

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
FIFTH DISTRICT – NORTHERN REGION
AUXILIARY POLICY MANUAL

STANDING ORDERS



DEPARTMENT OF
HOMELAND SECURITY

**United States
Coast Guard
Auxiliary**



MMS-PR-AUX (D5NR 16791) -A-STANDING ORDERS-(01)

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard

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FIFTH DISTRICT INSTRUCTION MMS-PR-AUX (D5NR 16791)-A-CHAPTER 10-(01)

Subj: FIFTH DISTRICT NORTHERN REGION (D5NR) AUXILIARY POLICY MANUAL –
STANDING ORDERS

Ref: (a) Coast Guard Fifth District Northern Region Auxiliary Policy Manual, MMS-PR-AUX (D5NR 16791)-A-(series)
(b) Coast Guard Auxiliary Manual, COMDTINST M16790.1 (series)
(c) Coast Guard Auxiliary Operations Policy Manual, COMDTINST M16798.3 (series)
(d) Auxiliary Communications Specialty Course (AUXCOM) Student Study Guide
(e) Telecommunications Ops, Auxiliary Telecommunications Qualification Standards (PQS)

1. **PURPOSE.** This manual outlines policies and procedures for the Coast Guard Auxiliary within Fifth District Northern Region (D5NR) per reference (a). The Auxiliary D5NR is comprised of Auxiliary units and the District Auxiliary staff in the state of Delaware, in areas of Pennsylvania and New Jersey that are within the Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay area of responsibility. This manual supplements national level guidance provided by reference (b) and (c).
2. **ACTION.** Commanders, Commanding Officers, Officers in Charge, Director of Auxiliary and Auxiliarists within D5NR shall comply with the provisions of this instruction.
3. **DIRECTIVES AFFECTED.** The previous edition of the D5NR Policy Manual Chapter 10 (D5NRINST M16790.1d of 13 Mar 2012) is cancelled.
4. **DISCUSSION.** This manual has been revised due to recent changes in Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary. The D5NR Policy Manual (POLMAN) addresses policies and programs locally. It should be reviewed by regional Auxiliary leadership and referred to frequently for clarification and guidance, particularly in the support and execution of references (b) thru (c).
5. **CHANGES.** Recommendations for changes to this instruction are encouraged and forwarded to the Director of Auxiliary via the chain of leadership and management. A list of recent changes are included.
6. **PROCEDURES.** Official distribution of this manual will be via electronic copy to the Auxiliary Executive Committee (EXCOM) and e-mailed for distribution. An electronic version will be located at: <https://5nr.org/diraux-guidelines-policies-and-manuals/>

7. PRIVACY COMPLIANCE. When completed, the numerous forms identified or referred to in this instruction contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII). The Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 522a, mandates that agencies establish administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to ensure the integrity of records maintained on individuals. The Privacy Act also requires the protection against any anticipated threats which could result in substantial harm, embarrassment, or compromise to an individual. In order to maintain the public's trust and prevent privacy breaches, the Coast Guard has a duty to safeguard all types of PII in its possession. Unintended disclosure or compromise of an individual's PII constitutes a Privacy Incident and must be reported in accordance with COMDTINST 5260.5 (series), Privacy Incident Response, Notification, and Reporting Procedures for Personally Identifiable Information.
8. RESPONSIBILITY. Commander, Fifth Coast Guard District, Director of Auxiliary (dpa-n), is responsible for the content and upkeep of this instruction. Questions or concerns about this material contained in manual should be emailed to Director of Auxiliary (D5NR) at D05-SMB-NRDIRAUX@USCG.MIL
9. DISCLAIMER. This instruction is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it itself a rule. It is intended to provide operational direction for Coast Guard personnel and is not intended nor does it impose legally-binding requirements on any party outside the Coast Guard.
10. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS. All data and documents created for Coast Guard use and delivered to, or falling under the legal control of the Coast Guard are Federal records. Ensure that all records created as a result of processes described in this directive are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Coast Guard Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series).
11. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. This directive will not have any of the following: significant cumulative impacts on the human environment; substantial controversy or substantial change to existing environmental conditions; or inconsistencies with Federal, State, or local laws or administrative determinations relating to the environment. All future specific actions resulting from general policies in this Manual must be individually evaluated for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Policy NEPA regulations at 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508, DHS and Coast Guard NEPA policy, and compliance with all other environmental mandates.
12. FORMS AVAILABILITY. Most if not all required forms can be downloaded from the D5NR website. <https://5nr.org/member-links/d5nr-forms>, or may be ordered from the Auxiliary National Supply Center.

LCDR Victoria Z Taylor-Davies

10 MAR 2021

V.L.TAYLOR-DAVIES
Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Coast Guard
Fifth Coast Guard District Northern Region
Director of Auxiliary

Significant changes to the D5NR Policy Manual made in this revision:

STANDING ORDERS

1. Updated per MMS-PR-AUX(D5NR 16791)-A-02
2. Spelled out acronyms for first time use
3. Split the standing orders from Chapter 10 – Communications D5NR Policy

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FIFTH DISTRICT – NORTHERN AUXILIARY REGION (D5NR)

COMMUNICATIONS STANDING ORDER (CSO) – 1

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SEARCH AND RESCUE DETACHMENT (SARDET) LEADER

1. The Lead Telecommunications Operator (TCO), under direction and supervision provided by an Auxiliary SARDET Coordinator or operational commander's Communications Officer, is responsible for the unit's telecommunications operations, to include:
 - a. Provide guidance and supervision to unit communications watch standers.
 - b. Ensure cleanliness and preventive maintenance of all unit telecommunications equipment.
 - c. Ensure all equipment and supplies are cared for properly and that appropriate measures are taken for their preservation and economic use.
 - d. Prepare, submit and maintain all required telecommunications reports and records including:
 - (1) Maintain prescribed message files and properly dispose of obsolete files.
 - (2) Conduct a periodic inspection of all equipment and report any defects or deficiencies that may impair operational efficiency to the SARDET Coordinator.
 - (3) Ascertain that transmitting/receiving equipment has been calibrated and tested as required.
 - (4) Assist and support DIRAUX, operational commander's Communications Officer, and SARDET Coordinator in training communications personnel.

FIFTH DISTRICT – NORTHERN AUXILIARY REGION (D5NR)

COMMUNICATIONS STANDING ORDER (CSO) – 2

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WATCHSTANDER OR TELECOMMUNICATIONS OPERATOR (TCO)

1. The TCO, under direction and supervision provide by the Lead TCO, is responsible for the unit's telecommunications operations during their watch, to include:
 - a. Familiarity with all appropriate Auxiliary and operational commander's communications policies.
 - b. Alertness at all times while on watch.
 - c. Maintain a continuous (PRIMARY) distress guard for the Auxiliary SARDET's area of responsibility (AOR) on the VHF-FM calling and distress frequency (156.8 MHz / Channel 16).
 - d. Maintain a professional on-air presence for the public by adhering to proper communications procedures and disciplines, constantly remembering that they are speaking for, and with the authority of, the operational commander.
 - e. Maintain telecommunications discipline throughout the AOR. Monitor, assist, and correct all SARDET personnel, as needed, to insure that they adhere to proper and correct telecommunications procedures at all times.
 - f. Maintain proper security and accountability of all material listed on the SARDET's Communications Watch Stander checklist.
 - g. Have a thorough understanding of distress procedures and be able to readily employ same.
 - h. Have a complete understanding of all communications equipment, net control stations, purposes, frequencies and guard assignments.
 - i. Know proper radio log procedures.
 - j. Keep the SARDET supervisor informed of all pertinent watch standing incidents and events.
2. The following duties are also applicable:
 - a. If standing the first watch of a day or cycle, open the SARDET and report to the operational commander's Command Center Controller (CCC). Record the CCC's name in the radio log when the on-duty SARDET Lead TCO advises you to do so.

