night has obvious merit, as today's brightly lighted marinas place boats in a position to be seen throughout the evening hours and they need no longer stand incognito.

For yachts grouped together at a rendezvous or other function, the exact time for colors is taken from the senior officer present. The ceremony may be signaled by a starting gun or blast of a whistle or horn. Yachts that will be unmanned at sunset should make evening colors beforehand.

As noted earlier, the United States or yacht ensign should be displayed even at night when entering or leaving port. When anchored or otherwise moored upon entering, or when well out of the harbor upon leaving, the flag should be secured if between sunset and 0800.

It is common practice that when engaged in racing, all flags be secured except perhaps for a signal flag denoting the yacht's class and, if appropriate, a protest flag. At least the national flag should be restored to

view as quickly after the race as is permitted by the race committee. Even committee boats are often required to remove unnecessary flags when on duty, avoiding confusion by contestants who must take their instructions from signal flags. Nevertheless, there should be no confusion as to the significance of a United States ensign at the stern and taking in this flag by a committee boat is neither necessary nor appropriate. 12.4 Quick Guide to S.

### 12.2.12.2 Alternative Display Locations

The traditional locations for wearing flags are outlined. However, many vessels, because of their size or construction, cannot accommodate these provisions. Accordingly, when preferred positions for the squadron burgee and officer flag are not available, these flags may be worn along with USPS ensign from spreader halyards, multiple hoisted where necessary, provided that the proper order of precedence is observed. USPS ensign is the senior flag, followed by a squadron burgee and officer flag, in that order. The officer-in-charge pennant may be placed above the officer flag when appropriate and USPS cruise pennant may be placed above USPS ensign when engaged in organized on-the-water squadron activities. When neither the preferred location nor a spreader halyard is available, a radio antenna may be used. Never fly any other flag on the same halyard, or on a halyard to starboard of, a courtesy flag.

### 12.2.12.3 Multiple Hoisting

Apart from the above provisions and the few exceptions specifically noted elsewhere, no more than one flag may be flown from a single halyard. In cases where multiple hoisting is permitted, it will be observed that never is more than one flag of the same type or equal stature flown from the same halyard.

### 12.2.12.4 Dressing ship

Dressing ship is a custom long used to add a festive air to a vessel or a fleet. It consists of bending together a long string of International Code flags and hoisting them so as to run from the forward waterline to the truck(s) of the mast(s) and back to the waterline aft. Boats without masts commonly use a radio antenna to give height to the array.

A vessel should be dressed only from 0800 to sunset, when not underway, although this custom is occasionally set aside by ships on their maiden or final voyage, boats participating in marine parades and in other unique situations. When underway, flags should end at the deck line rather than reaching to the water. A sequence offering well dispersed color and shape is as follows:

AB2UJ1KE3GH6IV5FL4DM7  
PO<sub>r<sub>3</sub></sub>RN<sub>r<sub>1</sub></sub>ST0CX9WQ8ZY<sub>r<sub>2</sub></sub>

Where  $r_1$ ,  $r_2$ , and  $r_3$  indicate first, second, and third repeaters and 0 (zero) is distinguished from O (Oscar). The answering pennant is the only standard flag not used.

### 12.2.12.5 Half-masting

A flag is flown at half-mast or half-staff out of respect for the deceased. Although no statute prescribes half-masting by civilians, citizens generally follow the practice established for United States government buildings and ships.

The United States flag is flown at half-staff only to reflect national or state mourning at the passing of honored citizens and high-level officials, as ordered by the President or a governor. The duration depends on the individual's position and varies from a matter of hours to up to 30 days, for a President, former

President or President-elect. Further, on Memorial Day, the United States flag is displayed at half-mast until 1220 corresponding to the final gun of a twenty-one-minute gun salute commencing at noon.

On a single-piece flag staff, at the stern of a vessel or as a “flag pole” ashore, the half-mast position for the United States flag is three-fourths the distance to the peak. For a staff with a yardarm, or with a yardarm and gaff, the half-mast position is where the flag is level with the yardarm. When the United States flag is displayed at half-mast, other flags, even a courtesy flag, remain two blocked (fully hoisted), on board or ashore.

On the death of a squadron member, the squadron's burgee may be flown at half-mast. On a yacht-type mast half-mast is even with the yardarm or spreader. The USPS ensign is half-staffed only under exceptional circumstances by direction of the chief commander.

When half-masting a flag, it should be two blocked smartly, then lowered ceremoniously to the half-mast position. Upon lowering, it first should be two-blocked, fully hoisted, and then lowered.

