

# Currents

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## Hot Topics

- **USPS celebrates 100th anniversary!**



- **New EdDept committee chairs take office (see chart on page 2)**
- **New Instructor Development course launched (see article, this page)**
- **Squadrons report positive experiences with new CCP course (see article, this page)**
- **On-Line courses coming (see article this page)**



## Hot Links

**SEO/DEO Tools Page:**

<http://www.usps.org/cgi-bin/natl/eddept/pages.cgi?tools/SEO/index:Y>

**BOC/OTW Program material:**

<http://www.usps.org/natl/eddept/boc/main.htm>

## Inside this issue

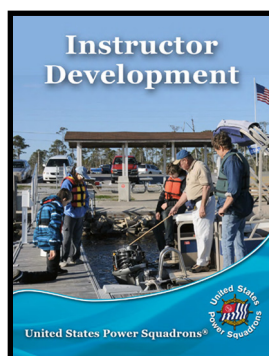
On-Line Partnership with Boat/US	Pg. 1
Ed Dept Organization Chart	Pg. 2
Report on BOC—OTW Programs	Pg. 4
Educational Tools	Pg. 4

## New Instructor Development Course

Several changes in the Instructor Development (ID) course occurred with the release of the new course this past March. One change is a shift in focus from the instructor giving a lecture to leading a lesson that engages students in the learning process. Lectures remain a useful tool, but it is only one of several methods an instructor should use in helping students learn.

There is no charge to squadrons for teaching the course, as we believe we shouldn't charge our instructors who volunteer their time and effort to teach our courses. Course materials (Student Manual, Instructor Manual, and presentation files) can be downloaded in pdf or PowerPoint® format, respectively, from the ID course page. Students can

read the manual on their computer, print the files themselves, or have them printed commercially for about \$12.



The final exam (final evaluation) also has changed. The multiple-choice test has been eliminated. As in the earlier course, each student creates a 1-hour lesson plan. However, this lesson plan is now reviewed by a panel of national reviewers, similar to the process in USPS advanced-grade courses. Evaluations of the lesson plan include criteria that aid in determining the student's understanding of the instructional principles covered in the course.

When students are ready to submit their Final  
(Continued on page 3)

## USPS Goes On-Line with Boat/US

A little over a year ago, USPS embarked on a major educational program to put all seminars and courses online. By teaming up with the BoatUS Foundation we were quickly able to produce a viable product because of the training and the specialized computer platform they provide. The major program goals are to provide a superior, fully interactive online product, target our sales to the 70 million boaters

who are not part of USPS, provide new member contacts for squadrons and make money for USPS at all levels.

To date we have released two seminars - Partner in Command and Boating on Rivers, Locks and Lakes - and have three more seminars and the first course in the works. Soon the VHF/

(Continued on page 3)

## San Juan Squadron Teaches New CCP Course

The Cruise Planning (CP) course was revised in 2013 and became Cruising & Cruise Planning (CCP). It was taught by the San Juan Power Squadron last fall.

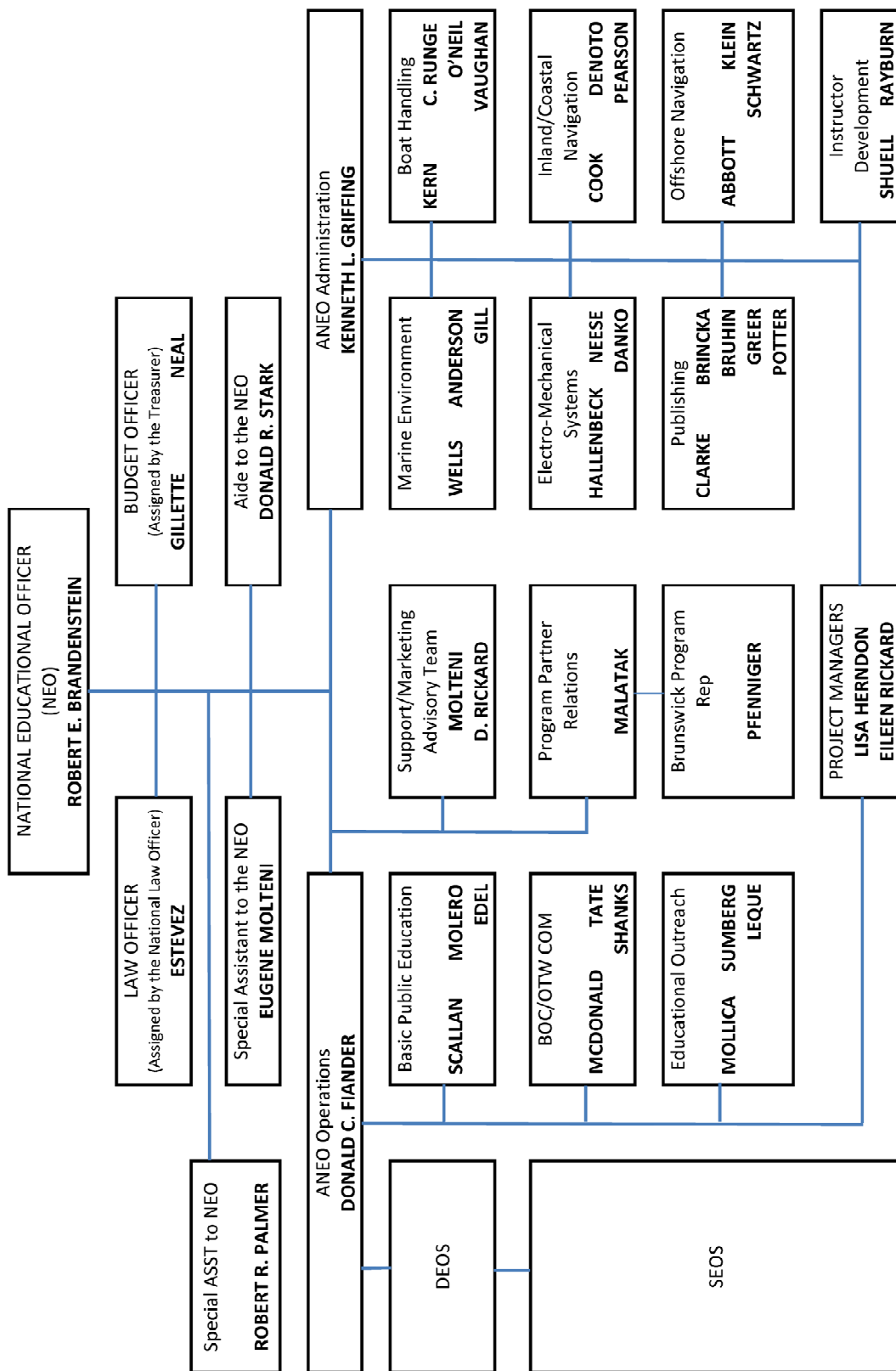
The students found the course to be of excellent quality and highly motivating. The course is applicable to long or short voyages and in-

