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COMDTINST 16794.4  
AUG 21, 2003

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 16794.4

Subj: COAST GUARD AUXILIARY OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

Ref: (a) Boat Crew Seamanship Manual, COMDTINST M16114.5 (series)  
(b) Auxiliary Boat Crew Training Manual, COMDTINST M16794.51 (series)

1. PURPOSE. This Program establishes policies and procedures allowing Auxiliary members currently certified in the Boat Crew Program to earn an Award of Operational Excellence.
2. ACTION. Area and district commanders, district directors of Auxiliary (DIRAUX), group/activity commands, marine safety offices, station commanding officers, officers in charge, district commodores, division captains, and flotilla commanders shall promote this program and ensure Auxiliary units under their supervision adhere to the provisions of this program. Internet release authorized.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. None.
4. REFERENCES.
  - a. Where applicable, Auxiliary Operational Excellence Program tasks shall be performed as described in the Boat Crew Seamanship Manual, COMDTINST M16114.5 (series).
  - b. Auxiliary Operational Excellence Program annual currency tasks shall be performed as per the Auxiliary Boat Crew Training Manual, COMDTINST M16794.51 (series).
  - c. All tasks shall be performed with safety in mind. Boat crews are expected to adhere to the principles of risk management and team coordination as described in the Boat Crew Seamanship Manual, COMDTINST M16114.5 (series).
5. DISCUSSION. The Auxiliary Operational Excellence Program will provide Coast Guard Auxiliary

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boat crews with a challenging opportunity to highlight their proficiency and skills through the completion of a series of evaluated scenarios. This operational recognition program is not mandatory and does not replace qualification or certification. It is intended to give Auxiliarists certified in the Boat Crew Program an incentive to train and increase proficiency by working together as a highly trained and coordinated crew and to encourage additional members to offer their boats as Operational Facilities.

6. PROCEDURES. Auxiliarists who are currently certified in the Boat Crew Program and wish to earn the Auxiliary Operational Excellence Award are required to make all arrangements necessary to acquire a qualified proctor (see enclosure 1, Para 8.). The team may compete for the award an unlimited number of times, but may only receive the award once per calendar year. If a boat crew completes the tasks with a passing score, the following actions will take place:
  - a. The proctor (see enclosure 1, para 8) shall send the Operational Excellence Program Letter of Completion (enclosure 2) to the Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX).
  - b. The DIRAUX shall enter the achievement in the member records and provide the member's Flotilla Commander the ribbon, award certificate, and decal with a courtesy copy of the award sent to the Division Captain (DCP). The Flotilla Commander shall present the award to the member(s) during an Auxiliary meeting to promote recognition of this accomplishment.
  - c. The primary manager for the Operational Excellence Program is Commandant (G-OCX) with assistance from the Auxiliary National Department Chief, Operations (DC-O).
7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT and IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. Environmental considerations were examined in the development of this Instruction and have been determined to be not applicable.
8. FORMS AVAILABILITY. Auxiliary National Supply Center (ANSC) shall maintain a supply of the Auxiliary Operational Excellence Program (COMDTINST M16794.51) instruction, "E" decal, Auxiliary "E" ribbon and Operational Excellence Award Certificate (ANSC Form 6029).

D. S. BELZ /s/  
Assistant Commandant for Operations

Encl: (1) Auxiliary Operational Excellence Program (Implementation Instructions)  
(2) Auxiliary Operational Excellence Program Score Sheet/Completion letter



## Operational Excellence Program

(Implementation Instructions)

### **Criteria:**

The purpose of the Operational Excellence Program is to provide Coast Guard Auxiliary boat crews with a challenging opportunity to highlight their proficiency and skills, foster teamwork and encourage fellowship among operational members.

The Operational Excellence Program is a non-compulsory method of demonstrating the level of operational excellence that may be achieved by a coxswain/crew team. The completion of the requisite series of evaluated scenarios shall be completed aboard an operational Auxiliary facility. The achievement of the award does not replace qualification or certification as referenced in the Auxiliary Boat Crew Training and Qualification Manual, COMDTINST M16794.51.