#### **12.2.12.6 Dipping The Ensign**

Many countries recognize the practice of “dipping” their national ensign as a means of saluting between ships. It is performed by lowering the flag to the half-mast position until acknowledged by similar action by the beneficiary. By American naval custom, however, the United States flag is never dipped to initiate a salute and is dipped in response only by government vessels.

United States Power Squadrons, America’s Boating Club vessels flying the yacht or USPS ensign from the flag staff (or gaff or leech) may exchange salutes by dipping such flags. The USPS ensign flown from a spreader is not dipped.

#### **12.2.12.7 Flag Precedence**

On a vessel or a flag hoist ashore the several points of flag display have a specific hierarchy. On a vessel, the flag staff, the peak of the aftermost gaff or the leech of a fore-and-aft sail enjoys the ultimate point of honor. Beneath those come the starboard spreader, bow staff, and mast-head, generally in that order. The port spreader was long reserved for crew signals, principally a triangular red meal flag, but today it is used as an overflow position for flags that otherwise would fly from the starboard spreader.

Flags themselves have precedence over one another based largely on the stature of the organization or the position or activity they represent. On a United States vessel, the United States or yacht ensign is subordinate to none.<sup>1</sup> Next comes the ensign of a foreign country - a courtesy flag. Following that come organizational flags (USPS ensign, yacht club burgee, squadron burgee), then flags of individuals (private signals, officer flags). Miscellaneous signals such as owner absent are accorded position at the spreaders to afford them visibility.

#### **12.2.12.8 Order of Making Colors**

In making morning colors, the United States or yacht ensign is raised first, followed by foreign ensigns (if any), the USPS ensign, a squadron or club burgee, an officer flag or private signal and, finally, other signals such as a guest flag. In making evening colors, flags are lowered in the reverse order. When the USPS ensign is flown in lieu of the United States ensign, it is raised first and lowered last.

#### **12.2.12.9 Flag Size**

The United States or yacht ensign, or USPS ensign when flown in lieu of those, should be approximately one inch on the fly for each foot of overall length of the boat. Essentially all other flags (burgee, officer

flag, private signal, courtesy flag, USPS ensign, et cetera) should be approximately one-half inch on the fly for each foot of the highest mast above the water on sail yachts and approximately five-eighths inch on the fly for each foot of overall length for motorboats. If the nominal size flag is not commercially available, the next larger available size should be selected.

In the case of a courtesy flag which has proportions different from those of accompanying flags (British Commonwealth flags, for example, are mostly 1:2), match its hoist to those of other flags being worn. Make every effort to fly correctly proportioned flags; many marine stores purvey improper versions.

### 12.2.12.10 Flying Flags Ashore

A flag hoist is a common and highly desirable institution at squadrons' headquarters and members' homes. The design affording the most points for display is one with a yardarm and gaff, with dual halyards port and starboard. Nevertheless, even the simple “flag pole” is satisfactory if used correctly.

The gaff-rigged hoist is designed to imitate several flag points on a ship and it is installed as if the “ship” were facing the intended viewer or the desired direction of display. That is, the gaff points “aft”, just as on a vessel and for one standing at the base of the pole looking “forward”, the extremities of the yardarms are termed port (to the left) and starboard (right) as they would be on a ship.

As on board, the United States flag is flown from the gaff. The truck of the mast is reserved for the flag of the displaying entity, squadron burgee at a squadron building, private signal at a member's home, and house flag at a business<sup>1</sup>.

The two or four, or even more, halyards from the yardarms are available for other flags with descending hierarchy from the outboard starboard halyard to the outboard port halyard. When only two flags are to be flown on a mast with more than two yardarm halyards, the inboard halyards are not used. For example, a Canadian flag flies to starboard with the USPS ensign to port. At a member's home, the USPS ensign flies to starboard (but inboard of a foreign courtesy ensign) and an officer flag to port. At a squadron's headquarters, the flag of the ranking flag officer present is flown to port.

