

Welcome to USPS

The
United States
Power
Squadrons®



Your New Friends Who Save Lives With
Safe Boating Through Education,
While Having a Great Time
With Sail and Power Boats

dedicated to
making boating
safer and more fun



New Member Orientation Manual

USPS	United States Power Squadrons
Jet Smart	the Squadron + flag graphic
Boat Smart	Wheel-and-Flag Design
The Ensign	the Officer Trident Design
	the USPS ensign (flag design)

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The Pledge of the United States Power Squadrons:

I do solemnly pledge to:

Abide by the bylaws of the United States Power Squadrons;

Promote high standards of navigation and seamanship;

Maintain my boat and operate it legally;

Render assistance whenever possible; and

Conduct myself in a manner that will add prestige, honor,

and respect to the United States Power Squadrons.

Who, What, Where, When, and Why of the UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS

Before 1900, most recreational boats were sail-powered; everything relating to recreational boating was geared to sailing. There were a few steam-powered boats, but they required large crews. Shortly after the turn of the century, gasoline-powered craft became available and many boaters bought them: power boating became a popular activity.

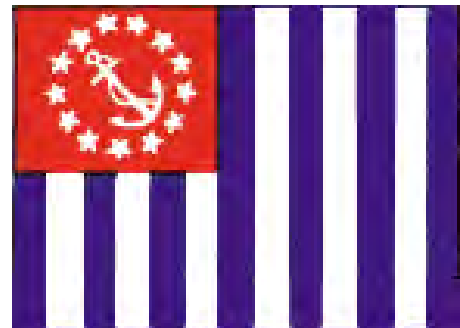
Since skills and education all were directed to sailing at that time, power boaters found themselves within a skill and knowledge gap. In 1912, Roger Upton decided to fill that gap by forming an unofficial Power Boat Division of the Boston Yacht Club. A year later, that division became “The Power Squadron.”

The Power Squadron received considerable media attention. Interest began to spread. During 1913, over 70 power-boat clubs and owners’ associations met at the New York Yacht Club. At the second meeting of this group, the United States Power Squadrons was officially formed.

Desiring some unique identification, this new group designed the ensign including a fouled anchor, encircled by 13 stars on a red field with 13 vertical, blue and white stripes, as shown here.

To protect the USPS Ensign, Roger Upton applied for and received a United States design patent, number 48,803, issued in April, 1914, which expired in 1928. To permanently protect the flag, however, trademark and copyright registrations, were obtained, both of which have been maintained ever since.

On 6 April 1917, Charles F. Chapman sent a letter to the Navy Department, offering the services of the USPS instructional program to train men for the Naval Coastal Defense. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, formally accepted the offer. Over 5,000 students attended these classes and entered the military. As a result of their USPS training, many earned commissions in the U. S. Navy. During both World War I and World War II, USPS supported the war efforts by training many naval navigators.



Originally, USPS was an all-male organization. Women were eligible to take our courses, but were issued “Woman’s Certificates” to show their affiliation with the organization. Then, in 1982, a special “meeting of delegates” adopted changes to the USPS Constitution and By-Laws to make our membership “genderless.”

Thus, from, the club-within-a-club beginning of USPS at the start of the 20th century, evolved the largest private, fraternal, self-supporting, non-profit, non-governmental, and non-military organization of power boaters *and* sail boaters in the world.

Over the years, USPS has expanded throughout the United States and the Caribbean. We even have a squadron in Tokyo, Japan. Now, you are one of 60,000 members in 450 squadrons. We work, study, and play with members of our neighboring squadrons. Ours and several nearby squadrons have joined together into a “district,” one of 33 geographically-related districts in USPS.

Our educational courses have been continuously developed, improved, and expanded since USPS’ early days so they remain current and up-to-date. Each of those courses is available for you to take when and where you choose: with members of your own squadron, members of other squadrons, or independently.

In addition to our educational program, we take cruises together, we perform a host of civic services, and we have all sorts of fun: picnics, parties, etc. Don’t miss out on these.

Enhancements to Your Membership

USPS has expanded services for its members over the years. One of the most important enhancements to your membership today is our boat insurance program. Special terms, coverage for older boats, and personal service are just some of the benefits of the USPS Insurance Program. The Membership Enhancement Committee can also provide information on discounts for airline reservations and auto rentals. We have our own USPS credit card for members who enjoy using that convenience.

