



U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

District 13

Public Event Guide



LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

DISTRICT 13 AUXILIARY PUBLIC EVENTS GUIDE

A new national Strategic Plan for 2012-2016 has been signed by Auxiliary National Commodore. This plan sets goals that speak to the renewed Recreational Boating Safety emphasis by the Coast Guard Commandant. Among these goals are RBS goals that heavily rely on the Auxiliary traditional programs: promoting life jacket wear; public education for boaters; and vessel safety checks.

One of the ways to inform and educate the public about these goals is through Safety Booths and Public Affairs Events. However, there are concerns about professionalism, uniformity of purpose, and training of personnel. Prominent boat shows are of particular concern, where the Coast Guard Office of Recreational Boating Safety pays the rent for the space and has furnished the Auxiliary with display panels and inflatable life jackets.

This event guide is an effort to provide assistance in answering these concerns, training personnel, doing a better job of presenting ourselves to the public, and encouraging planning and participation. These guidelines also apply to other types of safety booths such as safety fairs, boating ramp safety booths, and county fairs.

The overall RBS goal is to save lives and property by encouraging the public to:

1. Wear your life jacket
2. Take a Boating Safety class
3. Have a safe Boat (VSC)
4. Boat Sober—reduce BUI

District 13 Public Events Guide

The ideas in **Guide for Public Events** is a tool to be considered for each event promoting Recreational Boating Safety. It is in “outline” form.

I. Preparation Process

A. Planning – most important

1. Project team

a. Is a group headed by a project manager (Chair)

b. Manager is responsible for:

- 1) Understanding the work to be completed
- 2) Planning assigned activities
- 3) Completing work with scope, quality, time, and cost
- 4) Select, team members considering their talents, skills, interest, and time

c. Tips on Leadership

- 1) Use power and authority sparingly
- 2) Use persuasion and influence generously
- 3) Negotiate tactfully and facilitate continually
- 4) Nourish relationships
- 5) Ensure accountability
- 6) Use consensus for decision making
- 7) Cultivate full participation

2. Establish/List goal(s)

a. The goal is to “Promote Boating Safety”

b. The goal(s) you want to accomplish

3. Stakeholders

- a. Who are they? – the event, organization, or sponsor. Examples: USCG RBS, NMTA, State boating programs, schools, county fairs, boat ramps, stores, Marine events, Fire & Police Safety fairs, etc.
- b. What do they want? – you will find out from the Questionnaire
- c. What can we give or actually provide?
- d. Description of your limits
 - 1) Number of personnel
 - 2) Physical facility required
 - 3) Distance (mileage)
 - 4) Amount of time needed
 - 5) Cost

4. Plan Schedule

- a. Amount of effort to carry out project
 - 1) Hours
 - 2) Days
 - 3) Months
- b. Format dates into chart

5. Establish tasks

- a. List tasks
- b. Who is going to do which tasks
- c. When will the tasks be completed
- d. Time schedule
- e. Name of personnel
- f. Fill out the "Questionnaire"
 - 1) Be as specific as possible
 - 2) Questionnaire in the Public Events Guide

6. Materials & Equipment
 - a. Select and order materials
 - b. Plan, locate, and transport equipment
 - c. Plan who is going to set up, take down, etc.
 - d. An assignment sheet for who does which tasks
7. Publicity
 - a. What kind of publicity
 - b. Who is responsible
8. Back up plan
 - a. Risk management
 - b. Such as rain or someone becomes unavailable for the task
9. Evaluation (have written evaluation) A sample is in Appendix

II. Guide to setting up Safety Booths & Safety Fairs

- A. Physical setting (use the information questionnaire)
 1. Adjust to meet the needs of the stakeholder(s)
 2. You may have to use an alternate plan
 3. Be flexible
 4. Follow your plan (no matter how well you plan, there will be changes)
 5. Static display should be prepared ahead of time – banners, signs, pictures, written word, etc.
 6. Handouts
 - a. Quantities and types should be planned, procured and displayed on table
 - b. Use only the material that fits your goals
 - c. Be able to say “no” to materials that are not related or do not meet your goals
 7. Sign up sheets for VSC and classes (have pens and pencils)