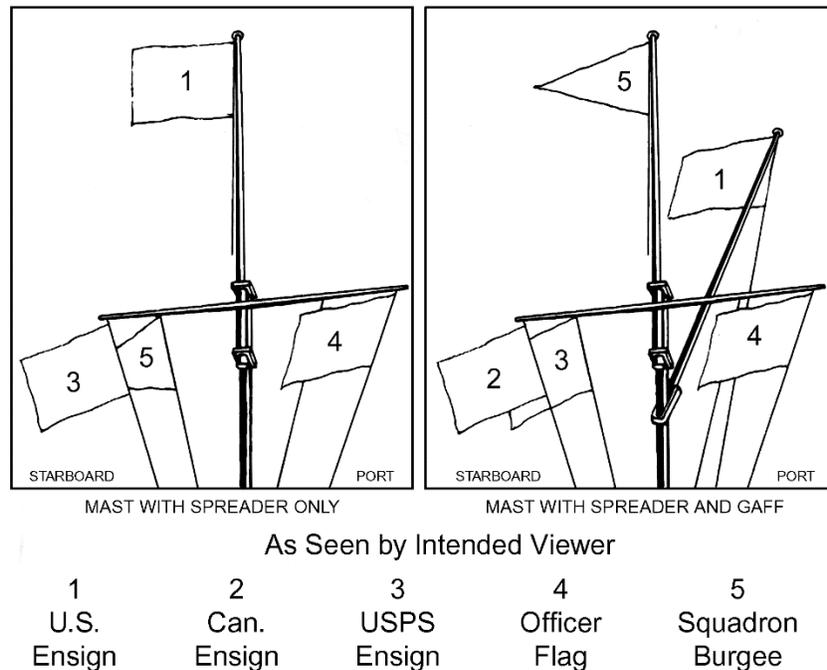
On flag hoists with a yardarm but without gaff, the masthead becomes the point of honor and the burgee or house flag flown there on gaff-rigged hoists merely takes its normal place in the flag hierarchy when determining where to display it.

On simple flag poles without yardarm or gaff, it is permissible to fly a second flag beneath the United States flag, but never another national flag.

In nearly every situation, and there are far too many combinations to be treated exhaustively here, common sense and a firm understanding of precedence will lead one to an acceptable presentation.

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<sup>1</sup>Laymen occasionally question this, arguing that the United States flag should not fly lower than the flag at the truck. The “highest point” rule, which holds that the American flag should be uppermost, applies only to individual and certain masted flag staffs. Obviously, the flag staff on a vessel is not the highest point either.



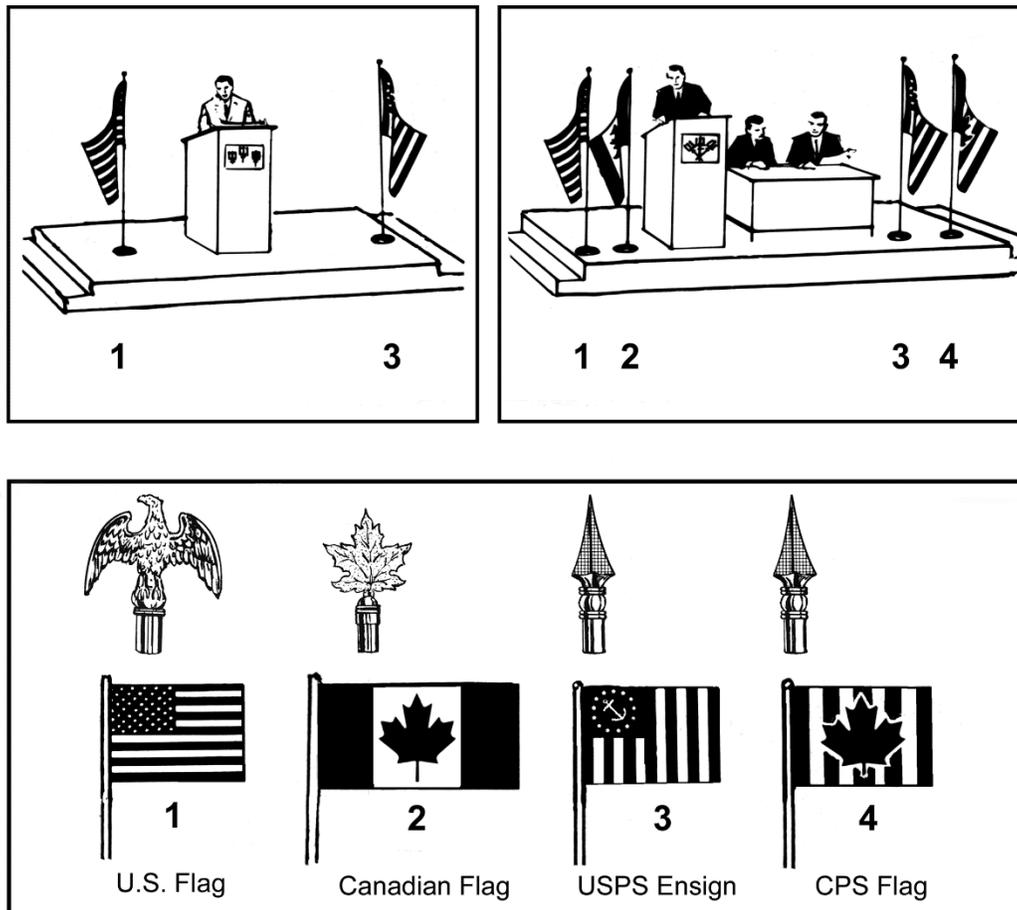
When flown ashore, the United States flag may be displayed 24 hours but should be illuminated at night.

