

# TEAM COORDINATION TRAINING 2008 REFRESHER PARTICIPANT REFERENCE

## Learning Objectives

***Review & discuss the key risk factors from this patrol that may impact our judgment and decision making.***

- ❖ complexity of tasks
- ❖ high traffic volume
- ❖ skills of crew such as photography
- ❖ GPS familiarity
- ❖ Impact of stress, fatigue

***Discuss how planning can contribute to the success of this mission***

- ❖ knowledge of seamanship skills of crew
- ❖ knowledge of sea conditions and boat traffic patterns
- ❖ selection of day & time to perform mission
- ❖ training and briefings on equipment

## YOUR TASK

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

- 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.

## THE PATROL

**Mission:** Conduct a physical survey of state ATONS (channel markers and buoys) in a large bay that may be missing, damaged, or out of position. Photograph each ATON, report its GPS coordinates, and complete a detailed report of findings.

**Facility:** A 21 foot walk-around cuddy with outboard...crew of 3. (crew experience can be variable for discussions)

### **Weather**

- ❖ Air temp 88 degrees    Humidity 75 %
- ❖ Water temp. 66 degrees
- ❖ Sea state 1 to 2 foot seas on the bay, 3 to 4 feet on the ocean
- ❖ Winds 10-15 MPH out of the east
- ❖ Atmospheric conditions-visibility 6 miles

## **The Story**

The FSO-AN is requested to perform a survey of all State ATONS in a heavily populated resort area known for a high concentration of pleasure boating, jet skis and sailboats. He arranges through the FSO-OP to have assigned a vessel and crew who have already been scheduled to patrol the target area. His Coxswain has assembled a crew, which will now number three, including himself. The patrol will take place on a Saturday morning in mid July. Although the FSO-AN has performed this mission before, the Coxswain and the other crewmember have not. The bay is located approximately 20 miles, by sea, from the marina. The Coxswain has rejected a suggestion to use the intra-coastal waterway to reach the destination because of the extra travel time this twisting and turning route would cost them; the sea journey is a rougher, more difficult route but considerably quicker.

When the crew assembles at the marina at 0800, the FSO-AN begins to brief the Coxswain and the other crewmember on the mission. The crewmember asks why they are not taking the ICW (intra-coastal waterway), noting that the ocean was "a little choppy", but the Coxswain dismisses his question by saying that time is more important than comfort. The briefing continues after a brief silence; the FSO-AN describes the tasks to be completed when they arrive at the bay; clearly this is the 1<sup>st</sup> time the Coxswain and crewmember had heard of the nature of the patrol. The briefing lasted about 10 minutes until the Coxswain decides that they had better get going if they were going to get back before 1800.

One and a half hours later they arrive at the bay, a little wet, but feeling fine as they began looking for the first ATON on the list. The tasks require that they approach very close to each ATON to survey for damage, and

to get a good photo that shows the buoy number clearly. The Coxswain at the helm has to maneuver to within 3 to 4 feet of each buoy for the photo. This is a tricky task because of the heavy wake action caused by various pleasure boats using the channel; he finds his OPFAC being pushed towards the markers at unexpected times as he concentrates on the helm. The FSO-AN holds the portable GPS in one hand, while making notations on the clip board with the ATON list with the other. The crewmember holds a digital camera belonging to the FSO-AN; he is not familiar with its features and is calling to the helm to change course in various directions around the buoys as he tries to get the proper photo image. The Coxswain asks the FSO to please give the third crewman some instruction before they continue; the FSO complies with the request.

The mission proceeds in this manner for about 30 minutes until the Coxswain lets out a curse as his boat scraped up against the ATON he was trying to maneuver around. He thrusts the throttle forward and shoots out into the channel to clear the offending buoy...he then hears an excited shout from the crewmember taking photos. The Coxswain and FSO looked up and see a larger pleasure craft bearing down on them as they drift into mid channel and away from the buoy. The larger boat veers to port, and the two vessels miss each other by a few feet. At this point the clearly rattled Coxswain suspends the mission, proceeds slowly to an area clear of the channel, and begins a review of what they were doing and how they were doing it. After a full 30 minutes of discussion and review, they all decide that they were unable to complete the mission under the current circumstances, and that the ATON survey would wait for another time. They return to the marina, feeling disappointed.

## **REVIEW OF TCT BASICS**

A short summary of the key points of Team Coordination Training is provided to assist with your analysis of the case. This information is accessible to all members on the Coast Guard's TCT website: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/g-wk/wks/TCT.htm>.

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### **Mission Analysis**

Always go through the Risk Management process 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

### **Situational Awareness**

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. Stressful situations, complacency and boredom will inhibit our situational awareness and increase the likelihood of poor decision making.

### **Adaptability**

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**

Communication takes many forms. We have verbal and non-verbal (facial expressions, etc.) communication that everyone uses to convey thoughts and ideas. 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 involves closing the "feedback" loop. We can ask for feedback, or we can observe behavior to be sure the message was received. The key is a two way expression, either verbally or non-verbally, that confirms the communication process was completed.

### **Leadership**

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. Since we cannot "order" anyone to do anything, we must strive to achieve the respect, confidence and loyalty of those entrusted to our care...all Auxiliarists have this opportunity to lead, regardless of their position.

## **Assertiveness**

The Coast Guard values people who are assertive, but not aggressive. The difference between these two characteristics is sometimes hard to see. The aggressive person seeks to bully his/her way through situations for their own ego or self image....while an assertive person cares about the "mission" more than themselves and their ego. They 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**

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? 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. 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.

Thank you for your participation in the 2008 Team Coordination Training Refresher. Please share your thoughts about this training and the format with us!

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