



**Homeland  
Security**

**U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary  
District 11 Northern Region**

*Serving Northern California, Nevada, Utah*



# Vessel Safety Check Newsletter

**January 2009**

Volume 6 Number 1

**Mike Lauro DSO-VE**

**Joaquin Duran ADSO-VE Tony Budlong ADSO-VE**

This newsletter is the publication of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, District 11NR - Vessel Safety Check program and published at no cost to either the Coast Guard or the Coast Guard Auxiliary. This newsletter will be distributed in PDF format electronically to each Vessel Examiner in D11NR with a CURRENT email. It can also be found on the D11NR website. It will be published on January 1<sup>st</sup> and each month starting with April and ending with October. Disclosure of the personal information contained in this publication is subject to the provisions contained in the Privacy Act of 1974. As a matter of policy, roster of names, addresses, email address and telephone numbers shall not be made available to the general public or any outside organizations. This newsletter is a team effort by the DSO-VE staff and is responsible for its content. If you have anything suitable you think should be included that others would benefit from, please send it to Mike Lauro. It may be discontinued at any time by the DSO-VE.

## **DSO Comments**

By Mike Lauro



**Happy New Year!  
I'd like to thank  
ALL vessel  
examiners for  
their hard work  
and dedication to  
the VSC program  
this past year!**

Tony Budlong from 6-4 will be joining Joaquin Duran this year as an ADSO-VE in a limited capacity. He brings his talents to specialize in promoting our new District SUBS program. A short bio from Joaquin and Tony are further in the newsletter.

As I write this, the final statistics for 2008 are continuing to trickle in, but we've reached 7200 VSC's or **97%** of the Commodore's 7,500 VSC objective! Not bad considering the low water levels. More details further in the newsletter. It shows YOUR continued dedication and support of the VSC program and Recreational Boating Safety in general. I hope your

support continues for 2009. We achieved several goals for 2008.

Briefly:

66 examiners reached the 20+ VSC plateau. In addition, 23 **SUPERSTARS** reached the 60+ VSC plateau. GREAT job! I hope everyone has been recognized for his or her hard work. In addition, I hope you'll find your name listed later in the newsletter. Congratulations to the D11NR members who as a result of their hard work in 2007 and 2008 have qualified for the new RBS device. Once you've earned it, you'll be proud to wear it.

Please help promote the Vessel Examiner class amongst your new flotilla members at the upcoming February PCA Fair. Anyone who has taken this 2-day class will admit it's a great bargain at \$5.00!

There is an updated VE review workshop for 2009. While NOT mandatory, I strongly suggest you

take a few minutes on a rainy or snowy Saturday to review the 2008 power-point presentation. It can be found on the D11NR VE website:

<http://rbsafety.d11nuscgaux.info/ve.html>.

The 2009 VSC **BLUE** decals have been available for order since mid-December and some should be in local hands by now. If not, please encourage your Flotilla Commander and/or FSO-MA of **RECORD** to order the initial supply and other materials promptly. The order form is on the D11NR VE website:

<http://rbsafety.d11nuscgaux.info/ve.html>.

Are you a newly appointed VE officer for 2009? If so, you along with the repeating officers have assumed an additional responsibility of administration in addition to your regular duties as a vessel examiner. If you did not receive a job description from the appointing officer (FC or DCP), you can find it at on the VE D11NR web site:

<http://rbsafety.d11nuscgaux.info/ve.html>.

Now is the time to make plans to adopt a marina, support NSBW, National Marina Day and the "Wear It" campaign. Please don't wait until the last minute! Additionally, let's not forget to support the National and state "**WEAR IT**" campaign by wearing our pfd's while performing VSC's. Again, while not required, it's a good idea to wear them when working around the marinas while on the dock and climbing aboard vessels.

Let's have some FUN with our VSC program! Let's get potential and new

members to an outing and get them involved by helping greet, directing traffic, passing out literature, etc. By utilizing ALL of our flotilla members, especially the newer ones, we'll have a true TEAM COAST GUARD! Let's also not forget the 4th cornerstone and occasionally include a potluck or a BBQ.

