Team Coordination Training Refresher 2010

# US Coast Guard Auxiliary
# National Response Department
# 2010 TCT Facilitator Resource Guide

## Introduction

The 2010 Operations Team Coordination Training (TCT) Refresher follows a similar format to the 2009 training session. We will focus on group, or "crew" problem solving activities rather than a lecture presentation format. As always, the 7 components of TCT will be the guiding principle for you to emphasize as you lead this problem solving session. The facilitator should be someone familiar with the operations program, a trained instructor and familiar with the TCT program.

**Note: This TCT refresher session should last about one hour.**

This TCT Refresher reflects an emphasis on the 7 components of Team Coordination that you have previously been introduced to:

- **Leadership**
- **Mission Analysis**
- **Adaptability**
- **Situational Awareness**
- **Decision Making**
- **Communication**
- **Assertiveness.**

This training is part of the mandatory annual currency maintenance requirements for the USCG Auxiliary Boat Crew program.

The format, as in prior years, takes the form of a group problem solving session, rather than facilitated discussion. This approach will emphasize your role as a facilitator and, hopefully, make the training interesting for both you and your participants. **Do not** deliver this as a straight lecture, the key learning objective is with the interaction of small 'crews' in solving the problem presented.

## Facilitator's Role

As the facilitator, your role is to help participants discover new knowledge or discover new applications for knowledge you may already have. This is not accomplished by lecturing. Lecturing is one of the least effective ways to promote learning that can be utilized. If you find yourself talking a lot and teaching numerous techniques and required actions in detail, you are

probably talking too much. Trust that the participants have the answers, and you are there to help them discover new relevance for a familiar concept.

A facilitator creates a positive, interesting and challenging environment for the participants in the classroom so that **they, as a crew**, can learn to solve problems and make better decisions that will keep the crew safe, the public safe, and accomplish the mission.

A facilitator leads the learning, but allows the participants to go their own way...***to a point***, always gently steering the process so that learning objectives are met...but also insuring that participants learn to make decisions in a "team format", similar to the "crew" that exists onboard our air and surface facilities. Let the discussions happen but do not hesitate to step if they get "off topic".

**Note:**

*The Sea Story patrol presents a scenario with several sub-plots that describe problems, incidents or situations. This scenario paints a picture that, with some analysis, will lead the team to recognize core problems or issues among the crews in the scenario. The process is similar to what a physician goes through who must diagnose the disease in a patient from a list of specific "symptoms." In this case we want the participant groups to identify the symptoms (incidents or situations) that point to the underlying TCT component that is missing or dysfunctional and therefore threatens the success of the patrol. In addition we want participants to suggest a course of action for the scenario group to take to correct this deficiency.*

**We have intentionally made the crew less efficient and effective than normal to help stimulate the discussion.**

### Facilitator Responsibilities

1. (10 min) At the outset of the session, organize the participants into "crews" of 3-5 members that will work together on the patrol story (case study). Tell them to appoint a recorder/reporter to take notes.
2. (5 min) Provide each group with one piece of paper and pencil. Tell them that the group is to:
   - **Describe the elements in the story where you feel that the principles of TCT were not followed.**
   - **Suggest a course of action or change in behavior that might correct the problem or align this crew's activity with TCT principles.**

3. (10 min) Present the Sea Story of a patrol (see page 7). Be sure that everyone is clear on the scenario but be careful not to give away any answers. If possible hand out a copy of the story to each group.

4. (15 min) Redirect the session into small groups. During the small group work, **circulate among the crews** and **listen**. Make notes for yourself, if needed. Allow the groups to struggle (discuss/disagree) a little in making their lists. They are developing a problem solving relationship with their fellow crew members. Leaders may emerge in the groups (they usually do). Your job is to **keep the groups focused on their question list and determination of dysfunctional TCT** components, and to assist them by asking questions if and when they get off track or bogged down. Use the definitions of the TCT components below, your knowledge of the boat crew program and the targeted questions that accompany the scenario (see pages 9 & 10) to refocus groups that have gone astray. Try to insure that everyone participates, and that no one "hijacks" the process because they are more experienced, or louder, or because others seem willing to just go along. ***If you hear something that is inappropriate or not consistent with good practice, intervene with a gentle comment so that the group recognizes the problem. Try not to take control of the session away from the crew*** but get them "back on course," then let them continue.

5. (15 min) Lead a focus session during which the participant group reporters present their group solutions to the other participants. Don't try to discriminate between solutions! Simply be a clerk and record, in brief, the reports. When all groups have reported, ask the group, at large, to choose the best three solutions (there's rarely one "right" answer) or to rank order the best solutions. Use the last 2-3 minutes to summarize the group results (groups almost always find good answers, as a group) and, if necessary, interject one or two considerations that might have been missed.

6. (5 min) Thank the participants for their participation and assist with any final questions or concerns. If there are suggestions from the group on how to improve the course, jot those down as well and forward them to the DVC-OE (dvc_oe@yahoo.com).

# Review of TCT Basics

A Team Coordination Training student guide is available on the Coast Guard site at http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg3/cg3pcx/training/tct/intro.pdf. You can also get additional information from the Coast Guard TCT web site at http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg3/cg3pcx/training/tct/default.asp.

**Mission Analysis**

1. Always conduct a risk assessment prior to a patrol, no matter how routine you believe the mission to be. Every mission is unique, contingency planning based on experience should include complexity of mission, environmental factors, crew fitness factors and any other circumstance that could impact the mission & your safety
2. Develop escape/contingency plans for potential risk scenarios
3. Reassess risk when conditions change

**Situational Awareness**

1. We must **know what is going on around us** to make good decisions. Plans are critical to success, that is for sure…but we must be ready to change those plans, use contingency plans if necessary, based on what we encounter during the mission.
2. Stressful situations and complacency and boredom will inhibit our situational awareness and increase the likelihood of poor decision making. Remember the 3 levels of human error:
    a. Slips ….. Miss Speak
    b. Mistakes ….. Bad Plan
    c. Errors …. Flawed execution
3. Catch the slip before it becomes a mistake. Catch the mistake before it becomes an error.

**Adaptability & Flexibility**

1. Adaptability is the ability to react to changes in conditions, crew fitness, equipment failures, etc. and is based on the "situational awareness" we mentioned above. How flexible are we? How receptive are we to different opinions? Leaders do not necessarily have "all the answers". Leaders do take advantage of everyone's ideas and experience and remain adaptable to new conditions and challenges.

**Communication**

1. Communication takes many forms. We have verbal and non-verbal (facial expressions, etc.) communication that everyone uses to convey thoughts and ideas.
2. The key of course is to ensure that the person or persons we communicate with have a clear understanding of what we wish to convey. This is the 'senders' responsibility.
3. Good communication involves closing the "feedback" loop. We can ask for feedback, or we can observe behavior to be sure the message was received.
4. This is a two way expression, either verbally or non-verbally, that confirms the communication process was completed. Both parties are responsible for insuring the message received is accurate, understood, and effective.

**Leadership**

1. Leadership is not about giving orders. Leaders do find ways to obtain the willing participation of others towards accomplishing a goal. That goal, in this case, must be consistent with the Coast Guard's core values as well as consistent with the mission at hand.
2. Since we cannot "order" anyone to do anything, we must strive to achieve the respect, confidence, collaboration and loyalty of those entrusted to our care.
3. Remember all auxiliarists have this opportunity to lead, regardless of their position.

**Assertiveness**

1. The Coast Guard values people who are assertive, but not aggressive.
2. Know where the dividing line is. The difference between these two characteristics is sometimes hard to see. The aggressive person seeks to bully his/her way though situations for their own ego or self image….while an assertive person cares about the "mission" more than themselves and their ego.
3. The assertive person will always communicate their concerns but they also, try to get a reasonable resolution when ideas are in conflict without stepping on top of those who may disagree.

**Decision Making**

1. Making good decisions is really at the heart of TCT. How do we ensure that we act or perform in a manner that maximizes mission success and minimizes risk to ourselves, our crew, the public, etc.

2. The other elements of TCT all play a role in improving those decisions. We define a problem or condition, seek information about that problem, analyze that information, identify alternatives and select one or a range of alternatives.
3. Then we measure our success or failure in order to adjust our course of action. This process can take us 20 seconds in the case of routine decisions, or 20 months in the case of large complex problems. The process is the same, ...the depth of analysis and level of importance is always changing.
4. There is always time to consider other actions, use that time before you act.