#### 12.2.12.11 Displaying Flags Indoors

Squadrons and districts are encouraged to display flags at meetings, luncheons, and other indoor activities where they will not be obtrusive; yet at all but large national meetings, such as Governing Board and annual membership meetings, the presentation of colors by marching color guards usually appears pompous and curiously out of character for a nonmilitary organization. It is rarely performed satisfactorily by anyone other than those skilled in military close-order drill.

When displayed from staffs, flags should be at the head of the room or, if there is no head table or other determining feature, at the most logical arbitrary point in the room. So-called presentation flags, with gold fringing and tassels, should be used.

As a minimum, the United States flag and USPS ensign should be used, proportioned well for the particular presentation. Where foreign officials are present officially, their national flag(s) should be present (in alphabetical order of the countries' names in the English language) and the flag of Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons should be displayed when members of the Canadian organization are officially in attendance. Many border squadrons display the Canadian [flag](#) and [the flag of the Canadian organization](#) ~~CPS flags~~ regularly at membership functions where members of the Canadian organization are routinely welcome.



Arrangement of flags follows the regular hierarchy with the United States flag at the speaker's far right, whether or not on an elevated platform. Where there is no lectern or head table, the flags are arranged against the selected wall with the United States flag to its own right (the viewer's left). All other flags are displayed at the United States flag's own left (viewer's right) in descending precedence. The arrangement is generally divided on opposite sides of the head table, if any. In the most common situation, the audience would see the United States flag to the left of the head table with the Canadian flag just to the right of it. On the right of the head table would be the USPS ensign and, further to the right, the CPS flag or squadron burgee. Where a squadron burgee is used in this context, its dimensions, hoist, and fly, should be approximately equal to those of the other flags.

Display of more than four flags, except where the display is in itself a feature of the event, is not recommended. Further, display of officer flags from floor staffs in conjunction with these arrangements is not approved; however, a miniature flag hoist, complete with yardarm and gaff, may be used with flags displayed as for out-of-doors. (The gaff will appear projecting away from the viewer.)

When displayed from a wall or suspended from overhead, the United States flag is hung in accordance with Public Law 94-344 as described in many texts. Where the USPS ensign is displayed in a similar fashion, alone, it is to be hung in a similar manner.

On some occasions, the United States flag, USPS ensign, and a similarly sized squadron burgee are hung from walls or overhead. When on opposite walls, the superior flag will be at the front of the room or at the audience's left. When suspended overhead in the same plane, the inferior flag will be to the superior flag's own left with the latter nearer the front of the room or to the audience's left. The upper corners of the hoists will be toward the front or left. When suspended overhead in parallel planes the centers of both flags will be in the same plane 90 degrees to the planes of the flags. The superior flag will be nearer the front of the room or to the audience's left and the upper corner of the hoist will be to the left or toward the front.

When two flags are displayed with crossed staffs, the superior flag is at its own right (viewer's left) with its staff closer to the viewer. Finials (top ornaments on staffs) have specific significance. In civilian usage the United States flag should be topped by a gold eagle while the Canadian flag should be topped with a gold maple leaf. Finials on the USPS ensign, squadron burgee, and other lesser flags all should be a gold fancy spear (not a fleur de Lis or army spear).

When a burgee is suspended vertically (point down) against a wall or backdrop, it may be hung with the obverse side out, to avoid showing reversed pattern or detail. In a horizontal array of burgees, as at district or national meetings, all should be hung in this way.

#### **12.2.12.12 Advancing and Retiring The Colors**

At national meetings it is customary to place and remove flags in a ceremonial ritual called advancing and retiring the colors. The Heritage and Documents Committee has the responsibility for arranging this ceremony at national meetings. Similar ceremonies, if performed at all, are the responsibility of squadron liaison committee (SLCom) or district liaison committee (DLCom) at squadron and district meetings; however, simply placing flags in their stands prior to the start of a meeting is recommended. Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance is customary. Flag ceremonies are not appropriate at social affairs.

