

United States Power Squadrons Annual Meeting  
Jacksonville, FL  
Education Department  
Combined DEO/ADEO & Educational Leadership  
Meeting Minutes  
22 January 2015

1. Report on CPS/ECP Education – Don Griffin CPS/ECP National Education Officer
  - a. It has been a big year for changes in CPS. We have made changes to the bylaws, regulations, and policies to comply with the new governing regulations.
  - b. We changed membership classifications. We have changed from seven different classes of membership to one class of member. You are either a member or you are not. Life members still don't have to pay dues.
  - c. We have changed our Board of Directors from a group of 38 people to 24 people elected by the members. Every director has to be elected by the members. Every member in the organization gets a vote for directors. The voting is done electronically.
  - d. We are pushing forward for e-books using E-Pub. We still have printed copies of our courses available. We print on demand in any number. The quality is good. Our Boating Course and VHF Radio (both public courses) are on E-Pub. We have just added Seamanship and Advanced Piloting.
  - e. We are planning to shorten our introductory boating course from nine weeks to five weeks. This change was based on a survey of non-member boaters. People want to take courses but were not ready to spend two or three months in a course.
  - f. We are using Citrix GoToTraining to reach areas that are sparsely populated to present courses. One of our districts is using GoToTraining to teach Seamanship. Our Seamanship course is the same as your Piloting course. There will be weekly seminars online. There will be two nights where the local squadrons provide the hands-on training for navigation skills. This is a blended learning kind of situation. Perhaps we will be taking this across Canada and do this more often.
  - g. We bought one of the Virtual Trainers which is currently traveling across the country.
  - h. Our course statistics are stable. We taught about 12,600 students through courses last year, 7,700 of those for maritime radio (a required course). Some of our courses are not doing that well.
  - i. Our courses are promoted on a national website by geographic location, not by squadron. People don't know who our squadrons are. It is more important for them to find a course based on their location.

- j. Next year our general meeting is in Niagara Falls in October, and all of you are invited.
- 2. Survey Results – Bob Brandenstein, NEO
  - a. We were hoping to get comments from SEOs and Commanders as well as DEOs and D/Cs. Somehow the survey did not get sent to SEOs (or DEOs). So the 80% of results are based on responses from Squadron Commanders and 20% from District Commanders. There were about 125 responses to the survey. There will be another try at the same survey.
    - i. How many ABC Classes does your squadron offer per year? There was an average of about 2 ABC classes offered per squadron responding.
    - ii. How many of your classes include an On-The-Water component? 82% of the squadrons said 0.
    - iii. How many of your classes include youth (12 – 17) 50% had some youth attendance.
    - iv. How many classes included more than one instructor? The most common answer was two.
    - v. How many of your courses included an introduction to USPS and the benefits of membership. The most common answer was two.
    - vi. What share of graduates joined your squadron? The answer was about 25%.
    - vii. How did they join? Most are six-month members.
    - viii. Describe your success with marketing your course. Various answers.
    - ix. How many students, did you have in your ABC courses. Most popular answer was 5 to 9 students.
    - x. If you had ten or more students, to what do you attribute your success? Various answers but the most popular was word of mouth. Second was posted flyers. Third was the website. Fourth was using social media.
    - xi. We offered the America's Boating Course at what price? At or below our cost was the most popular answer. Next was with a discount for a family member. Third was with a discount for youth. Next was that the price was equal to our cost. Next was a part of bundle.
    - xii. Does your squadron engage in Educational Marketing Activities? More than 60% said yes.
    - xiii. For what courses do you engage in marketing activities? Missing data for this question.
    - xiv. Does your squadron enter all education data in the HQ800 system? 65% do.
    - xv. Would your squadron engage in more marketing activities if prepackaged materials were available from Headquarters? 55% said yes.
    - xvi. Does your district engage in educational course marketing? Most people were not sure.

- xvii. Would your district engage in more marketing activities if prepackaged materials were available from Headquarters? Most said that they did not know.
- xxviii. Who should be leading course marketing? The preference is that it be done at the squadron level.
- xix. Who should be involved with educational course marketing? Everyone.
- xx. Should we have paid staff that does educational course marketing? 50% said yes.
- xxi. In what form would you like marketing materials to be available? Downloadable course brochures that the squadrons can print was the most popular answer.
- xxii. Would you be willing to pay more in dues to hire additional paid marketers? A lot of people said that we should apply for a grant to support our marketing.
- xxiii. Are you aware that when a person takes an on-line course that their information is sent to nearby squadrons? 93% said yes.
- xxiv. Is your squadron's public contact information up to date? 89% said yes.
- xxv. Have you acquired any new members from these referrals? 33% said yes. 54% said no.
- xxvi. How many new members did you get? The average is about 3.
- xxvii. Which of the following would you attend, read, or listen to increase your knowledge? The largest response was for attending District conferences. The second largest was for monthly educational updates.
- xxviii. Is there a likely successor in line to succeed you? About 50% said yes.
- xxix. Is that person engaged in the activities? 2/3's said yes.
- xxx. If you don't have a successor; tell us why? Biggest response was that their squadron was a small group without many people to take offices.
- xxxi. How many district conferences did you attend in 2014? Two-thirds said 2.
- xxxii. If not, why not? Time constraints was the leading reason given, followed by the conference agenda is not compelling.
- xxxiii. I would attend more district conference if . . . . Some interesting responses were "if they were less expensive" and "they don't meet my needs now nor is the district hierarchy very friendly".
- xxxiv. How many national meetings did you attend in 2014? Two-thirds said none.
- xxxv. If not, why not? Cost and time constraints were the most common answers.
- xxxvi. I would attend more national meetings if... Some interesting comments include "If there were more classes and less closed committee meetings." (Bob's comment is that there are not many

closed committee meetings except the Committee on Nominations and the Finance committee.) “I believe that National is too self-serving and self-perpetuating.”; “If someone else paid for it.”

- xxxvii. Open response question regarding reducing the number of meetings and using the funds for additional marketing staff. Varying responses including: “Way too much money for the average person.”
  - xxxviii. Final question “I am optimistic about the future of the educational programs and activities.” About half said that they agree. Another 10 % said that they strongly agree. That means that 40% are not optimistic and we need to be concerned about that.
  - b. Comment – from these responses is there anything in these free form responses about what should we be doing to increase our viability and improve our courses? Not very much.
  - c. Comment –We should have some support on the district level for marketing. The district should get financial and material support from national for that effort.
3. Social Media Awareness – Jan Wright
- a. Update on Social Media Campaign. Presentation from Crystal City is on the website.
  - b. Focus is on Facebook with some Twitter and YouTube.
    - i. Done in conjunction with the staff and USPS Headquarters.
    - ii. Done in Support of Squadrons. It will not just be a national effort but will serve the local effort as well.
  - c. Goals
    - i. Focus on people who need to know more about us
    - ii. Education Department content will be presented using best practices so that others can follow and gain effectiveness.
    - iii. We want to let potential students sample what we offer in our classes. We want them to be able to form their own opinions about the quality. We want them to, in turn, be advocates for USPS education.
    - iv. We want to encourage you to try to use Social Media.
  - d. We need to have original content.
  - e. Facebook generates comments and that becomes a dialogue.
  - f. Meeting with R/Cs covered four areas.
    - i. For your committee’s area of expertise, what content do you think is most important?
    - ii. For that content can you allow the Social Media team access? That would include photos, graphics, and videos. Images carry a lot of weight in social media.
    - iii. Who are the subject matter experts in your team? Who would be able to develop the factual content?
    - iv. How would you like to collaborate?

- g. Someone needs to be available for responding to comments on the social media platform. You want to be very careful with content and with the responses to questions.
  - h. There is a team that has been working on the USPS social media campaign that is focused on our members.
    - i. It used to be that 80% of content was generated by those outside our organization.
    - ii. We want to have the educational content of the USPS national Facebook page. It has been decided to give USPS Facebook administrative access to me (Jan) to promote the educational side of our organization.
    - iii. We have to have branding on our visuals. If you don't brand them, they will be taken by others.
    - iv. We need to put more items on our website that squadrons and districts can use. We need to give them resources. For example, we need higher resolution images of our course covers than we find on the USPS Educational Department pages.
  - i. Presented samples of Facebook pages from USPS, Banana River, D26, and Tybee Light Squadron.
    - i. Is there a topic that we can focus on? As soon as we have enough material to work with, we will start.
    - ii. We need to be sure that we have permission to publish any photo or article that you post as original content. We want to do this correctly and avoid lawsuits. We have to be more careful.
  - j. Question: Could our legal department prepare a generic release form for use by the squadrons?
4. Interactive On-line Status, Demonstration, and a Challenge.
- Eileen Rickard / Andy Sumberg
- a. We work with Boat US Foundation to both develop and market our program. We provide the content. Boat US gives us the help to develop and get this onto their platform. We use their computers, their software, and personnel.
  - b. We own the courses that are produced.
  - c. The next course to be released is Hurricanes follow by VHF and GPS.
  - d. We are also working on the first section of our first course – Cruising and Cruise Planning.
  - e. We are putting together handouts in PDF format for each course. These have some branding from USPS and key points of the seminar. Each is about 10 pages long.
  - f. Sales have been increased. We have had 266 sales since the last Governing Board meeting. Weather has been our best-selling course.
  - g. We had spikes in sales at the times of our special promotions.
  - h. We are focusing on three areas: Production, Sales, and Benefits to Squadrons.

- i. We are working hard to get the production working smoothly. Many people are involved, and there is a lot to learn. We want to keep our quality high.
  - ii. We have improved sales, but we are still working on that. We are using key words and a study by Rinck Advertising that was obtained through a grant. Email promotions have helped. Price was too high. Current price is \$24.95. We need to be sure that the next courses released are our most popular courses. We need to be sure that the names of our courses are descriptive. For instance our name for the Hurricane course is Hurricane Preparation for Boaters. There is a tag line for each course.
  - iii. We need the help of districts and squadrons to promote these courses. We have always focused on benefit to the squadrons. You get notified about who in your area is taking an online course. Make sure that your squadron has a public contact and that there is follow-up for each name.
- i. Classes are short and don't require tests or proctors.
- j. Our target student is not us. We are trying to reach outside our organization.
- k. Squadrons have asked to be able to use the seminars or portions of the seminars in small group settings. It does make sense for a group to buy one on these seminars and work through the course on a projected screen for a group. That gives everyone a chance to discuss various topics and answers.
- l. Question: How can a squadron compete with the low price of an online seminar? There is no requirement that a squadron charges for a seminar at all. The price for the in class seminar is set by the squadron.
- m. There have been a number of questions about our seminars.
  - i. Some squadrons are not getting a good turnout for seminars.
  - ii. What are the most popular seminars in your areas? Popular answers included:
    - 1. Using GPS.
    - 2. VHF
    - 3. Trailering
    - 4. Mastering rules of the road.
- n. We want to offer first in the online world what sells the best. If we can hit a broad market with the correct price, we can do ourselves the most good.
- o. There is a marketing group that is making many of these decisions.
- 5. Member Benefits – R/C Kristi Anderson
  - a. There are three new vendors.
    - i. American Hearing Aids
    - ii. Salude Coffee will return 20% of your purchase amount (not including shipping to your squadron. There is a link from the member benefits page.
    - iii. Announced the prizes for the raffle.

- b. Newest vendor is the WOW training aids. Doug Golding is here and will present information about his training aids for White Boards.
  - i. Doug is member of the Columbus Sail and Power Squadron and a former member of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Watercraft as a Marine Patrol Officer and Boating Educator. Became the state wide education administrator by the time of retirement. He ran a small boat sailing program and is an instructor for the National Safe Boating Council.
  - ii. Doug has created a wide assortment of magnetic images that will work with a whiteboard. That way things can be changed quickly and animated. Graphics have nice detail for classroom use.
  - iii. Any day time or night time scenario can be created with navigational aids, wind, current, docks, etc. for sail and power boats. Can show docking maneuvers, anchoring, etc.
  - iv. Doug has a display at the Expo, and there is also a link on the USPS member benefits page for the products.
  - v. A 10 % discount is given to USPS members on orders of \$100 or more. 5% is given on orders under \$100.
  - vi. Gave away 3 packages as door prizes.
- 6. Marketing Initiatives and effects – Rinck
  - a. Tammy Brown USPS Director of Marketing
    - i. Branding has been a focus.
    - ii. There are several marketing initiatives but a shortage of money.
    - iii. There is a Friend of Marketing Campaign that seeks to raise funds for marketing.
  - b. Gene Molteni demonstrated the use of marketing in addressing the audience.
    - i. You should say United States Power Squadrons. Things like your rank and grade, the name of your squadron, and district number don't mean anything to those outside our organization.
    - ii. There was a survey of nonmembers. About 900 responded.
      - 1. 25% of respondents said that they only took the course for state certification.
      - 2. 30% said that they didn't need anything else. We need to convince them that they really could benefit from additional education.
      - 3. Others were really sure but just wanted information about how to operate their boats. We need to help those taking our courses know what else we offer and how joining us can be a benefit.
      - 4. 75% were male.
      - 5. 52% were over 55 years of age. 20% were between 40 and 55.
      - 6. 51% were working full time. 40% were retired.
      - 7. What other courses would interest them:
        - a. Practical On-the-Water Training - 48%.