cludes planning of what may be encountered at each port of call. The course was taught by Gustavo Nevares SN, and Guillermo Mulet AP. Both have made several international trips which required preparations to enter islands in different countries, each of which had their own entry protocol and regulations.

(Continued on page 3)

## 2014 EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

(Effective 1 February 2014)



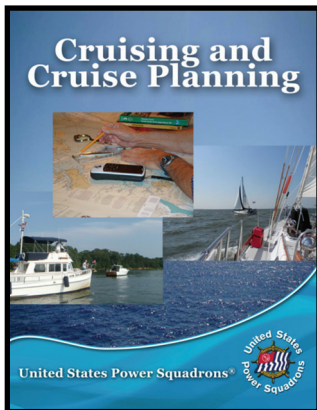
Updated 01 January 2014

(CP—Continued from page 1)

The class learned that a cruise plan of some sort is required for any boating trip. Once you progress beyond short day cruises in familiar waters, you need to learn what is being taught in this course, especially when visiting an area for the first time.

The experience and techniques of others, reflected in this course manual, is an excellent source of knowledge for you to plan properly. The new course manual has reduced the emphasis on long open ocean voyages and concentrates on shorter coastal trips.

One of the requirements to complete the



course was to plan a cruise. The instructors divided the class into two groups, asking each group to prepare and plan a voyage or cruise that they plan on taking, but extending beyond their previous cruising range. One of the trips submitted was departing from Fajardo, Puerto Rico, proceeding along the south side of Vieques, all the way to the east end of the island, and continuing to the island of Culebra.

The second group elected to plan a cruise departing from Puerto Rico, going through the U.S. Virgin Islands, and ending in the British Virgin Islands (BVI). Procedures for clearing immigration and cus-

toms, were detailed in the plan. The planning required consulting the BVI government Internet sites to learn about entry requirements, vaccines required, vaccines for dogs aboard, passports, avoiding prohibited cargo such as weapons, fruits, or a PWC (PWC use is prohibited in the BVI). These regulations, if not complied with, may end in confiscations or even criminal charges.

International trips involve border crossings. Each nation has its own unique regulations that must be researched and obeyed. For this course, we suggest that you plan a cruise that is likely to be traveled by members in your area, including a border crossing where possible. The members who took this course strongly encourage other members to take it. It is an important step in improving your skills in boating and will give you the confidence to undertake more challenging cruises.

(On-Line—Continued from page 1)

DSC Marine Radio, Basic Weather and Forecasting and Marine Radar seminars will be available on-line. Cruising and Cruise Planning, the first course, will join the on-line curriculum shortly thereafter.

We have built excellent, interactive on-line seminars and are definitely reaching

the target market. Over 80% of the students are NOT members of USPS. Squadron public contacts are receiving e-mails with contact information for non-member students who live within 40 miles of their squadron. And as we approach our 100th sale, we are beginning to make money for USPS.

