

We have started the boating season and after checking in with some of you in the district, I've compiled a few suggestions to help us improve:

1. Three mishaps have occurred – two included (minor) injuries to crew and were toward the end of the patrol and both were at/near the dock. This may have been caused by fatigue. Stay alert – the patrol isn't REALLY over until you are home. If you are like me, we have gotten out of shape and need to work back into the rigors of on-the-water patrols wisely. **Observe the fatigue limits** with Prudence (this will keep you out of trouble by suggesting shorter days). Remember, TCT says it is OK to say you're tired. Just a reminder (from the Mishap email I sent earlier) - **All mishaps (injuries, vessel damage, etc.) must be reported** to the Sector immediately with follow up communications (the form) to the OTO and a "cc" to me.
2. Share resources – whenever possible take advantage of sharing with nearby flotilla in these two key areas:
 - Training – spread your knowledge over wider circles, share accountability ("always did it that way" may not be the best way)
 - Patrolling – learn other AORs and with Prudence (again), take as many AUX members as possible to maximize the crew hours each trip – as you know, we have a limited number of facilities (94 currently active District-wide, down from 159 this time last year)
3. When requesting orders, use the "comments" part of AOM to describe your plans – give enough detail about the planned patrol area that sector can keep track of assets better. Rather than "patrol 4th of July fireworks in Podunk Hollow" – give town, which side of the fireworks launching area, associated OPFACs, etc.
4. There still appears to be some confusion about equipment checks – the simple answer is that RSS gear needs a semi-annual maintenance/inspection and the PLB needs a monthly operational check. If it isn't current the RSSO has to inspect and put it back in service before it can be used – so it is important to stay current to help things run smoother. Of course, before each use there should be a "suitability for service" check (did a mouse chew a hole in it since I used it last?). Just my take... If you have heard otherwise, please contact the OTO immediately. There have been reports of flotillas conducting maintenance on all PPE every month, which is not required and over-burdensome.

I am proud to work with all of you to serve the country, the community, and each other. Communication is a way we can continue to grow and make the best of limited resources. So if you have a question or suggestion – use the DSO-OP webpage or call me 509-430-6839. In case you haven't noticed, I am putting more info on the DSO webpage to help us operate better. If you have suggestions about that let me know as well.

GBA/terry