As I've mentioned throughout my comments during 2008, Irene Wetzel DSO-CS has helped me create the living Vessel Examiner information website for D11NR. This site is for **YOU** the examiner! I've attempted, and continue to make this is a ONE-STOP resource for ALL of your VSC needs. We are the **ONLY** District to offer an all-in-one inclusive website. Please add the following to your favorites:

<http://rbsafety.d11nuscgaux.info/ve.html>.

My sincere thanks again to Irene Wetzel for an **OUTSTANDING JOB** helping me put the site together and keeping it updated! I'm looking for action VSC photos. If you think you may have a suitable photo, please send it to me at [sumfun@juno.com](mailto:sumfun@juno.com).

In the meantime, I look forward to another great year and wish you a safe, happy and VSC productive year. If there is anything I can do to help make your local VSC outings successful, I hope there will be no hesitation to contact me at:

[sumfun@juno.com](mailto:sumfun@juno.com)

## ADSOS Comments

By Joaquin Duran



Fellow examiners, I'd like to take a minute to introduce myself. I realized that even though I

wrote a column and dispensed words of wisdom during 2008, no one knew who I was! I joined Flotilla 4-9, Silicon Valley in San Jose, in 2005. My first assignment was FSO-VE. From there I was asked to serve as SO-VE in 2007. That was a successful year for our flotilla as we completed over 800 VSC's and placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the District in VSC production. In the latter part of 2007, I was asked by Mike to serve as ADSO-VE. In addition, my SO-VE and ADSO-VE assignments in 2008, I was elected Commander. I have enjoyed the VSC activities and have participated in

vessel safety checks all around the San Francisco Bay area, from lakes in the Gilroy area to Pillar Point and Half Moon Bay.

I have extended my involvement in the organization to include the complete RBS program conducting Marine Dealer Visits and instructing at public education classes. In addition to conducting several classes at West Marine and other locations, I assist Mike at the Vessel Examiner class at the PCA Training Fair. I am also crew qualified and during 2008, have also completed several of the AUXOP Specialty courses.

Finally, I believe the Auxiliary is a GREAT organization, serving a variety of important needs, and I hope to be able to continue to support it and participate in its worthwhile endeavors.

## ADSOS Comments

By Tony Budlong



I'd like to take a minute to introduce myself. As a California boy, I became interested in boating at an early

age when boating with my father at Lake Havasu and Newport. I then joined the Sea Scouts and ultimately graduating from the California Maritime Academy. I served 3 ½ years in the Navy with primary duties in engineering and damage control. After the Navy, I was employed by the Todd Shipyard in San Pedro and several years later

ultimately owned my own engineering consulting business in Danville, Ca. retiring in 1990.

After moving to the Monterey area in 1993, I purchased a Prism kayak and after taking classes, I did a lot of paddling and volunteer work. In 1999, I became a docent with Bay Net and Team Ocean which are part of the National Marine Sanctuary Program. In 2001, I joined the Monterey flotilla of the Coast Guard Auxiliary and became active as a vessel examiner, marine dealer visitor and instructor and was appointed FSO-IS.

Last year, I was asked by Mike to help establish a pilot program to perform VSC's on rental kayaks. I reached an agreement with Monterey Bay Kayaks and during the course of the year 220 VSC's were performed. Based on the initial success of this program, it is hoped that we can take this program

District wide for 2009. In addition to being asked by Mike to be an ADSO-VE, like Joaquin, I was elected Flotilla Commander of 6-04. I'm looking forward to assisting Mike establish a VSC outreach program specifically for kayaks and canoes under the Recreational Vendor Program for 2009.