## Learning Objectives

**Participants will be able to identify key risk factors from this mission that may impact our judgment and decision-making.**

- **How complicated was this mission? How should this affect how we prepare the pre-underway risk assessment?**
- **What special risks does the use of a PWC present in this situation?**
- **What impact could the loss of one or more facilities have on a multi-unit mission? What impact did the loss of the CG inflatable have on this mission?**
- **What responsibilities does an AUXPATCOM (team leader) have for multiple units? What would you have done when the CG inflatable departed the mission?**

**Participants will identify at least three examples of good decision making by this crew and others.**

**Participants will identify at least 3 examples of poor decision making by this crew & others.**

**Participants will be able to suggest alternative actions to avoid high risk situations**

**Discuss at least 3 errors, and 3 good decisions made by this crew during the mission.**

## Sea Story - The Patrol

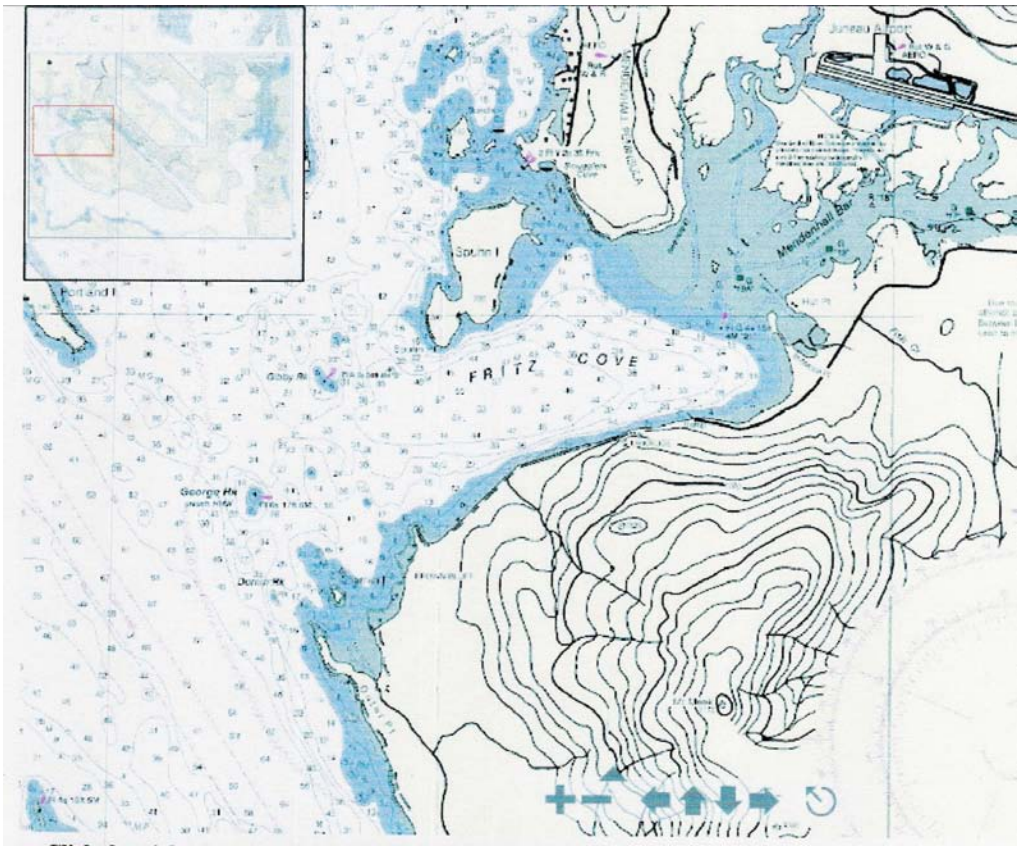
**Venue:** The shallow waters of Gastineau Channel, north of Juneau, Alaska between Spuhn Island and Mendenhall Bar. Strong tidal currents are common in narrow channel areas.

**Mission:** Survey and photograph ATONS used to mark the northern areas of the shallow waters at Mendenhall Bar including those at Spuhn Island. Check for ATONS that may be damaged, missing, or out of position, and assist in replacement ops under the supervision of CGC Elderberry, home ported in Petersburg, AK.

**Facilities:** 23 foot center consol with a single 175 HP outboard
1 coxswain with 2 crewmembers.

11 foot Yamaha FX Cruiser, 3 passenger PWC, 1812 cc engine displacement, 1 PWO

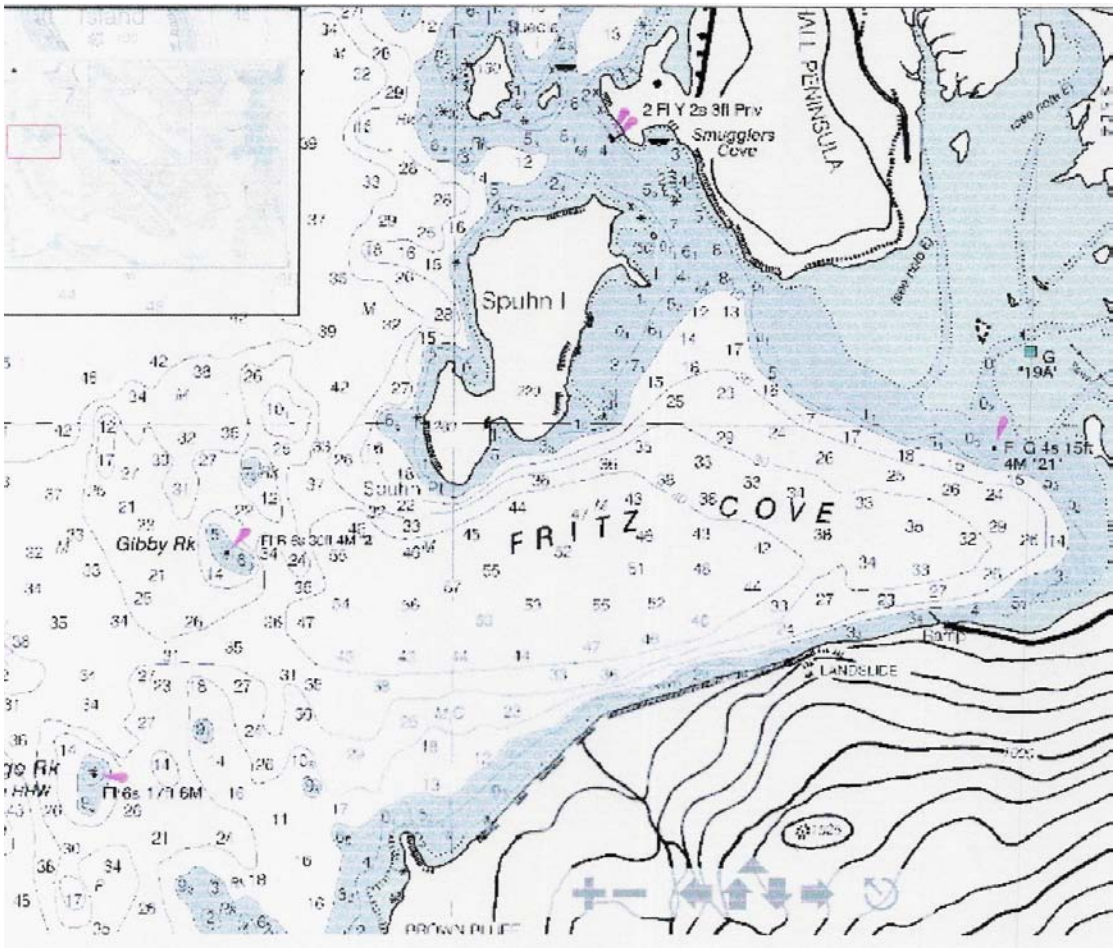
**Weather:** 50°F Overcast skies with 50% chance of showers.
Wind: NW at 10-15 mph
Humidity: 82%
Low tide predicated for 1130 hours in this area.




Enlarged Area of Operations

**Scenario:** The Mendenhall Bar area of the channel is known for its shallow waters and boaters are warned that navigation in this area is extremely hazardous. The water deepens as you enter Fritz Cove and the Spuhn Island area to the north and west of Mendenhall Bar.

Each spring, the USCG flotilla in this AOR is requested to assist CGC Elderberry personnel as they prepare for the summer recreational and fishing boat traffic that will begin to increase throughout the season; cruise liners will also begin arriving at Juneau within a few weeks. Many ATONS deployed at the Mendenhall Bar routinely become damaged or are relocated by the effects of severe weather and the extreme tidal flows that reach 19 feet in this area.




Close up view, Area of Operations

Coast Guard Station personnel have requested that Auxiliary facilities assist in this mission. The Flotilla Ops officer suggested that in addition to his 23' standard center consol, that a PWC AUXFAC be assigned because of their shallow draft capability that allows close inspection of ATONS and also enables those ATONS that have moved off station to be towed to their original designated location. The Station Juneau OIC agreed and also assigned a 15 foot Rigid Inflatable Boat, Light, to this operation.

At 0730 hours, AUXFAC #231076 and #112212 conducted a pre-underway checklist, and participated in a mission brief with Coast Guard personnel regarding the day's planned activity at Station Juneau. All vessels would meet at Fritz Cove just off the boat ramp located on the northwest side of Douglas Island west of Entrance Point at 0900 to launch the PWC and the CG 15 foot inflatable.

