

D5NR Public Affairs Event After Action Report

2013 Division 7 Open House

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Event Synopsis

The 2013 Division 7 Open House, held on Wednesday, August 21st at USCG Station Barnegat Light; marked the 10th anniversary of the event.

Estimated attendance is put at over 970 visitors (see Event/Visitor Assessment Summary on page 3 for details).

The event is held annually to promote and improve understanding of the U.S. Coast Guard Recreational Boating Safety outreach programs and enhance community relations.

Invited participants are traditionally the Division 7 component Flotillas; local and regional USCG units; local/regional civic, public, government organizations dealing with safe boating and marine environmental protection; and related private concerns.

Participants at the 2013 event consisted of:

- 5 U.S. Coast Guard Units
- All 6 of the Division 7 component Flotillas
- 2 local/regional organizations
- 2 commercial groups

The event was open to the general public, free of charge and ran from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

During the event, each visitor was offered a free raffle ticket for a PFD which were awarded on an hourly basis. 5 free PFDs were presented in this fashion.

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Event Narrative

The Division 7 event began in 2004 as a lead-in to the annual National Safe Boating week Campaign and held on the Saturday immediately prior to NSBW.

After several years of holding the event on various dates and after conflicts with competing events such as the Atlantic City Air Show, Maguire Air Force Base Air Show; the current mid-August, mid-week date was launched and has been a success.

As mentioned in the Event Synopsis, this year marks the 10th consecutive year for this event with the cooperation of USCG Station Barnegat Light and personnel and also appears to be the most highly attended.

Breakdown of participating organizations and groups is as follows:

1. U.S. Coast Guard: Station Barnegat Light provided tours of the station's assets (47' Motor Life Boat, 25' Defender Rigid Boat and 24' Special Purpose Craft) and non-operational areas. USCG Atlantic Strike Team, stationed at Joint Base Lakehurst/Fort Dix/Maguire, provided a mobile command center trailer for the public to tour and a unmanned search/rescue robotic vehicle. USCG Air Station Atlantic City provided a USCG Rescue Swimmer and equipment static display. USCG Academy Admissions Partners provided a display booth which informed visitors about the Academy. The USCG Commercial Fishing Vessel program offered its Damage Control Simulator and demonstrations.
2. U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotillas provided an in-the-water Auxiliary patrol vessel; operated "Coastie the Robotic Patrol Boat"; offered displays and demonstrations on "You Are in Command" for boating passengers, "Kids Don't Float" program, knot tying, life jacket selection and use, distress flare use, marine radio use, marine environment programs and vessel safety checks. The Division's Food Service Specialist Program members manned a refreshment area.
3. Regional governmental organizations included the Ocean County VoTech MATES program in Marine Environmental studies and the volunteer "Ocean County Black Sheep" air support group to the Ocean County Sheriff's Department.
4. Commercial groups were Costco, which featured samples and information on environmentally safe products and local radio station WBNJ-FM, 99.1; which made on-air broadcasts and interviews from the open house. WBNJ has also offered to schedule a series of PSAs on Americas Waterway Watch and RBS subjects.

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On entering the event, visitors were given a free ticket for an hourly raffle of a free PFD. A total of 5 free PDFs were handed out during the open house.

Event/Visitor Assessment Summary

As mentioned previously, the attendance is estimated at over 970 visitors. This estimate is based on the actual count of free PDF raffle tickets (970) issued to event attendees (some attendees declined the free ticket).

Visitors consisted mainly of local/regional tourists from the Long Beach Island and Southern Ocean County region, mostly family groups and also included a group of children from the Joint Military Base Lakehurst/Fort Dix/Maguire Children's Summer Camp program.

All age groups, military veterans, boaters, non-boaters were included in the visitor make-up. Many were return or annual event visitors. First time visitors expressed surprise at the varied missions and make-up of the U.S. Coast Guard and the Auxiliary.

No negative comments or opinions were reported. All participating groups were pleased by the attendance, reception and inquires.

Event Mission Reporting

A follow up email was sent by the SO-PA, asking all Auxiliary participants to report their event hours on form 7030 as a PA Community Relations mission using 10J; and preparation and travel hours on form 7029.