#### **12.2.12.13 Flags on the Rostrum and Head Table**

The flag of the officer conducting a meeting should be displayed by securing it to the front of the rostrum. It may be hung horizontally or vertically and, in both cases, the upper corner of the hoist will be to the left.

Officer flags of honored guests may be displayed by draping them from the table in front of their places or by fastening them to the wall or curtain behind their places. They may be hung horizontally or vertically, as above. The flag of the officer in charge should still be displayed from the rostrum, except that if a rostrum is not used, his flag may be presented as for honored guests.

Occasionally, flags of all officers at the head table are displayed at their places.



#### **12.2.12.14 USPS Ensign on Commercial Property**

The USPS ensign may be flown outside a hotel or other building when the chief commander is present officially or when a national, district or squadron function is being held at the site. However, routine display of the ensign at a commercial site owned or operated by a member is not authorized unless the property is also his residence or a marine facility.

### 12.2.12.15 Displaying The USPS Ensign in Mourning

When a member passes, the USPS ensign may be displayed in the funeral home and/or at the funeral at the request of the family. When displayed in company with the United States flag it should be to the viewer's right of the latter flag, as for all indoor displays.

The USPS ensign may be draped in mourning by using a black streamer. The width of the streamer should be about one twelfth (1/12) the hoist of the flag with which it is used and the length before tying about one- and one-half times the fly. With a 3' x 5' flag the width would be three inches and the length seven and a half feet.

Drape the USPS ensign by tying the mourning streamer at its center around the ferrule below the finial leaving two six-inch bows tied at the knot. The gold fringe cord and tassels may remain in place. The United States flag is not draped except by direction of the President.

## 12.3 Etiquette

### 12.3.1 Saluting

United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club is not a military organization. Still, certain naval traditions are observed by its members, just as they are in other yachting organizations. Members of the United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club do not exchange salutes routinely among them-selves, but salutes are rendered to national flags and anthems. Indoors and uncovered (no cap), members salute by holding the right hand over the left breast. Out-of-doors, the cap is not removed and the military hand salute is rendered. If uncovered out-of-doors, such as at a funeral, the breast salute should be rendered, holding the cap to the left shoulder.

It is appropriate for members to salute during presentation or retirement of the colors, the playing of the national anthem or recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. Out-of-doors, a salute should be rendered whenever a member is within hearing of the national anthem or Retreat or when the American flag passes by in procession. It is also traditional for those in uniform to salute in the direction of the United States ensign of a government vessel when boarding and leaving the ship.

Current or former military personnel may either use the breast salute or hand salute even if uncovered when rendering honors.

Members of the United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club show respect to the flag and anthem of a friendly foreign country in the same way they show allegiance to their own. Citizens of Canada and most other countries do not utilize a breast salute, but simply stand at attention.

If personally saluted for any reason, a member in uniform should return the courtesy with the military hand salute.

A member's vessel salutes, as in a fleet review, by her crew's standing at attention as the captain renders the hand salute. If appropriate, this may be supplemented by firing her cannon. The United States ensign is not dipped by a yacht.

### 12.3.2 Wearing the Cap

The cap, while part of the uniform, is rarely worn in normal back and forth situations and should be considered as an option by all. When in uniform at a formal occasion, the cap should, when practical, be

worn out-of-doors, with rain cover if appropriate. It should be removed indoors and preferably carried under the left arm. Members of a color guard wear caps indoors while in formation.

### **12.3.3 Uniform Decorum**

All elements of the uniform should be properly maintained. Gold bullion insignia should be replaced when tarnished, especially when older insignia can be readily distinguished from more recent additions, such as merit marks and higher grades. The uniform jacket, when worn, should be kept completely buttoned except in private. Needless to say, shoes should be kept at least unsoiled, if not well shined.

### **12.3.4 Etiquette On Board**

When visiting another's boat it is an inviolable custom to ask permission to board. One should not enter a boat unannounced any more than he would enter another's home without knocking. "Permission to come aboard?" is routinely heard throughout yachting circles among even the closest of friends and implies no specter of stuffiness whatsoever.

Only soft-soled, non-scuff, non-skid shoes should be worn on board, both for safety and for protection of the decks. Guests who present themselves in hard-soled shoes or high heels may be courteously asked to remove them; but be mindful that stocking feet, while harmless to the deck, may not afford any surer footing than the shoes that were removed.

