



Resources *for* Public Affairs Officers

by Manny Romero

Chief, Training Division (DVC-AT)

In great measure,
our job in public affairs
is one of *brand management*.

That is, we apply marketing techniques to enhance the image (public perception) of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Civilian corporations apply brand management to increase a product's perceived value to the customer. Thus, a clearly defined corporate image summarizes what a company stands for and what makes that organization unique and trustworthy.

Within the Auxiliary consistent branding can establish a cohesive unity between the Auxiliary and our parent organization, the U.S. Coast Guard. It also leads to increased confidence in the Auxiliary by our diverse volunteer membership and our "customers," the American boating public.

Our "product" in the Auxiliary is *service*. Service to those who live, work and play in our waterways.

To build a solid brand equity, we must deliver credible and consistent messages—to both our internal and external audiences. We must speak with one voice. This means using standardized terminology, a standard writing style, and an expressive use of pictures and graphics.

This guide will introduce you to a gold mine of information available at your fingertips—information that will help you create consistent branding messages to present the Auxiliary in the best possible light.

NATIONAL PA WEBSITE

Begin at *the* key source for tips, tools and techniques: www.auxpa.org

Need inspiration? Want in-depth PA or publications training? What about pictures or graphics? It's all right here at your gateway to the world of Auxiliary public affairs.

Articles are available as press releases that you can modify for local use. Photos, videos and Public Service Announcements are located in the multimedia section.

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
Public Affairs
Your Source for News & Media

Navigator On Line
Navigator

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Sitrep On Line
e Magazine
SITREP

Public Affairs Home | News Room | Multimedia | Our Programs | About the CG Auxiliary | Community Outreach

Google Search

Resources For Auxiliaries
Submit a Story
Creative Services Request
Writing & Publishing Tips
Newsletters & Publications
Manuals
Training
About the Public Affairs Team

Resources for Public Affairs Officers
Public Affairs Tools
Publications Tools
History
Mailing Lists
Public Affairs Update
Public Affairs

National Photography Corps

Headlines
Contact Our Media Office about a Story

N-Train Discover Learn & Lead St. Louis 2008

The National Training Conference was held in St. Louis, MO in January. View the question and answer session with Coast Guard Admiral Thad Allen.

Phoenix, Arizona (February 9, 2008) -- Enthusiastic young boat show visitors go eye-to-eye with Coastline the Patrol Boat at the Arizona National Boat Show. The event is the largest of its kind in the Southwest. Auxiliaries from several Phoenix-area flotillas (and one from Page, Arizona) staffed the Auxiliary exhibit during the Feb. 6-10 show at the Phoenix Convention Center. Photo by Manny Romero, USCGAUX.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

Visual Information Gallery

[History Images](#) | [Coastie Images](#) | [PA Video's](#) | [PA Audio](#) | [CG Graphics](#)



Official Auxiliary Emblems
This is the official image library of the Coast Guard Auxiliary Emblems, Marks, Signatures, Seals, and Logos.



USCG AUX Images
This is the Coast Guard Auxiliary image library. It contains Auxiliary photographs, Videos, and Images.



USCG Images
Here is the USCG Image library. It contains US Coast Guard photographs, Videos, Images, Art, and Audio files.

The *Navigator* is the official Auxiliary quarterly print magazine, and it's available for on-line viewing. Every issue is packed with interesting stories and pictures.

The editors are always looking for quality content, so here's your chance to gain some national exposure.

Sitrep (Situation Report) is the Auxiliary's electronic news digest of recent events. Both publications are easily accessible from the national PA website.

Valuable tips for PA officers are found in the *Public Affairs Update*. Archive issues go back more than a decade.

Discover this useful publication from the national website or at www.auxadept.org/update/index.html

THE AUX IMAGE LIBRARY

Here's a real treasure trove: thousands of pictures, audio or video clips and graphics that anyone can view and download.

Images are available in both low and high resolution and ready for use in your news and feature articles, slide programs

and websites. They are ideal for publications at the flotilla, division or district level.

The library is an invaluable supplement your own pictures...and you can upload images for national distribution.

Appendix A - Official Imagery Library

Index

USCG Auxiliary Official Emblems	USCG Auxiliary Official Marks	USCG Auxiliary Official Imagery	US Coast Guard Official Imagery	Homeland Security Official Imagery
 Standard	 Auxiliary Mark	 AUX Flags	 USCG Emblem	 Signature Preferred
 Alternate	 Operational Mark	 Program Logos	 USCG Mark	 Signature Alternate
 Stylized	 Signature Mark	 AUX Seal	 USCG Seal	 Seal Alone

www.image.auxpa.org

Only Coast Guard and Auxiliary personnel can upload new images to the library. Click on *USCG AUX Images*, then on *User Guide* for specific info.

Quality images of all Auxiliary activities “appropriate for our use” are desired and welcomed at the image library. File size should be less than 4Mb.

However, you should not upload images of Coast Guard activities that lack an Auxiliary component. “The Coast Guard has an image library that may accept those images,” says the *User Guide*.

To Upload a File: Select @ button then click on *Login*. (see illustration at right).

Auxiliary personnel use the following ID and password:

ID: **guest**
PW: **cgaux**

Browse to your file, then select *Continue*. ID photo and write a caption to make your submission complete (see specifics above right).

Select *Continue* and the image will be in a pending state until approval by an Auxiliary image administrator.

Not all images may be approved. If you don't see your picture in the library in a week, e-mail the webmaster.

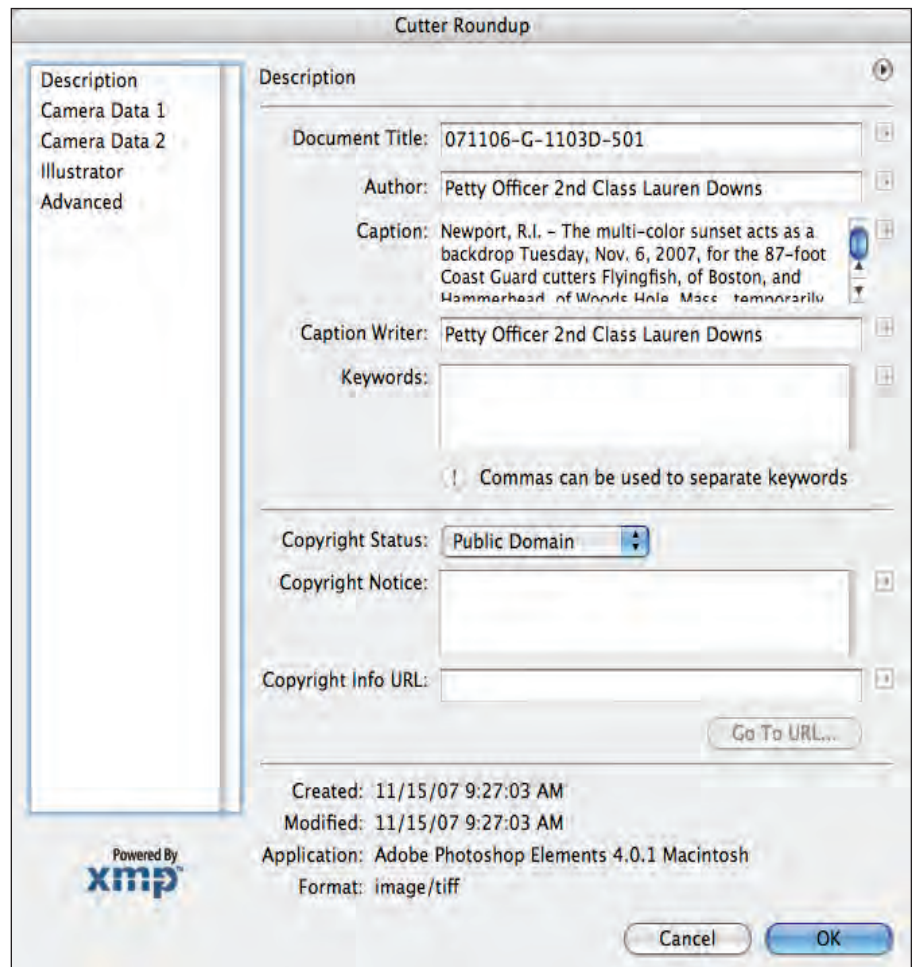
To make global searches easier, the Auxiliary has a standard list of keywords in the *User Guide*.

If you are unsure how to apply keywords, leave blank and the webmaster will apply appropriate words when your picture is added to the library.

Add Descriptive Data: Complete your submission with a special ID code called the Visual Information Reference Identification Number, or VIRIN (see “Document Title” in illustration below).

Write a caption to bring the photo to life. In the Auxiliary, we use Photoshop and Photoshop Elements for picture editing and file management. In Elements, use *File>File Info* to open the dialog box illustrated below.

If you don't have a photo program with this capability, include the caption in an e-mail along with the image.



To Create a VIRIN: As noted on the previous page, you'll need a Visual Information Reference Identification number to accompany your image. All pictures published in Auxiliary and Coast Guard publications must be documented with this special ID code, which is standard for all military visual imagery.

The VIRIN is used to submit, store and retrieve media produced by military photographers. Each VIRIN consists of four data fields separated by three hyphens, for a total of 15–18 characters.

1. Date image was created (YYMMDD).
2. Photographer's branch of service (use "G" for Coast Guard).
3. Last four digits of your Member Number and first letter of your last name.
4. Sequence number for that day (restart at 001 each day, not each shoot).

In the example below, the "501" refers to the first digital image that day (500–599 for digital, 001–499 for slides or prints).

You enter the VIRIN along with your caption in the File Info dialog as explained on the previous page. All data is sent with the image when you submit your file.



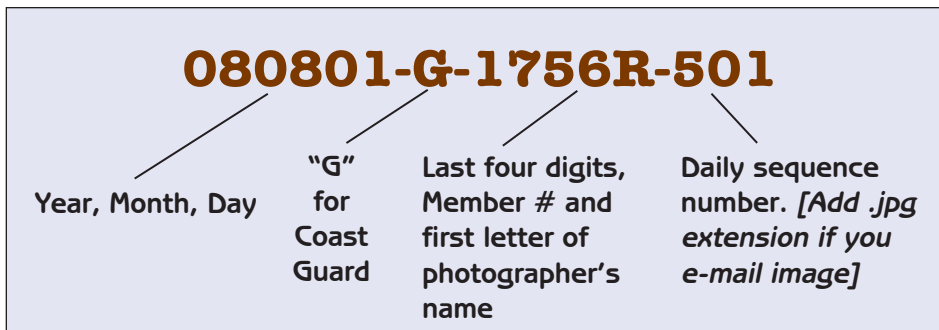
MANNY ROMERO, USCGAUX

LOS ANGELES—Auxiliarist Todd Egnor of Williamsburg, Va., gives a briefing to District 115R personnel before they begin tour guide duty aboard CG Barque *Eagle*. Egnor, a marine repair supervisor with the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, was assigned to *Eagle* for this voyage. The ship visited ports from Mexico to British Columbia during its 2008 summer cruise. [The VIRIN for this image is 080801-G-1756R-511. Decipher the "code" by studying the explanation below].

Auxiliary and Coast Guard visual imagery for official use is hosted on the web and follows the DoD Joint Combat Center (JCCC) format for International Press Telecommunications Council (IPTC) header information protocol.

When you post images, the server automatically embeds IPTC info along with each picture and indexes it into a fully searchable database.

Your images are thus available to individuals and media around the world via a simple search on the Internet.



SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

Other valuable web assets include the Auxiliary Knowledge Base, eDirectory and eNEWS, Auxiliary electronic newsletter. e-NEWS will keep you informed of information, issues and programs that affect the Auxiliary.

It includes links to official Auxiliary and Coast Guard sites that represent official programs, positions or policies and is sent only to Auxiliary members who have e-mail addresses entered in AUXDATA.

The Knowledge Base is in question-answer format. Answers are grouped in several categories such as Marine Safety, Public Education, PA, Membership, Operations, and Information Technology.

This database is a valuable supplement to the *Auxiliary Manual* (AUXMAN).

You should also subscribe to The Chief Director's mailing list. This one-way communication is used for announcing new policies, procedures, Commandant Instructions, Notes and ALCOASTS.

Announcements are made at regular intervals. Subscribe to CHDIRAUX-L at this address: www.uscg.mil/hq/cg3/cg3pcx/administration/maillinglist.asp

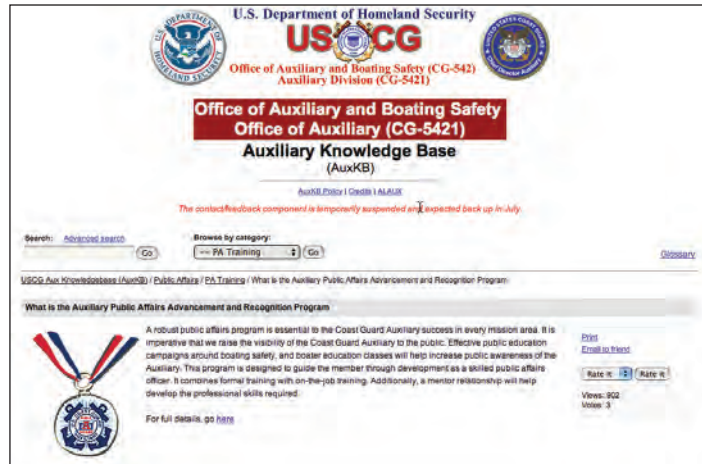
The Auxiliary Electronic Directory is a fast way to find membership info, such as offices held, e-mail address or unit. Check the FAQ section for tips and help on how to best use the directory.

Be sure to activate an account—and check back often to ensure your data is correct. In addition, you will need an eDirectory password to access final exams for any on-line courses you take (specifics on Page 7).

Another good source for member information is the Auxiliary Unit Directory and Flotilla Finder at: <http://nws.cgaux.org/flotillafinder/index.html>

To find an Auxiliary Unit, you may browse to a location using the Graphical Map or by using a ZIP Code.

In addition, individual flotilla websites are easily accessible from here. The sites are arranged by District, Region and Division.



www.kb.cgaux.info



www.auxdirectory.org/



PA TRAINING

Education should be a continuing process for a public affairs officer. We must all be committed to lifelong learning—training is the glue that binds us together.

Take a look at the options available within the national PA website. Just click “Training” and savor the choices:

- On-line courses through Auxiliary E-Learning (six in all)
- Public Affairs Specialist Program
- AUX-12, Public Affairs C School
- FEMA courses for Incident Command System (ICS) training
- Boating exhibit resources

You can also download these PDF documents:

- Public Affairs Guide
- CG Public Affairs Manual
- PA Handbook
- Guidelines for boat shows and Public Service Announcements

Take advantage of these training opportunities. They're free and they will help you perform your job better.

Courses: Everyone should start off with “Introduction to Auxiliary Public Affairs.” We encourage you to take the entire series.

Access public affairs E-Learning courses through the national PA website or directly through the address at bottom right.

All E-Learning courses utilize the Moodle Content Management System. Once on the Moodle site, you need only enter your username and password to enroll and access courses.

- Your username is generally your first initial followed by your last name—no spaces
- Your password is your EMPLID (member number)

To change your password, click on the “Edit Profile” tab which will bring you to a form where you can make changes.

The screenshot displays the 'USCG Auxiliary Virtual Classroom' Moodle interface. On the left, a 'Main menu' and 'Course categories' are visible. The 'Available Courses' section on the right lists various training modules. The 'Public Affairs' category is circled in red, and its sub-items are listed below it.

Course Category	Available Courses
Member Training	Rules of Order Chain of Leadership Fingerprinting Reporting Member Training Hours National Staff Orientation Training Expense Claim Reimbursement
AUX-OP Specialty Courses	Auxiliary Navigation (AUX-NAV)
Personnel	New Member Course Introduction to Auxiliary Personnel
Marine Safety	Sea Partners Introduction to Marine Safety and Environmental Protection Initial Indoctrination to Marine Safety
Operations	Operations Policy Navrules
Public Affairs	Introduction to Auxiliary Public Affairs Coast Guard Public Affairs 2nd Class Journalism Basic Introduction to Digital Photography CG Public Affairs Policy Journalism Advanced
Vessel Examination	Vessel Examiner Qualification
Department of Homeland Security	
Flotilla Staff Officer Indoctrination	

64.207.134.26/usr/moodle2/

A good strategy is to print out all chapters in advance—ideally double-sided. You can then create notebooks with tab dividers for each chapter. All elements are saved and uploaded as PDF files. To print, you may need Adobe Reader, available free from www.adobe.com/

Study each chapter then take the practice quiz. You can take quizzes as often as you'd like. The passing score is 90% (although to get credit you must take a final exam).

You'll find the final on the National Testing Center site: ntc.cgaux.org (see welcome screen above).

When you finish each chapter and practice quiz, sign up for the final using the above address. Select "New User - Get Password" from the opening screen.

1. Use your EMPLID and your eDirectory password.
2. If you need to activate or reactivate this account, click on the Auxiliary eDirectory link.

Once you complete the final, you will be notified immediately concerning your score (90% to pass). You will receive an e-mail confirmation and your test results will be recorded in AUXDATA.

We notify your DIRAUX and you will receive a nice certificate at your unit meeting.

Public Affairs C-School: Often called a journalism "boot camp," AUX-12 is three days of intensive training in how to tell the Auxiliary story. Here's where you get specialized knowledge to enhance competence and boost professionalism.

Among the topics covered are news writing, copy editing, media relations and digital photography.

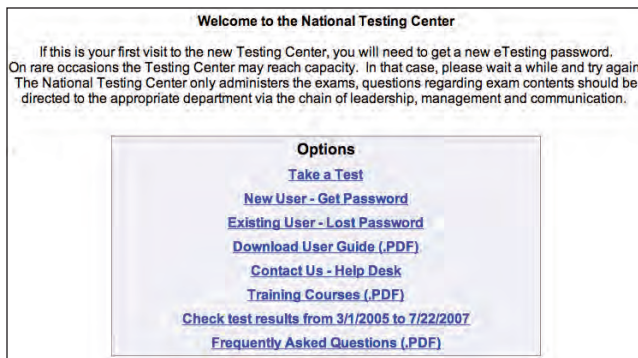
You'll also learn how to handle tough media interviews, and how to send out a press release that editors will love.

Of importance, in-class exercises will put you in a key role in a disaster scenario utilizing a Joint Information Center (JIC).

A JIC is set up during natural disasters

like Hurricane Katrina to coordinate all public information activities.

In all, AUX-12 training is invaluable in helping you to become a more effective public affairs officer. Access is through the national PA website, or you can get an overview at the C-School portal: cschool.auxservices.org



MANNY ROMERO, USCGAUX

AUX-12 students often get an added bonus to classroom work—a tour of a Coast Guard cutter, base or aircraft. For students in the April 2008 session at Air Station Clearwater (Florida), the bonus was an adrenaline-filled flight aboard a massive C-130 "Hercules." Here, two Coast Guard aircrew enjoy a dramatic view as the aircraft makes a low level run.

PA Advancement and Recognition Program:

utilizes the military Performance Qualification Standard (PQS). The program combines formal and on-the-job training. Mentors help polish the professional skills required.

There are three levels of advancement. The requirements are outlined below. (download the PQS workbooks from the national PA website).

Auxiliary Public Affairs Specialist [PA 1]

At this level, you should have experience in a variety of skills including print and broadcast media, public appearances, static displays, photography, video and the National Safe Boating campaign.



This level reflects the expected competencies of a flotilla public affairs officer. The award for this qualification is a ribbon with red and white vertical stripes (above).

Auxiliary Public Affairs Specialist II

Requires an advanced level of expertise. You are expected to demonstrate public affairs skills and assist others in developing and utilizing those skills. This level reflects the expected competencies of a District or Division Public Affairs Officer.

CG Public Affairs Support Specialist [PA III]

At this level you are qualified to assist a Coast Guard unit with their public affairs program. It includes knowledge of Coast Guard PA practices and procedures, internal communications, community relations, JIC operation and related issues.

An oral board is required for advancement through each level. Recognition for PA II is a bronze star placed on the Public Affairs Specialist Ribbon. Add a second star when you achieve PA III level.



Verifying Officer:

PA Designation (Check One): PA 1 PA 2 PA 3

Signature:

Date:

	PQS Workbook	On-Line Courses	...or AUX 12 PA C-School	Oral Board Date
PA 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Workbook Sign-off sheets Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Intro CG Auxiliary PA (AUX-20) <input type="checkbox"/> CG PA Specialist 2 nd Class (AUX-22) <input type="checkbox"/> Journalism Basic (AUX-24) <input type="checkbox"/> Intro Digital Photo (AUX-26) <input type="checkbox"/> ICS 100	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Counts for all previous tasks Except ICS 100 and Intro to Coast Guard Auxiliary PA (AUX-20)</i>	
PA 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Workbook Sign-off sheets Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> PA 1 Completion <input type="checkbox"/> Journalism Advanced (AUX-25) <input type="checkbox"/> CG Public Affairs Policy (AUX-21) <input type="checkbox"/> ICS 200		
PA 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Workbook Sign-off sheets Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> PA 2 Completion <input type="checkbox"/> IS 250 <input type="checkbox"/> IS 702 <input type="checkbox"/> ICS 800	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Joint Information Center (JIC) Training [Verified in PQS Workbook]</i>	

Candidate:

Member #:

Unit:

District:

Phone Number:

E-Mail:

City & State: