

Atlantic City Indoor Boat Show
After Action Report
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The 5th Northern District of the Coast Guard Auxiliary participated in the 2014 Atlantic City Indoor Boat Show, held from February 5th thru the 9th at the Atlantic City Convention Center. The Auxiliary's participation in this event was hosted by Division 8, Cape May and Atlantic Counties. For the fourth straight year, Division 8 has invited other local Auxiliary Divisions to participate in the boat show. This year's event included participation from 7 additional Divisions, representing all the Divisions in the D5NR Eastern Area and Divisions 2, 4 and 6 from the D5NR Central Area. All told, 69 individual Auxiliarists participated in the actual show booth.

The booth that the Auxiliary manned consisted of a 50' x 10' booth that was donated to the Auxiliary by the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), producers of the event. According to NMMA, the total attendance over the 5 day run of the show was 34,220, which is a 6% increase over 2013. Observations lead us to believe that the floor space of this year's show was larger than the last three years. The NMMA states that vendor participation at the show grew by 14% over last year. We observed that the majority of boats displayed were less than 26' in length.

The Auxiliary received outstanding levels of logistical support from Coast Guard Small Boat Station Atlantic City, NJ. The Station provided a meeting place for the three scheduled planning meetings to coordinate the member's activities. Due to inclement weather, meetings 1 and 3 were held as conference calls. Meeting 2 was held at Station Atlantic City with a conference call link for those members that could not attend the meeting.

Each participating unit was invited to send representatives to the planning meetings. Also, Station Atlantic City designated an Active Duty member to attend the planning meetings and act as a liaison between the Stations and the Auxiliary planning group. It is reasonable to conclude that conducting the planning meetings at Station Atlantic City made the event more inclusive for all aspects of the Coast Guard and Auxiliary.

Small Boat Station Atlantic City provided a 25' Defender class RB-S on a trailer for the Auxiliary's activities at the show. The Station brought the boat into the show Exhibition Hall on set-up up day and returned at the end of the show to retrieve the boat. At all times, the Auxiliary was present to participate with the Active Duty in the positioning of the Station's boat into the Auxiliary's booth at the show. In addition, the Station assigned active duty members to the booth when their staffing levels allowed. Also, the Coast Guard Recruiting Office in Northfield, NJ participated in the booth by having some of their staff spend time along-side the Auxiliarists in the booth.

Having been informed by Station Atlantic City that they may not have a 25' RB-S available to dedicate to the show, contacts were made through the Auxiliary Liaison Officers to Station Cape May and Station Philadelphia. Both Stations committed to providing either a 24' RB-S and a 25' RB-S to the Auxiliary for use at the event. We held these offers of assistance in reserve in the

event that Station Atlantic City would not have a boat available for the Auxiliary. As it turned out, Station Atlantic City was able to loan the Auxiliary their RB-S. Stations Cape May and Philadelphia were thanked for their support.

Station Atlantic City also provided logistical support to those members manning the booth by allowing the members to park their personal vehicles on base and the Station further provided a shuttle service from the Station to the Convention Center. This provided free, secure parking for the Auxiliarists who were manning the booth. The Station also stored overnight the two computer systems that the Auxiliary used in the booth. The Auxiliary provided a daily roster of members who would be attending the show to the Communications Center at the Station so the Communications Center would know how many Auxiliarists would need transportation. Table 1 details the breakout of the number of Auxiliarists per Division, per day at the Boat Show.

Table 1: 5NR Member Participation in the Atlantic City Boat Show

Member Unit	Wed 2/5	Thu 2/6	Fri 2/7	Sat 2/8	Sun 2/9	Totals
Division 2	0	2	1	0	0	3
Division 3	2	0	1	0	0	3
Division 4	2	0	0	0	1	3
Division 6	0	1	0	0	0*	1
Division 7	0	2	0	9	3*	14
Division 8	4	6	7	3	1	21
Division 13	3	2	4	0	3	12
Division 16	2	3	4	3	0	12
Total	13	16	17	15	8	69

* Care has been taken to not double count members who participated on more than one day.

For the first time, the Auxiliary was able to have a proper ladder for providing access to the inside of the RB-S from the show floor. Allowing the children to go up into the 25' RB-S while the parents stayed on the ground gave the Auxiliary another chance to engage the parents in conversation relating to boating safety. By engaging the children, it allows the parents to also be engaged.

Experience from previous shows indicates one management problem is that of accounting for all the time an Auxiliary member donates to the actual booth time in the show and reporting that information back to the Auxiliary. Again this year, a process that was developed to collect this information last year, was used to capture the Auxiliarists' time. Each day, the Booth Captain, who is the Auxiliarist in charge of the booth operations for a given day, hands out a pre-formatted 7030 form to each Auxiliarist as they complete their time in the booth. At the end of the day, these individual 7030 reports are compared against the roster of members participating in the booth to ensure completeness of the data collected. These 7030 reports are then sorted by Division, scanned and transmitted to the individual Division SO-IS officers for input into

AUXDATA. This gives the Auxiliary the capability of collecting 100% of the volunteered hours for the show. A total of 386.5 hours have been recorded in Public Affairs time for this event, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: 5NR Member Hours in the Atlantic City Boat Show

Member Unit	Wed 2/5	Thu 2/6	Fri 2/7	Sat 2/8	Sun 2/9	Totals
Division 2	0	7	7	0	0	14.0
Division 3	7	0	5	0	0	12.0
Division 4	11	0	0	0	9	20.0
Division 6	0	7	0	0	7	14.0
Division 7	0	8	0	63	14	84.0
Division 8	14	32	35	31.5	7	109.5
Division 13	24	6	17.5	0	14	61.5
Division 16	7	14	15.5	17	0	53.5
Total	63	74	80	101.5	50	368.5

This year, the Coast Guard requested that the Auxiliary distribute Coast Guard printed Maritime Awareness flyers about off-shore sailing. 200 of these flyers were printed and all were given out at the show. Also, the Coast Guard requested that the Auxiliary distribute Stars and Stripers flyers. However, these flyers were not forthcoming. District also attempted to get additional Operation Clear Channel flyers printed in time for distribution at this event. Again, these flyers were not forthcoming.

The Auxiliary attempted to use technology wherever possible at this show. The practice of recording on paper the names of the public who are interested in services offered by the Auxiliary was discarded in favor of electronically collecting this information into a computer database. Four years ago, the Boat Show Committee developed a custom MS-Access database to collect in one place all the necessary information regarding the interests of the public attending the show and visiting our booth. Since the attending public comes from a large geographic area and many boaters have summer homes distant from their full time residence, the program allows information to be collected as to where the service is to be requested, either at the person's residence or the place where they boat, which may be distant from their residence.

This year, 78 leads were collected using this method. The leads broke out into three categories; interest in taking a boating safety class (33), people interested in joining the Auxiliary (17) and people requesting a Vessel Safety Examination (22), with a few people requesting more than one service. All leads will be sent to the respective D5NR SO-PA Officers for follow-up. The detail collected in the database allows the Auxiliary to direct the lead to the specific unit best suited to meet the needs of the person requesting the service. The three leads collected for boaters outside of D5NR will be forwarded to the appropriate local Auxiliary unit.

Table 3: Show Leads Breakdown

Unit	VE	PE	Membership	Other	Total
Division 1	0	1	0	0	1
Division 3	3	6	1	1	11
Division 4	0	0	1	0	1
Division 6	1	3	0	1	5
Division 7	7	5	3	3	18
Division 8	6	10	8	1	25
Division 12	0	0	1	0	1
Division 13	2	3	0	0	5
Division 14	1	0	1	0	2
Division 16	2	3	1	0	6
D1SR	0	1	1	0	2
D9CR	0	1	0	0	1
Total	22	33	17	6	78

In accordance with the Auxiliary’s focus on Paddlecraft safety, for the second year we were able to incorporate an Auxiliary Paddlecraft facility into the booth. By having this aid available to us, we were able to engage the public in conversations about Paddlecraft safety with a greater degree of authority than ever before. It is important to be able to bring this focus on Paddlecraft safety to all of our public information booths in the future.

This year, for the first time, we were able to incorporate three new displays into the Auxiliary booth to compensate for the loss of one display. Over the two previous years, Mr. Ray Fusco had set-up a video display about Clear Channel issues. This year, he was unable to attend. In his place, Division 13 set-up a lifejacket display and Division 7 set-up a Maritime Pollution Awareness display and an American Waterway Watch display.

The soliciting of feedback from the members participating in the booth over the 5-day span of the show indicates that all members felt that the show was an outstanding success. It was universally noted of the need to focus more on children, having more coloring books, crayons, whistles and other giveaways on hand. Even though we ordered more children’s materials than last year, we still ran out of coloring books by Saturday afternoon. It is also noted that a larger supply of stickers is need as well. Additional materials on Marine Safety, Aquatic Invasive Species and American Waterway Watch have been suggested for next year as well.

It was recommended that Public Affairs take their library of Boating Safety videos and reformat them into looping videos. This would allow for continuous playing of the videos without the need of an Auxiliarist to constantly re-start the videos. Improvements have been suggested for the lifejacket display as it was felt that having loose lifejackets sitting on a table were not as effective as a message as would be new, high quality jackets mounted on a stand of some sort.



Active Duty and Auxiliary interface with the public at the AC Boat Show



Angela Chernitsky and Jessie Davidson from Flotilla 2-76



Lauren Carter (FL 7-11) and Paul Whitman (FL-13-3)



Harris Brody (FL 2-4) discusses boating safety with a member of the public



The Auxiliary Booth at the 2014 Atlantic City Indoor Boat Show
(L-R) Booth Captain Tom Nyman (FL 8-5), John Percy (FC FL 8-4) and Dave Kirk (FL 6-1)



The Friday Morning Booth Staff.

(L-R) Booth Captain William Hartley (IPFC FL8-3), Tony Lopez (FC FL13-3), Tia Pinkey (FL 13-3), Harris Brody (FL 2-4), Gloria Grumbein (FL 8-1) Steve Harris (FL 13-7), Terri Pierce (FL 8-1), Paul Casalese (FL 16-8) and Lorraine Bianco (VFC FL 8-2)
(Not shown: Rich Sampson and Tom Morrissey both of FL 3- 4)

All Photos Courtesy of the U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

In conclusion, the 2014 edition of the Atlantic City Indoor Boat Show was an outstanding success. Thanks go out to all the Auxiliary members who donated their time to this event, to the local Auxiliary Unit Commanders who supported the mission of the Auxiliary at this show, to the local Active Duty Commanders for their logistical support and to the Auxiliary leadership of D5NR.