It goes without saying that "the captain's word is law", figuratively if not always literally. When in command of his vessel, the skipper is legally responsible for the safety of all on board; thus his directions must be assiduously followed. It is well to anticipate his needs, but guests and crew must never act without specific instructions. For instance, never cast off a line until told to do so; don't even swab the deck unless that's your job or you've asked first!

A member's boat, whatever the size, should be kept shipshape. Space is at a premium on board and there is seldom room for clutter. When lines are taken in, they should be either stowed in their proper place or laid out temporarily to dry. Fenders should be removed and stowed immediately after their usefulness ends. All items of gear, whether for navigation or convenience, should be returned to their proper location after use so that they not only will be out of the way but also will be where the next person expects to find them in a hurry.

### **12.3.5 Responsibilities of the Skipper**

While the guests and crew have a responsibility to follow directions of the skipper, he or she, in turn, has an obligation to manage his vessel wisely. He must be alert to all that is happening both on board and around him, and he must anticipate the results of his and everyone else's actions. The skipper cannot ignore his responsibilities, thus he should be temperate in his drinking habits, even after the boat is moored. A member who overindulges any pleasure does not reflect creditably on United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club.

Further, it is the skipper's duty to assure decorum of his guests and crew. No one flying a USPS ensign should permit his guests to be objectionable to others around them. One thinks first of boisterous behavior in this regard; however, there are other, more subtle ways to alienate oneself: monopolizing dockside water, continually blowing electric breakers, mooring in more wharf space than is needed, running insufficiently muffled generators at night and throwing excessive wash are but a few of the actions that reflect unfavorably on the organization.

By statute as well as the member's pledge it is the responsibility of every skipper to “render assistance whenever possible” unless it imperils his own vessel or crew. The annals of history are replete with accounts of seamen aiding seamen at not inconsiderable risk to themselves. No member of the United States Power Squadrons, America’s Boating Club will shrink from this responsibility.

### 12.4 Quick Guide to Shipboard Display

FLAG	WHEN FLOWN	POWER YACHT WITHOUT MAST	POWER YACHT WITH SIGNAL MAST	SAILING YACHT WITH ONE MAST	POWER OR SAIL YACHT WITH TWO MASTS
U.S. ENSIGN U.S. YACHT ENSIGN UPS ENSIGN* (WHEN FLOWN IN LIEU OF U.S. ENSIGN)	0800 to sunset	Flag (stern) staff	Flag (stern) staff	Stern staff.  Option: underway at peak of gaff or 2/3 up leech of mainsail or equivalent position along backstay	Stern staff.  Option: underway: at peak of aftermost gaff or 2/3 up leech of aftermost sail or equivalent position along backstay
FOREIGN ENSIGN or commercial ensign when flown as courtesy flag	In foreign port and waters (after grant of pratique)	Bow staff	Starboard spreader  (alone on outboard halyard)	Starboard spreader  (alone on outboard halyard)	Starboard spreader  (alone on outboard halyard of foremost mast)
FOREIGN ENSIGN in respect to foreign dignitary	While foreign dignitary is aboard	Bow staff	Bow staff	Bow staff or forestay	Bow staff or forestay

USPS ENSIGN (WHEN NOT FLOWN IN LIEU OF U.S. ENSIGN)	Day and night but only when in commission and under command of an active member of the United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club	Antenna or staff amidships (preferably to starboard)	Starboard spreader. If foreign ensign flown, then on inboard halyard or port spreader.	Starboard spreader. If foreign ensign flown, then on inboard halyard or port spreader.	Foremost starboard spreader. If foreign ensign flown, then on inboard halyard or port spreader.
OFFICER  (either current or past)	Day and night when in commission	Antenna or staff amidships (alternative - bow staff)	Masthead	Masthead	Aftermost masthead
PRIVATE SIGNAL  (HOUSE FLAG)	Day and night when in commission	Bow staff	Bow staff	Masthead	Aftermost masthead
BURGEE  Squadron or Yacht Club	Day and night when in commission	Bow staff	Bow staff	Masthead	Foremost masthead
OFFICER-IN- CHARGE	Day and night during activity of which in charge	Above or in lieu of officer flag	Above or in lieu of officer flag	Above or in lieu of officer flag	Above or in lieu of officer flag

\*The USPS ensign may be flown in lieu of the United States ensign ONLY in United States waters.

*Figure 8*