We have learned many things along the way. Since the names of our seminars

may not adequately describe what the seminar is about to a potential student, we've added a "tag line" to the seminar name. Thus Partner in Command became Partner in Command ~ An Essential Intro to Boating for Every Crew Member. We also realized that the student needs to have some documentation to reference after they finish the seminar and that it needs to be delivered elec-

(Continued on page 4)

(ID—Continued from page 1)

Evaluations, the SEO orders an exam in the same manner as for other courses. Although an exam booklet is not involved and is not sent to the SEO, the invoice number is used to track and give credit to students for completing the course. The SEO electronically submits these documents to the Instructor Development Committee (IDCom@usps.org): each student's 1-hour lesson plan, the student's Certificate of Eligibility signed by the instructor and SEO, and the instructor's evaluation checklist for the student's three presentations.

The eight chapters of the ID course are:

- The Nature of Learning and the Art of Teaching

- Methods of Teaching
- Lesson Plans
- Questioning Skills
- Making Learning Accessible
- Teaching Aids and Teaching Equipment
- Teaching in an E-Learning Environment
- Teaching On-The-Water and Other Skills

In addition, there are six appendices on:

- Equipment Used in Teaching
- Creating and Customizing PowerPoint® Presentations
- Teaching Effectively Using PowerPoint®
- On-The-Water Programs
- Answers to Homework Questions

- Glossary

So far, 11 squadrons have submitted Final Evaluations for 52 students. On their first submission, 41 students have passed and 11 were asked to revise and resubmit their 1-hour lesson plan. Two of the latter students have resubmitted their plans and passed the course, and most of the remaining are working on revising their initial plan.

Comments on the new course have been mostly favorable. Nevertheless, the ID Committee is always looking for ways to improve the course and correct errors. Your comments and suggestions sent to [IDCom@usps.org](mailto:IDCom@usps.org) are most welcome and appreciated.

Currents is published twice yearly by the USPS Educational Department at each national meeting of USPS. Visit the EdDept web site at: [www.usps.org/eddept](http://www.usps.org/eddept)

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## Have a question about an Educational Department course or tool?

Be sure to check the Educational Department web site ([usps.org/eddept](http://usps.org/eddept)) for an answer. It's organized by courses on the left side; click on a course name to check for course updates, course tools, and other information related to that specific course. If you are about to teach a course, the first thing you should do is check the course web site for updates and other information for instructors. Across the top of the page, there are pull-down menus that are oriented to more generalized topics, such as EdDept forms and manuals, the Currents newsletter and Governing Board reports, who to contact with questions, and a listing of dates for current EdDept course materials. You can also access the HQ-800 system from a pull-down menu, as well as order course materials and exams from one. To make it easy, the left side courses and top pull-down menus are available on all EdDept web pages. And in case you still can't find what you're looking for, use the Search function (also on every EdDept web page) to search all USPS web pages for what you need. Scan this QR code for smartphone access.



(On-Line—Continued from page 3)

tronically. So beginning with Boating on Rivers, Locks and Lakes the student can download an electronic document containing the high points of the seminar for future use.

As we learn more, the team has gotten better and added new members to speed up our process.

Look for more and more seminars and courses to be put online in the coming months. Keep up with our online courses

and seminars. Visit [usps.org/edonline](http://usps.org/edonline) or scan the adjacent QR code with your smartphone to get access to this web site.



# USPS On-the-Water Programs Growing

On-the-water training is the fastest-growing segment of the USPS education program. If you haven't yet been involved, you should know that the program is something special. It builds on our traditional classroom training, and incorporates best practices for boat handling and navigation in real-world situations. The combination makes for an outstanding curriculum and a valuable experience for students and teachers alike.

There are three main components of the program:

- **Boat Operator Certification**, which recognizes and certifies the knowledge and skills of USPS members.
- **Practical On-the-Water Training**, a special seminar that teaches basic boat handling skills to members and non-members.
- **On-the-water training supplements** developed by the individual committees for each of the Advanced Grade courses and the Sail course.

The team in the Educational Department that oversees the program has the lengthy title "Boat Operator Certification – On the Water Training Committee" (You can call



it the BOC-OTWTrCom for short). The committee has been working hard during the past year to continue refining the program.

As of this year, 592 members have been certified as Inland Navigators, 152 members have gone on to be certified as Coastal Navigators, and 17 have achieved Advanced Coastal Navigator. Practical On-the-Water Training already has had 210 students. Use of the on-the-water course supplements is not tracked by USPS, so no statistics are available for them.

The Boat Operator Certification manual that lays out the framework for the certification program was updated in January 2013. Over the past few months, each of the guides for the Inland Navigator, Coastal Navigator, and Advanced Coastal

Navigator certifications were also updated.

Development of the Offshore Navigator certification is still ongoing. The skill component for this level presents some unique challenges, and we want to make sure we get things right before rolling it out to the membership. We are also looking at our options for creating new levels of training within the program. All of the current content is available on the USPS web site at <http://www.usps.org/national/eddept/boc/main.htm>.

The certifiers who conduct the training and certification are an indispensable part of the program. It's essential that each certifier receive the proper training so that we maintain quality and consistency in the program. That training will soon include a requirement for ongoing recertification. Beginning in April, each certifier must be recertified every four years in order to maintain their credentials. This will involve reviewing the latest documentation for the program as well as conducting at least two on-the-water exercises since the last certification date. The details of the recertification program can be found on the above web site.