

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



Commander
First Coast Guard District

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Boston, MA 02110
Staff Symbol: dpi-3
Phone: 617-223-8464

CGDONEINST 16760.1

NOV 23 2011

FIRST COAST GUARD DISTRICT INSTRUCTION 16760.1

Subj: OPERATION PADDLE SMART

1. PURPOSE. Provide district-wide consistency and ensure successful implementation of Operation Paddle Smart (OPPS). The goal of OPPS is to promote paddling safety and enable efficient identification and successful resolution of paddle craft emergencies.
2. ACTION. First District Coast Guard Auxiliary Support Center Cape Cod (ASCCC) will provide “If Found” stickers and OPPS pamphlets to sectors, stations, Auxiliary Flotillas, U. S. Power Squadrons, and harbormasters to distribute throughout their area of responsibility (AOR). “If Found” stickers and pamphlets will be given, free of charge, to anyone requesting one that has a paddle craft or small unregistered watercraft.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. None.
4. DISCUSSION. Boating trends indicate a nationwide growth in both inland and coastal paddle sport enthusiasts. Along with the sport’s rise in popularity, the number of paddle craft found adrift without an operator has also increased. Unlike larger recreational vessels, most paddle craft do not have hull registration numbers or other standard owner identifying features that normally allow SAR responders to contact the owner if the vessel is found unmanned. As a result, the Coast Guard and its SAR partners spend hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars each year engaged in SAR operations responding to false alert cases involving paddle craft. In 2008, the First Coast Guard District launched OPPS as a grass roots effort to combat this growing trend. This effort has been well received nationwide by SAR agencies, retailers of paddle craft, and paddling enthusiasts.
 - a. PROGRAM SUPERVISION

DISTRIBUTION - SDL No. 159

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NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION: B:a COMDT (CG-5422); B:b LANT (3p-1); B:c CGDONE (dp)(dr)(dre)(de)

*D1 Units Only

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- (1) The First Coast Guard District Recreational Boating Safety Specialist (dpi-3) shall maintain program and financial oversight of the First District OPPS program and is responsible for procurement of OPPS materials.
- (2) A designated OPPS supervisor from ASCCC will develop and execute distribution plans, outreach strategies, oversee reporting requirements, and serve as the primary contact for all First District OPPS efforts.
- (3) Designated OPPS coordinators will serve as the OPPS point of contact to field commands, state and local agencies, and other boating/paddling stakeholders within their respective AORs. Designated OPPS coordinators include:
 - (a) First District Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotillas
 - (b) U.S. Power Squadron Divisions within the First District AOR
 - (c) Harbormasters within the First District AOR
 - (d) Sector Recreational Boating Safety Coordinators

b. OPPS MATERIAL DISTRIBUTION. The ASCCC OPPS supervisor will distribute OPPS material to OPPS coordinators prior to Memorial Day weekend. OPPS coordinators should encourage field commands, state and local agencies, local paddle craft retailers and renters, and paddling clubs and associations to distribute OPPS material at boat and trade shows, boating safety classes, vessel safety checks, dockside outreach efforts, and other public events. Distribution of OPPS material during routine patrols is equally important. Interaction with paddlers on the water validates paddle craft operators as equals in the boating community. Interaction on the water also promotes boating safety education, educates paddle craft operators on proper vessel operation (NavRules), enables verification of federal boating carriage requirements, and raises Boating Under the Influence (BUI) awareness. OPPS coordinators can obtain additional OPPS material by completing enclosure (1).

c. APPLICATION.

- (1) "If Found" stickers are weatherproof, retro-reflective, and provide room for the vessel owner's name and two phone numbers to contact if the vessel is found unmanned.
- (2) Owners should affix the "If Found" sticker on a highly visible location such as the vessel's hull, open cockpit, or near the operator's station. Discourage owners from placing the sticker inside a closed compartment or on nonstructural equipment.

(3) Image:



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- (4) When providing "If Found" stickers to paddle craft owners and operators, instruct paddle craft owners to use a waterproof marker to provide two phone numbers and owner's name in the allotted spaces. Emphasize listing at least one phone number of an individual, other than the owner or operator, who will be aware of the operator's float plan.
- d. SAR AND PERSONAL TESTIMONIALS. OPPS Coordinators are strongly encouraged to publicize SAR cases or personal testimonials when an "If Found" sticker, or lack thereof, significantly affected search efforts. Recommend specific emphasis on outcome, time required to determine if incident is a true distress and associated cost and resource hours spent on executing false alert cases. Notify dpi-3 of all publicity efforts.
5. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. Environmental considerations were examined in the development of this instruction and have been determined to be not applicable.
6. FORMS/REPORTS.
- a. OPPS Coordinators shall use First District OP Paddle Smart Material Request Form, enclosure (1), to report distribution efforts when requesting additional OPPS material.
- b. U.S. Coast Guard and Auxiliary responders should document in MISLE if an "If Found" sticker is affixed to paddle craft involved in SAR incidents.
- c. Supervisor, ASCCC shall provide a quarterly distribution report to dpi-3 one week prior to the end of each quarter.



D. A. NEPTUN

Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard

Encl: (1) First District OP Paddle Smart Material Request Form

First District OP Paddle Smart Material Request Form

Material Request Procedures: All requests shall include **Date**, **Requesting Unit**, **Quantity**, and intended **Distribution Category** for the material.

- a. Distribution Categories:
 1. Vessel Examination Program
 2. Visitor Program
 3. Public Education Program
 4. Public Affairs (Boat Shows, Safe Boating Week, etc)
 5. Public Request (Random request from public)
- b. Quantity: Requests exceeding **300** (total) require additional justification.

Example: Southern Region Auxiliary Division 1, Flotilla 5 requests 100 Stickers and Pamphlets for Visitor Program, 25 Stickers and Pamphlets for Public Education, and 200 Stickers and Pamphlets for Public Affairs.

| Date | Unit / Agency | Category | Stickers | Pamphlets |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|------------|
| 15 Oct 2011 | SR DIV 1 - 5 | Visitor Program | 100 | 100 |
| 15 Oct 2011 | SR DIV 1 - 5 | Public Edu | 25 | 25 |
| 15 Oct 2011 | SR DIV 1 - 5 | Public Affairs | 200 | 200 |
| Total | | | 325 | 325 |

*Justification required if request exceeds 300.

Justification: Extra Public Affairs material requested to stock Auxiliary Information booth at New York International Boat Show.

| Date | Unit / Agency | Category | Stickers | Pamphlets |
|--------------|---------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Total | | | | |

*Justification required if request exceeds 300.

Justification:

Shipping Address:

Name:

Street:

City, State, Zip Code:

Phone:

Forward request to COMO Carolyn Belmore via email or mail.

Email: Carolyn.v.belmore@uscg.mil.

Mail: Supervisor
 USCG Auxiliary Support Center
 c/o USCG Air Station BLDG 5205
 Cape Cod, MA 02542