### **Congratulations!**

Congratulations to the following examiners who have performed 60 or more VSC's during 2008:

<b>Stephen R. Salmon *</b>	<b>01-01</b>	<b>Richard A. Saber*</b>	<b>01-02</b>
<b>Robert J. Aston*</b>	<b>01-04</b>	<b>Diana R. Serchia*</b>	<b>01-07</b>
<b>James R. Goff</b>	<b>03-05</b>	<b>Charles M. Duncan Jr.*</b>	<b>03-09</b>
<b>Lonny B. Singer</b>	<b>03-09</b>	<b>Mark Mushet*</b>	<b>04-09</b>
<b>Joaquin P. Duran*</b>	<b>04-09</b>	<b>Michael F. Nolan*</b>	<b>04-09</b>
<b>Curtis S. Han</b>	<b>05-02</b>	<b>Johannes A. Pattiradjawane</b>	<b>05-02</b>
<b>Gary N. Murray*</b>	<b>05-05</b>	<b>Jim D. Blackburn*</b>	<b>05-07</b>
<b>Anthony T. Budlong</b>	<b>06-04</b>	<b>Michael J. Lauro*</b>	<b>10-02</b>
<b>Michael A. Rafatti</b>	<b>10-02</b>	<b>Joseph M. Madden*</b>	<b>10-02</b>
<b>Anthony D. Leonard*</b>	<b>10-03</b>	<b>John L. Paval</b>	<b>10-03</b>
<b>Phillip E. Grove*</b>	<b>10-05</b>	<b>Neil P. Sliva</b>	<b>10-05</b>
<b>Von C. Webber</b>	<b>10-05</b>		

\*Denotes repeat performer!

### **Welcome Aboard and Welcome Back!**

<b>Ernest R. Dunaway</b>	<b>01-02</b>	<b>Jerel Berkov</b>	<b>01-04</b>
<b>Jack Marshall*</b>	<b>01-04</b>	<b>Mary L Kirkwood*</b>	<b>01-04</b>
<b>Christopher Wenk</b>	<b>01-05</b>	<b>Joseph M. Harris</b>	<b>01-07</b>
<b>Kathi Karish</b>	<b>03-03</b>	<b>Calvin Faulkner</b>	<b>03-10</b>
<b>Robert West</b>	<b>04-03</b>	<b>Debbie L. DuBe'</b>	<b>06-01</b>
<b>Sarah Reeves</b>	<b>06-07</b>		

#### **\*Re-certification**

With the addition of these 11 new and re-certified examiners for 2008, our examiner base total is now 302 active examiners! This represents about 20% of our total District membership. This information is supplied by the Director's office, as examiners are qualified.

## **Congratulations!**

Congratulations to the following examiners who have performed 20 or more VSC's during 2008\*:

Richard A. Saber	01-02	Robert W. Hendry	01-02
Robert J. Aston	01-04	Michael F. Nolan	01-05
Laurence B. Draper	01-05	Mark Mushet	01-05
Simone H. Adair	01-07	Stephen R. Salmon	01-07
Diana R. Serchia	01-07	William W. Burns	01-07
James R. Goff	03-05	Marla J. Moura	03-05
Edward E. Sweeney III	03-05	Jeff D. Scarberry	03-05
Hannelore Maddox	03-09	Charles M. Duncan Jr.	03-09
Lonny B. Singer	03-09	George T. Cusack	03-10
Joaquin P. Duran	04-09	James N. Higuchi	04-09
Gerald S. Mc Alwee	04-09	Gilbert Ellis	05-01
Harold Laetsch	05-01	Daniel E. Tinney	05-01
Johannes A. Pattiradjawane	05-02	Curtis S. Han	05-02
Charles E. Mc Carty	05-03	Linda C. Mc Carty	05-03
Randy C. Powers	05-03	Gary N. Murray	05-05
Wilfred A Sumner II	05-05	Michael D. Mirata	05-07
Jim D. Blackburn	05-07	Paul J. Brighton	05-07
John L. Banks	06-01	Anthony T. Budlong	06-04
Jean E. Paskett	07-02	Steve A. Paskett	07-02
Joyce W. Bell	07-08	Donald W. Robertson	07-08
Rex P. Miner	07-08	Charles A Poplinger	08-07
Nancy A. Turtle	08-08	Jeremiah P. Collins	08-08
Jill R. Munger	08-11	William E. Sharp Jr.	10-02
Michael J. Lauro	10-02	Michael A. Raffatti	10-02
Joseph M. Madden	10-02	Matthew F. Innes	10-02
Christen A. Arroyo	10-02	William H. Correll Jr.	10-03
John L. Paval	10-03	Irving R. Golub	10-03
Anthony D. Leonardi	10-03	Phillip E. Grove	10-05
Von C. Webber	10-05	Neil P. Sliva	10-05
David R. Flum	10-05	Steven W. Dicken	10-06
Leslie J. Pearlman	11-01	Keith A. White	11-03
Victor Beelik	11-04	James L. Snell	11-04
Ricky A. Thomas	11-05	Fred A. Goodwin	12-03

This brings our total to 66 examiners reaching this plateau!! This is approximately 20% of the total District examiner base. 2007 had 77 examiners or 25% at this time. Where's your name?

PLEASE be certain that all stats are reported MONTHLY using the CURRENT Form 7038 to your FSO-IS so you and your unit(s) will receive proper credit.

\*Statistics as shown in AUXINFO thru December 2008

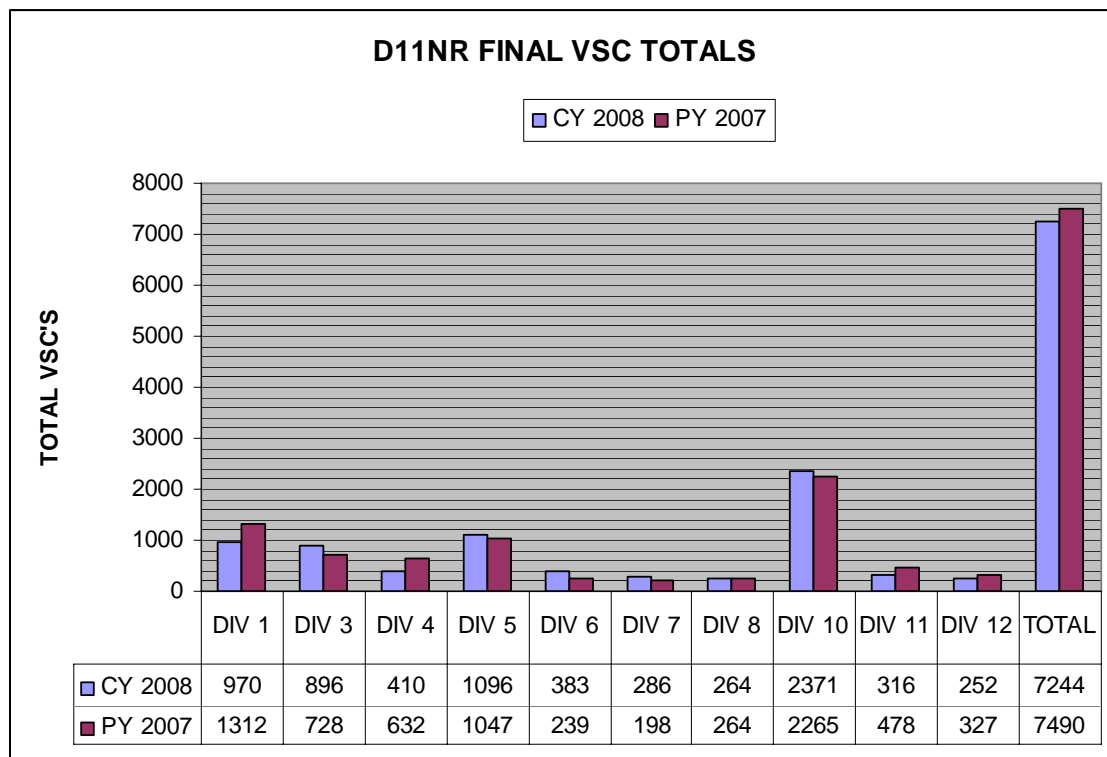


## VSC Calendar

If you have a planned event and would like it listed here, send an email at least 45 days prior with a brief description to: [sumfun@juno.com](mailto:sumfun@juno.com)

- Past Captains Training Fair-February 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> at Coast Guard Island
- D/Train-March 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> at Doubletree Hotel Rohnert Park
- National Safe Boating Week May 16<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>
- Coast Guard Auxiliary 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary-June 23<sup>rd</sup>
- National Marina Day August 9<sup>th</sup>
- Past Captains Training Fair-August 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> at Coast Guard Island

## Division Statistics\*



\*Statistics as shown in AUXINFO thru December 31, 2008

The goal for D11NR for 2008 is **7,500 VSC's**. We are **97%** of our goal for the year and **97%** of 2007 production! The data source is AUXINFO. PLEASE be certain that all stats are reported MONTHLY using the CURRENT Form 7038 to your FSO-IS so you and your unit(s) will receive proper credit.

Additional stats from AUXINFO\* indicates that **4399** or **62%** of our VSC's are First Time VSC's. In addition **3812** or **56%** are High Risk VSC's.

 VSC Questions - Answers can be found in another location in the newsletter

**1-Because of unusual circumstances, you were unable to conduct five VSC's last year. What happens now?**

- a. You have to do ten this year to keep your qualifications and to make up for last year.
- b. You have to do at least two VSC's under supervision of a certified VE to regain your qualification and then five for this year.

- c. You can request that the DSO-VE grant you a one-time waiver.
- d. You can't regain your qualifications. Once you miss a year, you're too rusty to be an effective VE.

**2-At least one wearable PFD for each person on board must be on board to meet VSC requirements for boats that are:**

- a. All vessels.
- b. 26' or greater in length
- c. 40' or greater in length
- d. Less than 16' in length

**♥Bet You didn't Know...**

**Litter, Litter, EVERYWHERE!** Everyday we see litter in our waterways, on our streets, highways, playgrounds, and parks. Some litter lasts a few weeks and some litter can hang out for **1 million years!** Below is a look at the lifespan of some commonly littered items:

<b>Glass bottle</b>	<b>1 million years!</b>	<b>Plastic water bottle</b>	<b>450 years!</b>
Aluminum can	200-500 years	Rubber boot sole	50-80 years
Leather	40-50 years	Nylon fabric	30-40 years
Plastic bag	10-20 years	Cigarette butt	1-6 months

In 2007, 61,112 California volunteers picked up over 903,000 pounds of trash and recyclables statewide on Coastal Cleanup Day. 40% of all debris items picked up were cigarette butts-over 345,000 were picked up in 3 hours! This was the 23<sup>rd</sup> straight year in which cigarette butts were the most numerous debris item picked up. Unfortunately plastic items followed close behind.

Source: California Waste Management and California Coastal Commission

**♥National and District News**

**♥National News**

**-V-Dept Workshop Updates 2009**

The V-Dept has updated its workshop and training modules for 2009. They can be found on your D11NR website: <http://rbsafety.d11nuscgaux.info/ve.html>. These workshops are **NOT** mandatory and are intended to train new and to refresh existing program visitors and vessel examiners.

Source: [Pete Urgola, DC-V]

**From the Office of the Chief Director:**

"If an Auxiliarist is authorized to wear a Coast Guard unit ball cap, such wear shall not extend to activities involving public interaction. This is to ensure that an Auxiliarist is not mistaken by the public as an active member of a Coast Guard unit with

commensurate authority. For example, an Auxiliariast may not wear a Coast Guard unit ball cap when performing VSC's."

## Northern California Inland Lake Water Levels



Below are 2 photos taken of Lake Camanche in May of 2008 illustrating the lack of water in typical Northern California reservoirs. The water level at the time of these photos at Lake Camanche is **35%** of capacity and over **50+** feet down! However this is pale when compared to Lake Shasta, which is **29%** of capacity and over **155 ft** down! Lake Oroville which is only

**30%** of capacity and is over **225 ft** down! Unfortunately, this was a common sight at many Northern California inland lakes this past summer. The photo on the left shows the 6-lane South Shore launch ramp, which has not been in use since late April. The photo on the right shows Camanche Creek Bridge built in 1950 normally under 50+ ft of water on the original road en route to the original Camanche town site.



Another 10 ft. lower and many foundations from the original town site will be exposed. The gold rush town of Camanche was built along the banks of the Mokelumne River in the mid 1800's. The town was flooded in 1965 by EBMUD to create Camanche Dam and a 400,000+acre ft. flood/irrigation and recreation reservoir. On normal years at the time of the photos, the water level is less than 6' from the top of the ramp and the trees in both photos. In spite of the low water levels, over 5,500 of the 6,600 District VSC's were performed at these low-water locations! My hat's off the hard working examiners producing these VSC's in less than ideal conditions.

-In the continuing evolution to provide information to assist both the new and experienced vessel examiners, there have several **NEW** additions and updates on YOUR Vessel Examiner website: <http://rbsafety.d11nuscgaux.info/ve.html>. Expect to see many more changes and updates for 2009!

## District News

-Thanks to the efforts of Rick Saber SO-VE 1, **AND** the computer wizardry of Irene Wetzel DSO-CS, West Marine has agreed to offer 10% coupons for 2009 for items needed to pass a VSC. Along with many additional aids, a 3-to-a- page, black and white



coupon is available on the D11NR Vessel Examiner website:

<http://rbsafety.d11nuscgaux.info/ve.html>

-Please pass the word that the Vessel Examiner class is coming to the PCA Fair over the weekend of February 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. The 2-day class includes the final exam and weather permitting, a VSC demo on a vessel. Many handouts will be provided. This class is a great bargain at \$5.00 and an excellent opportunity for new members to get started and involved in the Auxiliary. The member is **REQUIRED** to bring a copy of the VSC Manual. In addition, the member needs to review the manual **PRIOR** to the class. Additional arrangements can be made to perform the 5 VSC's to complete the qualification. If there are any questions, please don't have the member contact me.

-The 2007 National VSC award presented to Flotilla 10-02 and the RBS (Eagle) award presented at NACON are on permanent loan to the District and have been placed in the District trophy display case.

### **Are Paddleboards 'Vessels'? Coast Guard Now Says They Are**

By: Louis Gerlinger | Thursday, October 23, 2008 12:00:00 AM

*Officials determine paddleboards are subject to boat regulations.*

**LOG NEWS SERVICE** — The Coast Guard has officially determined that paddleboards are vessels -- and, as such, they are now subject to federal boating safety regulations. This pronouncement came in an official memorandum issued Oct. 3 by Jeffrey N. Hoedt, chief of the Coast Guard's Boating Safety Division, in response to an inquiry from the director of the Oregon Marine Board. The Marine Board had asked whether or not a paddleboard is considered by the Coast Guard to be a vessel for purposes of Navigation Rules, accident reporting and safety equipment requirements (including personal flotation devices).

"Based on the information available, the Coast Guard has determined that, when beyond the narrow limits of a swimming, surfing or bathing area, the device known as a "paddleboard" is a vessel under 46 U.S.C. paragraph 2101, and therefore subject to applicable regulations administered by the U.S. Coast Guard and its Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety, unless specifically exempted," Hoedt said in the memorandum. The Coast Guard said that because a paddleboard -- a large flat board, like a surfboard, which is stable enough to support a person standing while they paddle the device using a paddle in a manner similar to operating a canoe -- is "practically capable" of carrying persons or property beyond the narrow limits of a swimming, surfing or bathing area, it meets the criteria to be considered a vessel. "The word 'vessel' includes every description of watercraft or other artificial contrivance used, or capable of being used, as a means of transportation on water," the Coast Guard said. So far, neither the Coast Guard nor the California Department of Boating and Waterways have issued guidelines to law enforcement officers on what laws and

regulations apply to paddleboards.

The Marine Retailers Association of America has issued a dealer alert advising of the Coast Guard's decision to classify paddleboards as vessels.

"I have been around the boating industry for a long time, and sometimes think I've seen it all -- but this ruling goes beyond even what I thought was an April Fool's Joke," Phil Keeter, MRAA president, said in the alert.

This article first appeared in the **October 2008** issue of **The Log Newspaper**.  
Reprinted with permission.

-If you haven't seen it, below is a link to a great float plan. You may want print copies for your PE classes, PA booths or to distribute while performing VSC's.

<http://www.floatplancentral.org/download/USCGFloatPlan.pdf>

Question 1-"b" See page 3 of the VSC Manual  
Question 2-"a" See page 3 of the VSC Manual



Let's work together for our safety and the safety of others by setting an example and wear our lifejackets while performing VSC's especially when working around docks and when climbing aboard large vessels!

