



Gene M. Seibert, National Commodore

SUBJECT:

COAST GUARD AUXILIARY DIVE PROGRAM

Over the past several months, questions regarding the “Coast Guard Auxiliary Dive Program” have been raised by many Auxiliarists throughout our organization. I’d like to update you on the Dive Program and provide additional information to initiate planning at the local levels

Caveat:

This assumes that the Dive Program is applicable in your district and has been approved by the Coast Guard Headquarters’ Dive Manager.

Developed by USCG & Auxiliary:

The Auxiliary Operations Department has been working together with the Coast Guard to produce a tightly controlled Auxiliary Dive Program and that program is now in the final stages of development.

The Auxiliary Dive Program is a highly structured *pilot-program*, which will be very closely monitored by the Coast Guard. It is not meant for every district. We plan to implement it in districts only where the Coast Guard identifies a need and requests our assistance.

There will be minimal local structure and there is no intent to develop a “district staff officer” position for the program.

The Dive Program is a nationally based program. An Auxiliary Dive Program Manager (ADPM) has been appointed to the Department of Operations staff as the Branch Chief - Operations Surface Diving (BC-OSD). The ADPM is the Auxiliary diving expert and is responsible for overall program administration.

The ADPM will maintain close liaison with the Coast Guard Headquarters’ Dive Program Manager to insure the program remains consistent with, and responsive to, the Coast Guard. There will be minimal local structure and there is no intent to develop a “district staff officer” position for the program.

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY COMMODORE'S INFORMATION

The Dive Program will be organized in dive teams, each team having a partnership with an active duty dive team. The active duty dive team will provide oversight for the Auxiliary dive team and will assist in risk assessment for dive missions.

Approved Missions:

Currently, the approved missions for Auxiliary divers are as follows:

- Underwater ship's husbandry including hull inspections, hull cleaning (no power tools) and removal of fouled objects from running gear.
- Search and recovery, excluding salvage operations.
- Aids to navigation, limited to underwater inspection of aids and moorings that does not involve the use of lift bags.

Selection Process:

Because of the inherent danger of diving operations there will be a stringent process for the selection of diver candidates.

Successful candidates must hold civilian qualifications at the level of Rescue Diver or higher. In addition, candidates will be expected to have specified dive equipment, complete coursework in CPR and First Aid. Successful candidates will also be required to pass a medical certification examination and a swim test.

All diver candidates will be interviewed by the Auxiliary Dive Team Supervisor and after review of the candidate's credentials and materials, must receive command endorsement. An application to participate in a dive team does not insure acceptance into that dive team.

In Summary:

Based upon safety concerns, the Auxiliary Dive Program will be a carefully regulated program based solely upon Coast Guard needs and the availability of Coast Guard support.

Dive Program management will be centralized to the national Auxiliary Branch Chief and USCG HQ Dive Program Managers. The scope of authorized missions will be limited to low risk CG support as deemed acceptable to the supporting active duty Coast Guard Dive Team.

Within this framework, the Auxiliary Dive Teams are expected to improve Coast Guard readiness by providing a well-trained workforce to assist in underwater activities as needed for efficient fleet operations.

While we expect that relatively few Auxiliarists will be qualified in the dive program, we anticipate that the work these divers do will once again demonstrate the Auxiliary as ready, responsive and resolute to engage in and further Coast Guard missions.

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY COMMODORE'S INFORMATION

I hope that this information will provide a better understanding of what the Coast Guard Auxiliary Dive Program is and how it is to be managed.

One final note or caveat so there is no confusion.

Because of the recent tragic deaths of two Coast Guard divers, and because we are still waiting for program approval by the new CGHQ Dive Program Manager, the information above is only our current vision of the Auxiliary program. We could well receive changes to the program as it continues to be reviewed at the CGHQ level.

Semper Paratus

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim M. Libert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

National Commodore