At 0900, the 23foot OPFAC drifted just offshore while the inflatable and PWC were launched in Fritz cove. The 23 footer stayed off shore approximately 100 yards while all three vessels proceeded towards the Mendenhall Bar that begins about a one mile southeast of their position at the ramp. The operator of the PWC moved in close to the bar and began establishing each ATON's current position, and checking the GPS coordinates against the list of coordinates provided by the Coast Guard. The inflatable moved in with the PWC and assisted with the inspection and photography until 1030 hours when the CG vessel was called away to respond to a report of a disabled fishing vessel in Gastineau Channel, south of Juneau.

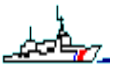
At the departure of the inflatable, the PWC operator continued to work at establishing current ATON positions, inspecting for damage and photographing each ATON while the 23 footer remained 100 yards off the bar to avoid running aground. His role was to maintain contact with the PWC and act as back-up should the operator encounter trouble.

At this point, the PWC operator left the seat and balanced himself on the stern area of his vessel to secure a line to one ATON that was clearly out of position.


ATONS at Mendenhall Bar

The coxswain saw what was occurring and felt that the PWC operator was taking unnecessary risks by standing upright on the stern of the PWC and trying to manage the ATONS without the 15 foot inflatable's crew to assist. He knew that the tide was still going out and that water depth would worsen the risk of his going aground unless he could immediately maneuver closer in to give a hand with the ATON. He was focused on getting the job done, despite a warning from his helmsman that they had already positioned themselves too close to the bar. He told the helmsman to raise his outboard as high as he dared to maintain propulsion and maneuverability and slowly edged in to approach the ATON and the PWC. He positioned his crew as far forward as he could to raise the motor a little higher as he closed the distance to within 20 yards of the PWC. At this point, the PWC operator leaned over the stern a little more to secure a line on the ATON, causing him to slip and fall into the shallow, muddy water on the bar. The PWC operator tried to stand up but the mud provided no footing as he struggles to extricate himself from the bottom.

Two members of the crew of the 23 footer ran aft to retrieve a "throwable" attached to a line to assist the PWC operator, which caused the stern to settle the prop into the mud, stalling the motor of the facility. The coxswain raised the motor and all three members used the boat hooks and emergency paddles on board to push the boat away from the bar to an area where the motor could be re-started. At this time the PWC operator was still attempting to regain his balance to return to the PWC. The 23 footer gained maneuverability and a line was passed to the PWC operator who was hauled to the boat and helped onboard. The mission was canceled at this time and plans were made to retrieve the PWC when the tide returned sufficiently to recover it. All crew and the 23 footer returned to base.



***What did the crew do correctly during this mission?***

1. Appropriate AUXFAC resources were used; the 15 foot inflatable was correctly used in tandem with the PWC. – **MISSION ANALYSIS**

2. Planning correctly identified the risks of tidal action and shallow water operations. - **MISSION ANALYSIS & SITUATIONAL AWARENESS**

3. PWC was properly monitored by the 23 foot OPFAC according to policy regarding PWC operations. - **DECISION MAKING & SITUATIONAL AWARENESS**

4. The 23 foot OPFAC had adequate equipment onboard for this contingency. **MISSION ANALYSIS**

***What did this crew do incorrectly during this mission?***

1. Poor decision to continue mission after CG inflatable was diverted. **DECISION MAKING & LEADERSHIP**

2. PWC engaged in risky behavior in attempt to complete mission without CG support. - **DECISION MAKING**

3. Coxswain disregarded the advice from his helmsman; the helmsman did not press the issue- **ASSERTIVENESS**

4. Coxswain took additional risks by moving in closer towards the PWC operator when he fell. **DECISION MAKING & LEADERSHIP**

## PWC Issues To Review

1. ***Because PWCs offer no protection from the elements, and operators can be ejected from the PWC, PWCs must train and patrol in tandem at all times. If the PWC operates more than one nautical mile from shore, the second vessel may not be another PWC.***

2. ***PWC operators may train or patrol for a maximum of 6 hours in any 24 hour period. A one hour break must be taken after a maximum of 3 hours of training or patrol.***

3. ***The requirement to work in tandem with another boat or PWC***

4. ***The fatigue limitations for a PWC (6 hours maximum in 24 hours with a maximum of 3 hours underway with a minimum of a 1 hour break. Underway time also includes trailering (1/2 hour for each hour trailering), launch time and pre-departure/briefing time.***

***(Source Auxiliary Boat crew Qualification Guide Vol. III: PWC Operator; Appendix C, sections 5 and 8).***