### **Program Guidelines:**

1. The Auxiliary Operational Excellence Program “E” decal will be awarded to a team (coxswain & crew) after that team has completed several operational/SAR tasks (outlined below). All certified boat crewmembers are eligible to compete for this award. It must, however, be the same team throughout the entire testing process. The process does not need to be completed in a single session. The team and individual team members can only win the award once per calendar year. There is no limit on how many teams may earn the award in each district/region.
2. A team shall consist only of currently certified Auxiliary coxswain and crewmembers. The number of crew shall meet the minimum number of crew as designated for the size of the operational facility (boat) as per the Operations Policy Manual, COMDTINST M16978.3 (series) and may not exceed more than one over the minimum crew size required. Currently certified coxswains may participate as a crewmember on the team. The proctor for the evaluation cannot participate as a member of the team.

3. The boat utilized for the program shall be a currently approved Auxiliary operational facility (boat), capable of operating in the expected conditions for the underway portion of the required tasks. To promote training throughout the range of varied Auxiliary boats, a facility may only achieve the qualification of the "E" decal once per calendar year and shall not be used again for the purpose of this program until the following year. Risk management shall be utilized prior to getting underway throughout the event to consider operational and environmental limitations.
4. The team may compete for the Operational Excellence Program award an unlimited number of times, however the team may only receive the award once per calendar year. There will be no dockside waivers for underway required tasks, except for the pump drill as mentioned in the Operations Tasks requirements of paragraph 3 below (Pump Drill).
5. Upon successful completion of the tasks, the Coast Guard Auxiliary will award the "E" decal, Auxiliary Operational Excellence certificate and "E" ribbon to the Auxiliarists at no cost. The Auxiliary National Supply Center (ANSC) will stock the Auxiliary "E" ribbon, "E" decal and Auxiliary Operational Excellence certificate (ANSC form 6029) which is available for authorized requestors. The team's Flotilla Commander shall present the award to the team member(s) during an Auxiliary meeting to promote recognition of the accomplishment.
6. The Operational Excellence Program, "E" decal, will be issued only to the Coxswain. It may be displayed on the coxswain's surface facility (if the coxswain has a facility) at all times, whether or not the facility is under orders. When the "E" decal is awarded, it may be displayed for that time remaining in the calendar year in which it was earned plus the next full calendar year. For example, if the "E" decal is earned on July 01, 2003, it may be displayed for the remainder of the year 2003 and all of 2004. The "E" decal will be dated to indicate the year in which it was achieved. The "E" decal shall be displayed on the port side forward window, just aft of the Operational decal and wreath if possible. For vessels with no port side window the "E" decal may be displayed on the port side of the operating console, above the viewing line of the vessel's gunwale. The Coast Guard Auxiliary Excellence "E" ribbon and the Auxiliary Operational Excellence certificate shall be awarded to coxswain and crewmembers of the team who achieve Operational Excellence by completing this program. The order of precedence for the Auxiliary "E" ribbon will be as per the Coast Guard Auxiliary Manual, COMDTINST M16790.1 (series).
7. The proctor whom administers the program to the team shall complete the Operational Excellence Program Letter of Completion and forward it to the Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX). When the completion letter is received the DIRAUX (or designee) will review and endorse the team's letters of completion, enter the appropriate award and

accomplishment into the members record. The DIRAUX will provide an endorsed copy of the completion letter, Auxiliary Operational Excellence certificate, “E” ribbon, and “E” decal to the team member’s flotilla as an administrative approval for the flotilla to issue the awards to the team. A courtesy copy should be provided to the member’s Division Captain (DCP).

8. Proctors for the required tasks will include:

- Current certified Auxiliary Qualification Examiners (QE).
- Any active duty or reserve member on active duty with the rank of at least E5 who is a certified coxswain on a Coast Guard SAR boat and authorized to proctor the program by the unit Commanding Officer/ Officer in Charge.

### **Operational Excellence Program tasks:**

1. Search Planning - The proctor gives the team a Person In the Water (PIW) scenario, the team does the search planning appropriate for the scenario including plotting on a local chart the enroute course and selected search pattern.

The scenario will include:

- Reported incident involving PIW at a specified time.
- Team receives pertinent information at incident time + 30 minutes.
- Last Known Position (LKP) at time of incident.
- Set and drift information (this may be “virtual” in non-tidal areas).
- Team will have 30 minutes to calculate and plot a trackline with time/distance markings at all turn points enroute to Datum, and plot the appropriate initial search pattern.
- Datum must be corrected from incident time to the time the facility expects to be on scene.

Scoring: Given a scenario of a person in the water, the team must demonstrate the ability to accurately calculate and plot datum (5 points), plot a trackline to datum (5 points), correctly choose (5 points) and plot the initial search pattern (5 points) within a 30 minute time period (5 points).

2. Search Execution – The team must transit along their plotted trackline to the calculated datum in their facility, using safe and prudent navigation. The team will search and recover an item previously placed in the water.

- A dummy PIW is to be set at the location where Datum from previous scenario SHOULD be before the search is begun.
- The team runs their plotted trackline to calculated Datum and conducts their chosen search pattern (the team may use GPS or LORAN-C for search pattern).
- All turn points along the trackline must be reached within 10 seconds of predetermined time.

- All turnpoints of search pattern legs must be within 5 seconds of predetermined time.
- Search must be completed within 12 minutes after arriving at CSP.
- When the dummy PIW is found, the drill will stop and will be noted as successfully completed, if within the prescribed time limits.

Scoring: Using the information derived from their Search Planning, the team must demonstrate the ability to accurately run their plotted trackline (5 points), arrive within 2 minutes of projected ETA (5 points) and within 100 yards of datum (5 points), properly conduct the search pattern within the parameters stated above, and find the PIW within the 12 minute time period (5 points).

3. Pump drill – This task will be performed in **calm, sheltered waters** with a P-1, P-5 or other suitable pump. The team will anchor the facility in sheltered waters and properly operate the pump.

- Safely and properly anchor the facility.
- Unpack, prime, and operate the P-1, P-5, or other suitable portable pump while on board a facility, at anchor.
- Obtain suction and a discharge stream within 3 minutes of beginning unpacking the pump.
- Pump must be properly repacked when cooled down.
- If the facility is not large enough to perform this task at anchor, or if a suitable anchorage is not available, the proceeding steps may be completed dockside.

Scoring: Using the above criteria, the team must properly prepare and operate the pump (5 points) within a 3 minute time period (5 points), then properly repack the pump (5 points).

4. Communications – Team members are tested on correct use of marine radio communications.

- Two team members must orally recite the phonetic alphabet and operating channels for the local area. Must score 100%.
- A team member gives proper underway message.
- A team member gives proper ops & position reports to the controlling unit.
- A team member gives proper on scene message.
- A team member gives proper commence search message.
- A team member gives proper PIW found, and simulated PIW condition message.

Scoring: Two team members shall be tested dockside on the phonetic alphabet and operating channels. Each team member must score 100% (5 points for each team member). The underway message, ops and position message, on scene message, commence search message, and PIW found and condition messages may be given by any team member, and are scored 3 points each for a total of 15 available points for messaging. These messages will be passed during the search execution task.

5. Complete the normal Currency Maintenance Tasks:

- Successfully complete Pre-Underway Checkoff (BCM-03-04-AUX, COX-03-04-AUX) (2 points)

- Successfully complete MOB drill (BCM-07-02-AUX, COX-07-02-AUX). (3 points)
- Successfully complete Towing drill (BCM-07-05 or BCM-07-08, COX-08-05 or COX-08-07-AUX). (10 points)

**Any safety violation will void the entire testing evolution and the team must re-test.**  
There are 100 possible points. 90 points are needed for award of the Operational Excellence Program “E” decal.

## Auxiliary Operational Excellence Program Letter of Completion

From: \_\_\_\_\_, Member No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name of Proctor) \* (See last page if Active duty proctor)

To: Director of Auxiliary, \_\_\_\_\_ Coast Guard District/Region

Subj: Operational Excellence Program Letter of Completion

Ref: Coast Guard Auxiliary Operational Excellence Program, COMDTINST 16794.4

1. This is to notify that I have examined the following Auxiliary team in their attempt to earn the Auxiliary Operational Excellence Award. The team members below have achieved a passing score on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (Month / Day) (Year)

Member Name	Number	Crew Position

### SCORING

#### Search Planning

- Demonstrate the ability to accurately calculate and plot datum (5 points)
- Plot a safe navigational track line to datum (5 points)
- Choose appropriate initial search pattern (5 points)
- Plot appropriate initial search pattern (5 points)
- Complete all plotting within a 30 minute time period (5 points)

score	initial/date

#### Search Execution

- Accurately run plotted search pattern legs (5 points)
- Arrive within 100 yards of datum (5 points)
- Arrive within 2 minutes of projected ETA (5 points)
- Conduct search pattern and find PIW within 12 minutes (5 points)