- b. Weather- 42%
    - c. Rules of the Road – 40%
    - d. Using GPS – 39%
    - e. Engine Maintenance
    - f. Knots and Rope Handling – 38%
    - g. Chart Plotters and Cruise Planning were similar.
    - h. These results are very similar to our member survey that we did a couple of years ago.
  - 8. What did they think that the benefits of membership would be?
    - a. Emphasis on safer boating.
    - b. Socialize with fellow boaters.
    - c. Discount on Educational Classes;
    - d. Discount on boat insurance.
  - 9. 78% of respondents agree with the statement that USPS represents strong boating skills education.
  - 10. 77% of respondents preferred taking a classroom course. This question did not differentiate between a classroom course and a blended learning situation when part of the course is on-line or distance learning.
  - 11. This survey will be available to the Education Department and will be posted on the website.
- c. Branding – Glen Sherman
- i. The Branding Manual has been released.
  - ii. We want to appear as one big organization instead of a lot of fractured groups.
  - iii. The branding manual will provide guidance.
    - 1. The national brand will always come first.
    - 2. The national logo always comes first. Then you can cobrand locally.
    - 3. We want consistency in branding. You always use the same name and the same font. United States Power Squadrons should be in Arial font. It should always be larger than the local name.
    - 4. We have had many logos. There should be just one. The triangle is not a logo. We have seen such a variety of logos on district shirts, squadron shirts, etc. There should be one logo. It is used either with the United States Power Squadrons around it or beside it.
    - 5. The current tag line is *Come for the boating education...stay for the friends<sup>SM</sup>*. It is written in Calibri font and italics. It should include the service mark, <sup>SM</sup>. Mac users will find that Calibri font is not standard but it is easy and free to obtain.
    - 6. Next Glenn described the colors. (See the Marketing Manual on the website.)



7. Newsletter options – also best described in the Marketing Manual.
8. Websites will follow the same idea and similar format.
9. Press Releases should be a similar idea with the National Logo on top. Logo for the local group below. Note in the Branding Manual that we will refer to the “United States Power Squadrons will present ...” Not the local group. We give the national name with local information. We are all part of the national group and use the national brand.
10. We need to get national identification on the name tags as well.
11. On your boat if you fly your squadron burgee, then you should also fly the USPS ensign. Otherwise we look like a bunch of clubs that are competing with each other.
12. Going forward, each new publication or website should be updated to meet the new standard.
13. Much of this was already in the Operations Manual, but few were paying attention. That will be updated to meet these standards.
14. There will be updates to this manual as we go forward but will follow the same concept.

7. Status of OTW Training Scott McDonald
  - a. There are three different offerings in the program
    - i. Practical On the Water Training (POTW)
    - ii. Boat Operator Certification (BOC)
    - iii. On the Water Guides. (OTW Guides)
  - b. There is a big push to get squadrons to use the OTW Guides.
  - c. There are four pieces to BOC.
    - i. Inland Navigator (IN)
    - ii. Coastal Navigator (CN)
    - iii. Advanced Coastal Navigator (ACN)
    - iv. Offshore Navigator – this is rolling out now as an official course. (ON)
  - d. With the success of the program, the number of eligible candidates goes down.
  - e. Our education program ties closely to those four levels.
    - i. IN ties to Seamanship.
    - ii. Piloting ties to CN.
    - iii. Advanced Piloting goes with ACN.
    - iv. JN and N goes with the ON.
    - v. There are other seminars and courses involved, but this is the basic concept. These courses work together.
    - vi. There are OTW work that needs to take place to gain practice. That is why the OTW Guides are important.
  - f. We have refined our technique and presentation from our beginning with this topic. Now that we are doing ACN and ON, these have become more

of a workshop. A lot of training takes place with the testing. It takes many hours of work dockside.

- g. We have had an interaction with the Royal Yachting Association.
    - i. In the United Kingdom the RYA provides certification for Captain's Licenses.
    - ii. 102,000 members worldwide.
    - iii. Their training takes place around the world.
    - iv. They have stayed away from pushing for legislative requirements for boating education.
    - v. They believe that requiring boating education reduces the quality of courses to the lowest common denominator.
    - vi. For Power Boats there are two levels: Power Boating and Motor Cruising. There are also courses for PWC and other.
    - vii. Their courses are similar to ours focusing on basic seamanship and navigation. They combine this with multiday OTW courses that measure skills.
    - viii. We starting talking about this group when we started our program. It relates to United Nations Resolution 40 establishing an international certificate of boating competency.
    - ix. This program was European focused.
    - x. RYA after reviewing our program has said that we are heading the right way, and our graduates could apply to RYA to get an international certificate of competency. There are a couple of areas for improvement:
      - 1. We do not have a formal program of training for larger boats.
      - 2. We need to make sure that we maintain consistency and quality in our training.
    - xi. We will continue to work with the RYA.
    - xii. RYA has a mature program with more courses, publications, and experience.
  - h. We need to revisit and refresh what we do for Basic Powerboat Handling.
  - i. We need to align our program with ANSI (American National Standards Institute) Standards.
  - j. We want to develop a curriculum for large boats for BOC and POTW.
  - k. We also want to develop a program for Personal Watercraft.
  - l. We want to revisit the CN course in the near future, probably next year.
  - m. Summary
    - i. We want to strengthen our curriculum across the program.
    - ii. We want to improve the quality and consistency.
    - iii. We want to grow participation across the squadrons and districts.
8. Brief Update on the Licensing Issue for POTW requirement. Bob Brandenstein.
9. Boating Skills Virtual Trainer Lisa Herndon & Bob Palmer
- a. Discussion of the current status and functionality of the BSVT Gen 2.
    - i. We have a total of 13 units, 9 available for reservation.
    - ii. There is strong parallel between the BSVT and our OTW program.
    - iii. Uses other languages including Spanish and French.

- iv. There are some more navigation features such as day marks and ranges.
      - v. There are branding billboards that include our logo and tag lines.
    - b. There will be more upgrades coming this spring.
    - c. 2014 was very busy.
    - d. We were awarded the Canadian Marine Innovation Award for developing the BSVT.
    - e. We did have some difficulties, but we are developing methods for dealing with problems.
    - f. There is currently no usage fee but it may be required in the future. We may institute a late fee. Remember there are other squadrons and districts waiting to use the simulator, so there needs to be a penalty for shipping late.
    - g. You can reserve a unit up to 14 days.
    - h. We have a web page to handle reservations with lots of information including manuals.
    - i. Be sure to set it up a couple of days early to be sure that everything is okay before you need to use it. During the week, you can get technical help during business hours Pacific Time. During the weekend, there is a customer service number that you can call and the person on call will call you back.
    - j. The set up and shut down procedures are critical. Follow the procedure exactly.
    - k. We have retrofitted all the cases and tightened and used Loctite on all the screws.
    - l. Canadian Power Squadron and the states of Virginia, and South Carolina each have purchased one. South Carolina will have a mobile unit with huge screens.
    - m. We need to have the feedback sheets and you must report the usage and the ratings.
    - n. All should be upgraded to Generation 2 by May.
    - o. We want to have these used for education. We want to coordinate these units with our courses. We need help developing lesson plans.
10. Partner Relations Update - John Miller.
- a. Introduced Bert Rogers, Executive Director of Tall Ships America.
    - i. Plans to collaboration being developed.
    - ii. We hope for joint programs between the local groups and local squadrons.
    - iii. Tall Ships are coming to the East Coast this year.
  - b. Mariners Learning Systems has produced the "Captain in a Box". This is a quality program for learning information for getting your Captain's License. It will be at the Expo.
  - c. Brunswick Dealer Advance program. On Saturday there will be three squadrons given a monetary award.
    - i. We need help with improvements to the program.

- ii. 166 squadrons are interested in the program, but only about half of them have participated in offering a class.
- iii. There is a listing of all the Brunswick dealers in the country. If you want information about the dealers in your area, contact John.

11. Final Comments

Bob Brandenstein

- a. The Governing Board meeting for the fall is the week of 24<sup>th</sup> of August in San Diego. This seems like a satisfactory resolution of a serious scheduling problem.
- b. I think that we should all be impressed with the quality of the presentations both this morning and afternoon. We spend our own money to do this. The quality of what we do is as good as many for-profit organizations. Thank you to the team for everyone who helped fill in for Don Fiander. Thank you for what you do.

12. Adjourn