USPS Web Page

Our USPS Web Page contains information about educational courses, National Committees, upcoming National Meetings and much more. The address is: www.usps.org/member. You will need your certificate number to log into the members’ page.

Important: Do Not Print this page or its reverse side as part of your squadron's manual! This page, and its reverse side, are reserved for your squadron's page—see Appendix A for how to write one, and a sample.

How Our Squadron is Organized

Nearly every corporation has a board of directors that oversees the managers who actually conduct the day-to-day business. Ours does, too, but we call it our Executive Committee. This Committee, which includes our elected officers and several elected Directors, meets regularly to review and approve everything our squadron does.

The Executive Committee is responsible to all of our members to see that things are done properly. Its meetings are announced in our newsletter, and we encourage you to attend them—they're open to all members. When you attend, your questions and suggestions will be welcomed. Remember—we're all volunteers and can use all the input and help we can get!

The day-to-day management of our squadron is accomplished by a group of officers called the *Bridge*. These officers are elected by, and are responsible to all of the members. The Bridge consists of:

One officer presides over all of our membership and Executive Committee meetings and performs all of the other tasks normally accomplished by the president of any corporation or similar group. To provide a nautical sort of recognition and honor to the office of our chief executive, he or she holds the rank of "Commander," (**Cdr**) and receives a special flag to fly. The flag includes three tridents with short staffs on a blue field, as shown here.

Each of the following officers gets lots of help from the rest of us through the various committees to which we belong. Their areas of responsibility are generally described below.

The Executive Officer is our "senior vice president." Second in command, the **XO** performs the Commander's duties when the Commander is unavailable. This member is responsible for the *external* functions of the squadron, such as public relations, cooperative charting (see page 7), boat show booths, legislation of interest to us as boaters, radio technical information, and safety issues.

The Executive Committee

The Bridge

Commander



Executive Officer

Educational Officer The **SEO** (Squadron Educational Officer) is responsible for the entire educational program of our squadron. This officer may well be our busiest member (having the most fun), because he or she supervises our busy educational program, both the courses offered to the public and those for our members only.

Administrative Officer The Administrative Officer (**AO**) is responsible for all of the *internal* functions of the squadron, (as opposed to the XO's external functions). The AO's tasks include recruiting and retaining members; keeping us involved in squadron activities; arranging for membership meetings, programs, and entertainment; and setting up cruises.

Secretary Our records-keeper. Just as does the secretary of any organization, this officer records and keeps minutes of all of our meetings and safeguards our legal documents. Our Secretary also maintains the squadron membership records (database), and is responsible for publishing our newsletter and roster of members.

Treasurer This is our "show me the money" officer. The treasurer manages all of the financial transactions of the squadron.



Each of the Executive, Educational, and Administrative officers, as well as the Secretary and Treasurer, is a Lieutenant Commander (Lt/C). The flag of a Lt/C has two short-staffed tridents on a red field, as shown here.

The Bridge officers are elected at our annual meeting, installed at our Change of Watch (a big party you won't want to miss!), and serve until our next Change of Watch. Usually, our SEO serves for three consecutive one-year terms, but our other Bridge members usually serve for only one or two one-year terms.

On the following pages, you will read about *some* of the committees in our squadron. There are several not listed due to space limitations, but you should be aware that we have an **Audit** Committee to verify the Treasurer's work; a **Nominating** Committee to propose candidates for squadron offices; a **Rules** Committee to ensure that we adopt, amend, and follow our Bylaws correctly; a **Planning** Committee to help us project what our squadron will be in the future and propose steps to attain our goals; a **Law Officer** who helps us meet all legal requirements, and a **Property Officer** who maintains the inventory of squadron property.

The activities for which the Executive Officer is responsible primarily relate to events that affect our relations with the public.

Executive Department

Each year, companies that build and sell boats and related boating equipment put on one or more exhibits to display and sell their products to the public. These are wonderful opportunities to tell people about the squadron and our motto: *Safe Boating Through Education*. We cooperate with our neighboring squadrons to set up and staff a booth at the shows to distribute our literature, talk to boaters and prospective boaters about safety and education, and publicize our Boat Smart and The Squadron Boating Course classes.

Boat Shows

Our squadron provides a civic service by helping to maintain the accuracy of the charts, light lists, survey markers, etc., in our area. Since charts and related publications are important safety and information items, this is an important activity.

Cooperative Charting

More than that, however, it's a lot of fun; it's like an adult scavenger hunt. We have water and land cruises to search out, find, and report discrepancies or errors on the charts to the National Ocean Survey (NOS), the Coast and Geodetic Survey (C&GS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and/or local agencies.

Many laws, rules, and regulations affect our recreation and boating safety. These are proposed and enacted by federal, state, and municipal authorities. This committee is responsible for maintaining our awareness of these bills and laws so that we can comply with them and, where necessary, contact our elected and administrative officials with comments and suggestions.

Legislative

We present solid educational and informational opportunities to the public. But, if we don't tell them why, where, and when, we're wasting our time. Public Relations—getting the word out about our classes—is critical. PR *directly* promotes boating safety.

Public Relations

PR *indirectly* promotes boating safety by informing the public about USPS, our activities, and opportunities for membership. Our members *are* our squadron. Unless we continue to attract new members, we cannot continue to promote boating safety. Effective Public Relations is critical to our goals.

Radio Technical As boaters, we need someone to be aware of the technical matters and regulations relating to the installation and operation of marine electronic equipment. Usually, this is done for our squadron by someone appointed as our Radio Technical Officer. Our RTO monitors FCC regulations and other information published by various marine electronics and telecommunications organizations.

The RTO helps us to be aware of, and in compliance with the rules and regulations relating to our boating activities, and helps our instructors to present accurate and current electronic equipment information in our courses and programs.

Safety Our Safety Officer is selected on the basis of an interest in marine safety. He or she helps to present informative programs throughout the year, during our meetings, classes, and cruises, and distributes safety bulletins, posters, literature, etc.

Each year, our country observes National Safe Boating Week, and a major task for this officer or committee is to help us observe and promote it to the public as another form of our civic service.

The Squadron Educational Officer (SEO) is responsible for all public and member courses and programs. As a result, the Educational Department is fairly large and involves a number of our members.

The SEO has an Assistant Squadron Educational Officer (ASEO) who helps guide this department's work.

What's the difference between courses and programs? *Courses* present specific material to students over a period of some time. Usually, students do homework, and courses always end with a proctored examination. *Programs* are relatively short presentations. They are usually given over a few hours on a day or two—most use USPS Learning Guides and there is no homework or exam.

Public courses and programs include The Squadron Boating Course, Boat Smart, Jet Smart, Chart Smart, and Boating Safety for Kids. These are all free of charge to everyone, with the only cost being for the texts, materials, and any fees charged for classroom use.

Member courses are far more extensive, and you will undoubtedly want to begin taking them soon after you join our squadron. The two categories of these courses are: Elective Courses and Advanced Grades.

Elective Courses may be taken at any time, and in any order you choose. These courses are:

- ⚓ Cruise Planning
- ⚓ Instructor Qualification
- ⚓ Engine Maintenance
- ⚓ Marine Electronics
- ⚓ Sail
- ⚓ Weather

CP discusses everything you need to know about planning for a cruise, whether it will last hours, days, months, or years. Take CP with your Family Members with whom you will cruise; including them will be fun and informative for all of you.

IQ is a misnomer: the name sells short what this course teaches. You will learn how to make an effective presentation to other people in every part of your life: at work, at home, in any public or private gathering, as well as in a classroom. The course covers preparation of your presentation and use of aids to help you make your point.

Educational Department

Courses vs. Programs

Public Courses

Member Courses

Elective Courses

Cruise Planning

Instructor Qualification

Engine Maintenance **EM** will teach you how to do routine maintenance on a boat's engine and related equipment. Equally important, it will teach you how to be a problem detective. You will learn how to diagnose problems so that you can more intelligently assess the work that needs to be done and discuss it with those you select to do it.

Marine Electronics Today, there's more electronic equipment aboard small boats than on large naval ships a half century ago: radios, radar, loran, global positioning systems, weather fax systems, and many others. We need to know a little about how they work and a lot about how to use them. **ME** is the course that provides this information to you.

Sail There's more to going for a sail than simply hauling them up the mast and letting go the docklines. When you take **Sa**, you'll learn about different kinds of wind—true, apparent, boat—and, different kinds of sail boats—sloops, ketches, yawls, etc. You will also learn how to make the wind, sail configuration, and weight of your boat produce the fastest and/or most comfortable ride for you and your passengers.

Weather Is the weather forecaster on your favorite TV station right—ever? Here's your opportunity to become familiar with the problems meteorologists encounter. Learn how they determine what the weather is most likely to be at some time in the future—tonight, tomorrow, next week, next month. Boating is really a “know before you go” activity, and knowing what the weather will be doing can be critical to your fun and safety. Don't miss **Wx**; it's a terrific course.

When to Take Elective Courses The Elective Courses may be taken in any order you wish. You can self-study any or all of these courses, and challenge any course's examination to obtain permanent credit, but we encourage you to take them with other student-members. Students always bring their own experiences to the classes and share them, so you will learn things not found in the texts. You will also develop lifelong friendships with your fellow students due to the love for boating we share.

A major element of safe boating is knowing your responsibilities as well as knowing how to move your boat from one place to another, whether across the marina or around the world. Many people think that anyone can get into a boat and drive it with no special training. Perhaps they can. *But*, they won't be safe—nor will anyone else on the water at the same time they are.

Our Advanced Grades courses present a series of information that is important for you to know to be safe and to get where you're going with the least trouble. We recommend that you take them in the following order, but you may take them as they become available, if the instructor approves. The instructor will ensure that you have sufficient background to absorb the material without delaying the progress of other students in the class.

Our Advanced Grades Courses are:

- ⚓ Seamanship
- ⚓ Piloting
- ⚓ Advanced Piloting
- ⚓ Junior Navigation
- ⚓ Navigation

S is our boat-handling course. It covers your responsibilities as a skipper. You will learn the basics of anchoring, line handling, rules of the road, and marlinspike seamanship, i.e., some basic knots, bends, and hitches—more than those taught in our public courses.

Your accomplishment in completing Seamanship is recognized by all of us, with our sincerest congratulations, by awarding you the right to attach the suffix **S** after your name. In addition, *if* you have a uniform (you don't have to have one), and/or *if* you have a blazer (you don't have to have one of these, either), you may display the award shown at the right on its breast pocket.

Your primary course in navigating your boat within sight of land, **P** will show you how to get from where you are to where you want to go, safely and directly. You will learn how to plot your course and position on a chart, the various types of charts available, the different types of aides to navigation, and how to use a compass effectively.

Advanced Grades Courses

Seamanship

John Paul Jones, S



Piloting

David W. Farragut, P



As a sign of having completed Piloting, you may add the grade designator **P** after your name and wear the breast-pocket emblem shown here.

Advanced Piloting

After completing Seamanship and Piloting, you'll want to take **AP** to complete your near-shore cruising education. You will learn sophisticated methods of finding and plotting your position. You'll also learn how to avoid dangerous-water conditions, figure out if there'll be enough water to enter your marina, too much water to get under the bridge, or if the current is too strong for your boat to get through the pass quickly. You'll also learn how to determine your compass' deviation and to prepare a deviation table for your boat.

William "Bull" Halsey, AP



If you have the background and skills to do the work, you may study and complete Advanced Piloting before you take Seamanship and/or Piloting. However, if you do, you will not have earned the **AP** grade designator until all three of those courses are successfully completed. Upon completion of all three, you will have earned that privilege and may use the emblem at the left on your breast pocket.



Members who complete Seamanship, Piloting, Advanced Piloting *and* any three Elective Courses have earned the Educational Proficiency Award. Your breast-pocket grade designator may be underscored, as shown here, to display your award.

Junior Navigation

When you've completed your near-shore cruising education, it will be time to learn how the more adventurous seamen travel the high seas. **JN** is the course that will tell you everything you've wanted to know about electronic navigation, and will also introduce you to celestial navigation—finding your way using only the stars and planets. Or, what to do when the batteries die.

Chester A. Nimitz, JN



Once again, if you're able, you may take JN before completing the earlier courses, but your grade designator will not be "JN" until Seamanship, Piloting, Advanced Piloting, and Junior Navigation have all been completed. And, as you may have guessed by now, when you complete these four courses, you will have earned the right to change your name's suffix to **JN**, and display the breast pocket emblem shown at the left.

And now, the full dose of celestial navigation! In **N**, you will learn nearly everything there is to know about finding your way using only a sextant and celestial bodies. In fact, you'll even learn how to find where you are in emergency, lost-at-sea situations when you don't even have a sextant. When you take navigation, you will learn not only how to use celestial navigation, but its theory—why it works.

When you've completed all of Seamanship, Piloting, Advanced Piloting, Junior Navigation, and Navigation, once more you are entitled to change the suffix used with your name to **N** and display the breast pocket emblem shown here.

Advanced Grades courses may be taken in any order you wish, but, as described above, your grade designator will always depend upon which courses you have completed. Although you can self-study any or all of these courses, and challenge any course's examination to obtain permanent credit, we encourage you to take them with other student members. Students always bring their own experiences to the classes and share them, so you will learn things not found in the texts. You will also develop lifelong friendships with your fellow students due to the love for boating we all share.

When you complete all of the Advanced Grades and Elective Courses, you will have earned the Educational Achievement Award and have acquired a classroom-level nautical education equal to that from any military or service academy. Is there more to learn? You bet! Where do you go to learn it? Out on the water: put what you've learned to use and go out and practice it.

In the meantime, however, you have earned the privilege of showing the symbol **N** as a suffix to your name and displaying the emblem shown to the right on your breast pocket. Just for practice, and to see how it looks, fill in your name in the blank space to the right. Then—go for it!

Is the use of these grade-designator suffixes bragging? Maybe, but there really are two important reasons we use them. First, they help us to inspire our friends and fellow-members to “be all they can be,” and absorb as much education as they can.

Navigation

Arleigh “21-Knot” Burke, N



_____, **N**
(print your name here)



Second, when you go out in public with your grade-designator emblem on your breast pocket, non-members often ask you what it means. Tell them, and tell them what USPS does for the public, and how we do it. We want everyone to be the safest boater possible. Safe Boating Through Education!

Educational Department Staff

So, how do we accomplish all this education? Clearly, it takes a lot of work. We're all unpaid volunteers, so the only way it's humanly possible to put on all these courses and create so many educated safe-boaters, is with a lot of help.

Member-volunteers plan, teach, and proctor our courses; build teaching aids; distribute information about our classes to members so they know when and where to show up; and encouraged them to attend.

Our Educational Department staff includes:

Chairmen of the Local Boards for Boating, Elective Courses, and Advanced Grades

A Course Chairman for each course

A Class Chairmen for each term of each course (this person is often the course chairman)

Instructors for some or all of the topics in each course (sometimes, these persons include the course class chairmen)

Proctors who aid instructors by helping the students; grading homework; arranging teaching aids and ensuring the aids are ready and operable; setting up and breaking down classrooms, etc.

Teaching Aids Chairman, who works with course instructional teams to think up and build aids to clarify information taught to students to help the students better understand the subject matter and quickly progress through our courses.

As you become more familiar with our squadron, we hope that you'll not only agree to help when you're asked, but will call and volunteer when you hear or read that someone needs help. Be there!

The activities for which the Administrative Officer is responsible primarily relate to events that affect our relationships with and services to our members.

Administrative Department

Here comes the fun! Let's go boating! This is the committee that arranges our squadron's cruises and rendezvous. We try to do several each year, setting our destinations for locations that are fairly easy and fun to go to. These events always involve social activities, especially those that involve meals. Sometimes we do raft-ups, so be prepared to learn and use new skills for anchoring and tying up to the boats of your fellow members. This committee also matches up skippers and crew for those who don't own a boat.

Boating Activities

USPS has set up a very special network of individuals in each squadron who are ready and willing to provide information about their squadron's area to USPS members from other parts of the country. The list of the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of these Port Captains is free for the asking to all members.

Port Captain

Our Port Captain learns as much as possible about our area: marinas, fuel docks, pump out stations, good restaurants, and so on, and is then ready to tell anyone who asks everything they want to know. He or she also stays aware of our squadron events in order to invite any travelers to join us and make new boating friends.

Since all of us are pretty busy, we make a special effort to get together on a regular basis and spend time with our friends and fellow members. At meetings this committee arranges, our Bridge officers tell us about their respective departments' activities, giving the rest of us an opportunity to question, suggest, and vote on things that need membership approval. That's the business part.

Meetings and Entertainment

But, there's a fun part too. Usually, our meetings include lunch or dinner, often with a cocktail hour, and often with a speaker, display, or something else that's interesting and entertaining. It's impossible to list all the things we've done in the past and may do in the future, so be sure to read your newsletter and other announcements. You won't want to miss out.

Membership Without members, there's no squadron. Without the squadron, the safety of boaters is impaired. This means there's exceptionally important work to be done: locate, recruit, and propose new members, and retain current members.

This committee submits membership applications to our Executive Committee for approval, and then forwards the paperwork to USPS headquarters in Raleigh, North Carolina, for assignment of certificate numbers and issuance of membership certificates. The committee also encourages current members to renew their memberships to continue promoting safe boating now and in the future.

Our Membership Committee is directly or indirectly involved in nearly everything the squadron does that, in any way, has a possible effect on membership. For example, when you were taking The Squadron Boating Course or Boat Smart, you met one or more members of this committee. Your instructors were part of our Membership Committee. And, when you filled out your application for membership, you turned it in to a member of the committee.

You may not have realized that the people you were talking to were Membership Committee members, because they probably forgot to tell you that they were. They may not have even thought about it themselves.

You see, every member of our squadron is part of our Membership Committee. *You* are on our Membership Committee. We need as many members as possible to effectively promote Safe Boating Through Education, and we need your help to do this committee's important work.

Talk about our squadron with your friends and other water-enthusiasts you meet. Tell them about our public courses and recommend that they take them as soon as possible. Then, pick up your roster and call our Membership Committee chairman. Give him or her the name and phone number of these prospective members so we can help you get them signed up for our next public course.

When was the last time you went out and looked for something to do? Maybe when you were 12 or 13? We're all so busy now with just the business of living that it's hard to juggle our schedules and find time to do the things we *should* do, much less the things we *want* to do. We don't go looking for work—we make it come and find us.

Even so, there's a lot of things that need to be done to keep the squadron fun, interesting, and worthwhile, and that can only happen if each of us is willing to do just a little bit to help out. *T.E.A.M.* stands for *Together Everyone Accomplishes More*. No one can—or should—do it all, but if everyone does just a little, the job will get done, no one will be burned out, and everyone will have fun.

The Member Involvement Committee helps distribute the tasks that need doing among our members. This committee is like a “help wanted” agency. Its goal is to ask each of us contribute at least a little time and effort to something that's worthwhile to all of us. When you get a call, we hope you'll be ready to respond and pitch in.

All that having been said, we sincerely hope you won't wait to be called. When you hear about something that interests you, or think of a new project that could promote boating safety, don't hesitate: pitch in and help. We guarantee no one will object when you do!

Okay, this *Squadron Orientation Manual* is helpful (we hope), but how does this outfit really run? The Operations Training committee will tell you everything you could ever want to know. In fact, when you're ready to take on some responsibility, such as serving as a committee chairman, an assistant to a Bridge officer, or even as a Bridge officer, it will be very helpful if you have taken **OT**.

OT is a program. It is educational, but is not an Educational Department program. Since Operations Training tells you everything about the administration of the United States Power Squadrons, from top to bottom, it is an Administrative Department activity.

We encourage you to take this short program when it is offered. It is fun and interesting, and will make your involvement in USPS and our squadron a lot more interesting.

Member Involvement

Operations Training

Secretary's Department

In addition to taking and distributing the minutes of our member and Executive Committee meetings, the Secretary is responsible for safeguarding legal documents, such as our Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. In addition, this department is responsible for communications with our members and the public.

Newsletter

Our newsletter is published regularly, and is discussed earlier in this booklet. This is our primary method of communicating with our members, so be sure to open and read it as soon as you receive it. If you don't, you will surely miss out on something you will wish you had seen or done.

If you like to write, edit, or publish, you will find this committee a fun place to use your talents. Don't wait to be asked—call the Secretary or newsletter editor and offer your services.

Historian

Those who fail to learn history are condemned to repeat it. That's probably true, so we make an effort to keep a written history of our squadron's activities. You will find it interesting to see what we've done in the past, and you'll find out why we do some things in certain ways.

We have no objection to changing something we've been doing, especially when the way it's being done isn't useful or interesting anymore. If you think we can improve, don't hesitate to offer suggestions. While we are considering changes, our Historian can tell us why we've been doing it the way we do, and we can avoid previous mistakes.

Roster

Each year, we publish a squadron roster. It includes the name, address, phone number, and other interesting and important information for each active member. It also lists the current Bridge and Executive Committee members, as well as the chairmen of the various squadron committees. You'll find that this booklet is something worth keeping handy so you will be able to contact all of your new friends easily.

(We all prize our privacy and request that you don't publish or give away any of the information our roster contains.)

Our Treasurer keeps the books for our squadron, receives invoices from our vendors, including USPS headquarters, pays our bills, and files any required tax returns. A primary task is to make regular reports to us about how we stand financially.

Treasurer's Department

The Budget Committee is very important to every member. This committee looks over the Treasurer's reports and makes educated projections about what our income and expenses will be in the coming year. With this information, we can plan our activities and make sure we avoid jeopardizing our non-profit status under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Budget

How We Acknowledge Our Members' Efforts

Throughout this manual, you have read about some of the important things we do to further the cause of Safe Boating Through Education. We believe it's important that these things be fun to do, but we also believe that, when someone actively participates in furthering our cause, his or her efforts should be acknowledged.

Since everyone who belongs to the United States Power Squadrons is a volunteer (that is, unpaid) and, since we are a non-profit organization, we cannot reward our members financially.

We show our appreciation for the efforts of any member who substantially furthers our cause by recommending that the Chief Commander (see page 25) issue a Merit Mark to that member. Since we have no other way of "paying" that member for his or her service, we believe that Merit Marks are very important.

Merit Marks can be earned at the rate of not more than one per year. They are not awarded automatically, and they are neither hard nor easy to earn. A member's efforts must be worthwhile and reasonably substantial to receive the award, and all the work the member does throughout the year is considered.

What type of activity is considered? Attending classes or meetings is a privilege of membership and is not considered to be an effort made on behalf of USPS. However, teaching a class, working on the Meetings Committee to arrange for, set up, or being the featured speaker at a meeting usually is. The work you do while serving on the committees you've read about in this manual usually counts toward your award. The point is, the *amount* of time spent is not as relevant as the *effort* and its benefit to USPS.

Senior Members



When a member has earned five Merit Marks, he or she becomes a Senior Member. Senior members are authorized to wear a special insignia consisting of a double-headed arrow through the Roman numeral **V** on their breast pocket, below their grade designator, as shown here.

After earning 25 Merit Marks, we become Life Members, at which point we are exempt from paying further dues. The breast-pocket insignia is similar to that for a Senior Member, except that the **V** is cradled by a gold laurel wreath.

We hope you will help us while having fun educating yourself and others. We will reward you with the Merit Marks you earn.

What Is a District?

In our geographical area, there are several squadrons like ours, all with the same goals, and each with an organizational structure similar to ours, i.e., as you've read about on the previous pages.

In fact, all the squadrons in our area aren't just one squadron because of our geographical separation and our need to serve boaters and prospective boaters within the relatively small areas in which we live, work, and go boating. Nevertheless, we all share the same love of boating and the same goal of increased safety through education. So, while working toward this common goal in our respective neighborhoods, we not only cooperate with one another, we also work and play together.

We share ideas about how to improve the things we do. We cooperate in the advertising we do to attract students to our public courses. We take cruises together. We attend parties together. We attend one another's meetings and events when we can. We get together at Spring and Fall Conferences to learn more about the things that all of USPS is doing, and to have a dinner party or two while we're at it.

Our district has the same officers, by title, as our squadron does, but preceded by the word *District*. In other words, District Commander, District Membership Chairman, etc. Their functions are similar to those of our squadron officers, but their work is not quite the same. For example, the district Member Involvement Committee chairman's job is the same as our squadron chairman's, except that the effort is for the district organization. In addition, the District MI chairman also helps and guides the MI chairman of all the squadrons in our district.

Similarly, the District Educational Officer (DEO) and the assistant (ADEO) don't actually plan, set up, and run courses as do our SEO and ASEO. But, they coordinate and guide the work of the SEOs so that everyone gets the job done without conflicts.

Why We Have a District

Our District Management

All of our district officers are members of squadrons in our district. Usually, they have been officers in their squadrons and have earned several Merit Marks. This means that they know how to do their jobs well and are better able to help us do ours with the least effort and greatest result.

Our District Bridge changes at the district Change of Watch, held at one of our semi-annual Conferences. Watch for an announcement and make your reservations early. You'll have a chance to meet members from other squadrons in our district, as well as the new Bridge officers. You'll also have a chance to learn a great deal about what is happening throughout USPS because our conferences are always attended by a national visitor, as well as any national officers who are members of squadrons in our district.



Our District Commander (D/C) is entitled to fly the three-trident blue flag shown above at the left. Notice that each trident includes a triangle, or Greek letter delta, to symbolize "District." The other District Bridge officers, i.e., the District Executive Officer (DXO), District Educational Officer (DEO), District Administrative Officer (DAO), and District Secretary and Treasurer are all District Lieutenant Commanders (D/Lt/C). They may fly a red two-trident flag with delta stems, similar to that shown at the left.



Why Should You Participate?

If you'd like to enlarge your circle of boating friends, participating in some of our district functions is an outstanding way to do that. Another important advantage of having a district is that, if you're ready and anxious to take a course that our squadron is not offering at the time you need it, you may take it with members from a nearby squadron, if you wish.

Watch our squadron and district newsletters for announcements of district conferences and cruises. Then, sign up, show up, and have a ball!

Important: Do Not Print this page or its reverse side as part of your squadron's manual! This page, and its reverse side, are reserved for your district's page—see Appendix B for how to write one, and a sample.

What is This Thing Called “National” Anyway?

As you become more familiar with the activities and opportunities available in our squadron and district, you will often hear people discussing “national” this and “national” that. It’s important to realize that you, and I, and every USPS member everywhere, are “national.”

All the word really means is that the 60,000 USPS members and the 450± squadrons, throughout the country, the Virgin Islands, and Tokyo work together to achieve our common goals. In order to do this, we elect a national body, called the Governing Board, and national officers. The officers’ positions are essentially the same as those in our squadron and district, i.e., Commander, Executive Officer, Educational Officer, Administrative Officer, Secretary, and Treasurer, but their titles are a little different.

For example, our national commander has the title Chief Commander and the other five officers on the national Bridge are all Vice Commanders. Chairmen of the national committees, which also correspond to those we’ve discussed in our squadron, have the title Rear Commander, and their assistant chairmen are called Staff Commanders.

Of course, the work done at the national level is also somewhat different. For example, in the National Educational Department, committee are responsible for developing, writing, and publishing our courses and programs. Course committees are also responsible for creating and grading examinations.

Similarly, in the other national departments, the work done is not the same “front line” work we do in the squadrons and districts. Rather, squadron members working at the national level provide leadership, guidance, and structure. This helps us to ensure that all of the important work we do to achieve our common goals is accomplished in a uniform and legal manner throughout USPS.

The main operating body of USPS is the Governing Board, i.e., our national board of directors. The Governing Board (GB) elects our national bridge officers and other national officers. The GB meets three times each year—spring, fall, and at the same time as the members' Annual Meeting, usually in January. Every member is welcome at any of these meetings, and you will find reservation forms and a great deal of information about them in our national magazine, *The Ensign*.

The spring and fall GB meetings are held at different locations around the country, giving those who attend an opportunity to visit interesting places, and those who live in the vicinity of one of the meetings an opportunity to attend without having to travel far.

Why Should You Participate?

Should you participate at the national level? That depends upon you. You should consider attending a Governing Board meeting only if you fit into one or more of these categories:

- ⚓ You Like people
- ⚓ You want to increase your circle of friends to include boaters from around the country (and the world)
- ⚓ You have a talent from which all of USPS might benefit
- ⚓ You like to be one of the first to know what's going on

Talk to our Commander about it. You may even be appointed as a voting delegate once you're well-established as a member of our squadron.