B. Watchstanding – working the event

1. Be responsive to the public
 - a. Don't ignore the public by talking to each other
 - b. Reach out to the public
2. Personal behavior
 - a. Dress in proper uniform (when booth is paid for by USCG RBS Office – ODU's are required)
 - b. Neat and clean appearance
 - c. Proper language and courtesies
 - d. Refrain from being argumentative
 - e. Do not express political or other controversial views
 - f. Remember you represent the US Coast Guard
3. Maximum of 4 people
 - a. No more than 2 people at the booth at a time
 - b. Others are for breaks – trade off
 - c. This number will depend on the activities and type of booth
4. Keep the area clean
5. Eat away from the booth
6. Good technique is to stand in front of booth to greet visitors as they approach, but not block the booth
7. Stand to meet the public
8. Answering questions
 - a. Only if you know the answers
 - b. Refer to others who know the answers
 - c. Don't bluff, if you don't know the correct answer
9. Ice breakers
 - a. How do you pull the people into your booth
 - b. Gimmicks – "give-aways", Coastie

10. Booths are to “sell” the “how to’s” of safe boating –
Best example is wearing your life jacket
11. Keep count of number of contacts.

C. Static Display Board

1. Means a display that is fixed or standing
2. It is portable
3. It is legible from a distance
4. KISS (Keep It Simple Stupid!)
5. Consider security of materials
6. May have to be weather resistance
7. The display will depend on audience you intend to reach
8. Display must meet the particular objectives of the event
9. Focus on subject and limit material
10. Use standard banners and format for certain booths
11. Maintenance of the display – you may want to use it again
 - a. Check condition for signs of wear before event
 - b. Replace outdated, faded, damaged pictures. or written materials
 - c. Practice preventative maintenance
 - 1) Take care of equipment & material
 - 2) Clean and repair before storage
 - 3) Proper storage - secure
 - 4) Know who has it and where
 - 5) Have it on Auxiliary inventory
12. Design of a Good looking Display Board
 - a. Choose a focal point of display
 - 1) What people will look for
 - 2) Who you are – organization
 - 3) What you are selling – Boating Safety

- 4) Only important information goes on the board
- b. Plan or sketch out the display – may have several variations
- c. Decide on the background
- d. Build your display
 - 1) Be neat
 - 2) Maximize your display by visual appeal
 - a) Choose images
 - b) Select verbiage
 - c) Title – fairly large and near the top
 - d) Letters large enough to see at distance
 - e) Graphics and text needs to have space around them
 - f) Graphics are for a point and not decorative
 - g) Use contrasting colors
 - h) Use slogan
 - i) Avoid a lot of text (reading)
 - 3) Less complicated the layout – easier to understand

III. Evaluation

- A. By the Auxiliary – See forms in Appendix
- B. By customer or stakeholder
- C. Utilize the evaluation for the next event

Questionnaire

(Know what you are getting into)

Questions to ask Stakeholder (the person requesting the Auxiliary's participation in the event)

1. Name of event, organization, school, or sponsor.

2. Contact person for event

Phone _____ E-mail _____

3. Person responsible at site _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

4. What does the sponsor want or expect of the Auxiliary? _____

5. Type of instruction/information wanted _____

6. Description of event (classroom, booth, fair, etc,) _____

7. Address and directions to the event.

8. Date and time of event _____

9. Set up time and date _____

10. Length of event _____ Ending time _____

11. Number of people expected _____ Any limits _____

12. Age range of participants _____

13. Description of physical situation _____

14. Ask such questions as: kind of equipment available, parking, access to property, electrical power, size of booth, equipment Auxiliary needs to take, what happens if it rains, tables & chairs, sponsors help, handicap access, etc.

15. Additional resources that might enhance the event

16. Did you express the Auxiliary's limitations

Project Planner (This accompanies the Questionnaire)

Project _____

Date _____ Time _____

Equipment and supplies needed _____

Tasks	Member who is responsible	Completion date
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Alternative Plan

AUXILIARY EVALUATION

We need to use our Auxiliarists and resources effectively and efficiently

1. Name of sponsor _____
2. Contact Person _____
3. Location of event _____
4. Did you personally think it was worth the time and energy?
5. Did you have FUN, was it enjoyable?
6. Would you do it again?
7. Did you have the equipment you needed (table, chairs, be specific)?
8. If you didn't have the desired equipment, what would have been the solution?
9. How easy was it to set up and/or take down?
 - Loading & unloading car?
 - Was more help needed?
10. How was the time schedule?
11. How helpful was the sponsor?
12. Was the effort of the event worth it?
13. Suggestions for changes or improvements?
14. Other Comments: