

**UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS**  
**DISTRICT 9**  
**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

Title:

**DISTRICT EDUCATIONAL CRUISE**

No. **41**

Date Created: 20 Mar 2004

Revised:

**Purpose:** To set up and coordinate a hands-on Educational Cruise designed to educate current and recent basic boating course students in the art of piloting and navigation utilizing on-the-water hands-on training and to promote recruitment of new members.

**1. OBTAIN THE RIGHT VESSEL**

Look for a vessel that is US Coast Guard approved to carry passengers for hire and is of suitable size for the number of students, proctors and staff that will be aboard for the cruise. Give consideration to the passenger visibility so that they can easily see what the skipper would see while navigating the area. Other considerations:

- Does the cruise area have the appropriate numbers of aids to navigation?
- Will the pilothouse be available for observation?
- May the cabin lights be dimmed while underway at night?
- May the participants bring food on board?
- Public address system availability?
- Schedule date for optimum weather conditions
- Schedule a three to four cruise time for optimum daytime and evening aids to navigation observation.

**2. ARRANGE LIABILITY INSURANCE**

In looking for a vessel, if they do not have at least 1 million dollars worth insurance, arrange for an umbrella rider, giving necessary amount of coverage for a nominal fee using the vessel's insurance company. Contact them direct for cost and rider to cover USPS, District, and Squadrons.

**3. DEVELOP AND OPERATE WITHIN BUDGET**

Determine costs of vessel, charts, flyers, mailings, handouts, insurance, refreshments, etc. in order to determine charge to students.

**4. DRAW UP THE LEGAL CONTRACTS AND RELEASE FORMS**

These documents are available on-line for download from the USPS National website.

As with any legal contract, make sure that the responsibilities of the CARRIER and the CHARTERER are fully described and agreed to. This must describe the extent of

liability for the participants of the event. Here again, the National Cruise and Rendezvous Committee has a sample Release and Waiver Agreement on-line and available for download from the USPS National website.

As with any USPS legal document, it is recommended that you contact the National USPS Law Committee for final approval of text before entering into a binding contract.

## **5. DEVELOP AN ITINERARY**

Discuss with the vessel captain a route suitable for educational purposes. Develop a chart cut from the NOAA chart of the area or extracted from commercial navigational software. Annotate the chart with points of interest that will be observed and discussed during the cruise.

Place a disclaimer on the chart Not For Use In Navigation to prevent possible litigation.

Prepare a script for the cruise discussing the aids to navigation that will be seen along the way as well as other points of interest that may be available.

Arrange for a dynamic spokesperson to narrate during the cruise and to keep the narration interesting and exciting.

## **6. CREATE FLIERS AND MARKETING PROGRAM TO PROMOTE THE CRUISE**

The proper publicity is key to a successful Educational Cruise. Fliers are the main instruments to contact potential participants. Create handouts promoting the cruise, news releases and letters soliciting members to assist as proctors and distribute them to all Squadron Commanders or their representatives at the Spring Council. Ask that they distribute them to their basic boating students and to their squadron newsletters editors. Utilize prior years literature for guidance. As budget allows, charge a reduced or no charge rate to the proctors.

Fliers are to include the following:

- A description of the event, date, times, cost, departure location and a form to fill out to include student names, address, phone number
- Waiver that releases USPS, District and District Squadrons from any liability resulting from accidents or injury
- Signature block following waiver
- Explanation of things that may be brought such as cameras, binoculars, PFDs, personal aids to navigation, etc.
- Explanation of things not to bring such as alcohol or drugs.
- Explanation that recent Basic Boating graduates, students and their family members are eligible to attend and indicating minimum age requirements.
- Point-of-contact information: name and return address for the completed applications and checks or money orders and a name and telephone number for telephone inquiries if there are questions.

Request the District website chairman to post similar fliers on the District website

Prepare and distribute RSVP invitations to special guests such as USPS National and District Commanders and USCG and USCGA dignitaries. Prepare and distribute news releases and invitations to the local media.

Attend the District Conference Basic Boating, Membership and Commander's Seminars and promote the Educational Cruise.

#### **7. PREPARE STUDENT AND PROCTOR PACKAGES FOR HANDOUT**

Include the chart(s) of the area as developed above.

Obtain safety promotional items and literature for inclusion. A wealth of these items is available at no charge from the United States Coast Guard, United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, Department of Natural Resources, Red Cross, USPS, insurance companies, etc.

Include a USPS membership application available from Headquarters.

#### **8. IF BUDGET ALLOWS, ARRANGE FOR SNACKS, ICE AND REFRESHMENTS TO BE AVAILABLE**

Discuss with vessel captain if USPS may supply and cater the occasion and availability of onboard dispensing facilities.

#### **9. RECEIVE STUDENT AND PROCTOR REGISTRATIONS AND MONEY**

Prepare an Excel or similar computer file to maintain student and proctor information to include:

Date application received, names, addresses, phone numbers, money received, check numbers and the name of squadron where the student took the Basic Boating class.

Periodically forward monies received and an accounting thereof to the District Treasurer for deposit.

#### **10. GENERATE AND DISTRIBUTE NUMBERED TICKETS AND COVER LETTERS**

Assign ticket numbers to each participant. This will allow accounting to each squadron as to participation and member acquisition.

Prepare and mail instruction letters to students indicating departure time and directions to cruise departure point. A separate letter for proctors must include their duties to mingle with the students and field questions while on board. Encourage proctors to bring squadron or personal aids to navigation that the use of which could be educational and interesting to the students.

If student response exceeds vessel capacity, determine based on earliest date application was received who is eligible to attend.

Determine number of Proctors required based on about seven students per proctor, allowing for vessel capacity and number of student applications received.

If proctor response exceeds an appropriate ratio of student to proctors, determine based on earliest date application was received who is eligible to attend giving special consideration to District and National Bridge members and special guests.

Generate letters of regret to those students who cannot be accommodated and offer to give them priority passage on the next cruise.

Generate letters of regret to those proctors who cannot be accommodated and encourage that they reapply for the next cruise as soon as the notices are distributed.

### **11. GENERATE NAMETAGS FOR EACH PARTICIPANT**

Student badges should indicate students name and squadron affiliation as an identifier to the proctors.

Proctor nametags to also include the word "PROCTOR" and squadron affiliation as an identifier for the students.

### **12. ATTEND THE CRUISE**

Arrive plenty early in order to prepare vessel for receiving students. Install any banners, burgees or Ensign. Set up and test public address system. Arrange nametags alphabetically for easy and quick distribution to students and proctors as they are checked in and tickets presented. Prepare student and proctor handouts for quick distribution. Set up refreshment distribution points as needed.

Have a short meeting before departure with the vessel crew and proctors to review what is expected of them and reminding them to make this a fun event for themselves as well as the students.

After departure welcome the students, introduce special guests, introduce proctors as a group and explain how to identify them. Encourage that questions be directed to them. Introduce the narrator and explain that they will be narrating during the entire cruise.

Upon disembarkation thank students for attending, have a short wrap up meeting with the proctors discussing what went well and where there may be need for improvement and thanking for their participation.

### **13. AFTER THE CRUISE**

Send final monies, accounting reports expense reimbursement forms to the District 9 Treasurer.

Prepare and submit summary reports on the event to the District 9 Administrative Officer, to include any merit mark recommendations.

Update information on the District web site.

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<p><b>SOP 41 HISTORY:</b> CREATED : 20 Mar 2004 REVISED:</p>
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