- b. Obtain time tick and adjust all SARDET clocks as required.
- c. Provide rapid and reliable communications support within the SARDET's AOR.
- d. Maintain a neat, clean, professional appearance at all times while on watch.
- e. Keep communications spaces clean and neat as operations and time permit.
- f. Maintain radio checks, operational or position reports for units that are operating for which the SARDET accepts and maintains a radio or communications guard. This includes any Coast Guard or Auxiliary aircraft as well as surface units.
- g. Conduct equipment checks to ensure proper equipment operation. During periods of prolonged radio silence, initiate radio checks to ensure proper operation of radio equipment.
- h. Ensure the operational commander's CCC is notified of all cases handled by operational facilities under orders in the SARDET's AOR, regardless of degree of case severity. The CCC should be immediately notified of such. They will, in turn, take necessary action to properly execute the case or, if needed, pass it to another unit. The CCC is responsible for notifying all pertinent units.
- j. Never grant permission to any unit to take action without approval of the CCC.
- k. Ensure all SAR and MEDICO traffic is relayed as close to verbatim as possible and confirm any questionable information received.
- l. Never, under any circumstances, offer medical advice to anyone no matter how minor the injury.
- m. Remain at the TCO station and perform all duties until properly relieved by a qualified watch stander or supervisor. If necessary to go off-air or leave the watch station, ensure net control and units being worked are aware of such absence and the projected time away from station.
- n. Complete the Watch Stander's Checklist, attach it to incident check sheets completed during the watch, and insert them in the radio log section of the radio log.

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COMMUNICATIONS STANDING ORDER (CSO) – 3

RADIO LOG PROCEDURES

1. Radio logs serve as official documents to record events that may be the subject of investigation or legal action. The radio log is also regarded as an official record of signals transmitted and received by an Auxiliary SARDET.
2. SARDET's shall maintain a written radio log.
3. At a minimum, radio log entries shall be made for all distress, urgent or safety signals, and related communications made or intercepted on any frequency for any incident or activity within the AOR. When a SAR sheet is immediately filled in, the information contained on the SAR sheet need not be logged, but reference to the sheet shall be made in the radio log.
4. Radio log entries will be kept on the log sheets that are supplied within the Radio Log Book provided at the SARDET. Entries shall be written neatly, legibly and accurately.
5. All radio logs shall be signed by the Lead TCO at the end of their watch. The log package will include all SAR sheets and incident check sheets for the radio day.
6. All radio logs, for any given day, shall be reviewed and signed by the SARDET Lead TCO at the end of the day.
7. Radio log entry formats shall follow the sample radio log sheet examples provided.



**UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY
SEARCH AND RESCUE DETACHMENT**

(SARDET name)

RADIO LOG (example)

DATE: _____

Watchstander: _____

TIME (L)	FREQ	UNIT	ENTRY
0950	LL	Sector Del Bay	OP NOTE: P.O. Wilson, CCC, notified SARDET open with vessel 212350, 4 POB, area 9 & 171091, 2 POB, area 10.
1000	81	212350	RCVD: Underway, 4 POB, area 9 patrol, ops normal.
1010	81	350	XMIT: Return to SARDET for crew member.
1200	81	171091	RCVD: Underway, 2 POB, area 10 patrol, ops normal.
1230	81	350	XMIT: 350 ops and position.
1231	81	350	RCVD: Position buoy AM-3, ops normal.
1301	16		OP NOTE: Monitored a distress call handled by Sector Delaware Bay, Mary Kay, 17' runabout, PA-2345JR, off Marcus Hook with engine trouble.
1400	LL	Sector Del Bay	OP NOTE: P.O. Wilson, CCC, notified SARDET secured.
			Watchstander signature
			SARDET Lead TCO signature

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COMMUNICATIONS STANDING ORDER (CSO) – 4

COMMAND CENTER CONTROLLER (CCC) NOTIFICATIONS

1. The CCC should always be known by the TCO when they assume the watch.
2. **Never** hesitate to call the CCC if in doubt or as required by applicable policy established by the operational commander.
3. The following lists normal circumstances for which immediate CCC notification should be made (but should not be regarded as an all-encompassing list):
 - a. SAR/medical/fire/flare sighting.
 - b. Equipment discrepancies that impair unit communications.
 - c. Power failure.
 - d. Missed communication schedule by any unit.
 - e. Information of a law enforcement or suspicious nature.
 - f. Bomb threat.
 - g. Report of ATON discrepancy.
 - h. Report of pollution.
 - i. Intentional radio interference.
 - j. Nuclear incident.
 - k. Any request for Coast Guard assistance.

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COMMUNICATIONS STANDING ORDER (CSO) – 5

DISTRESS PROCEDURES AND SIGNALS

1. The distress signal “MAYDAY” indicates that a vessel or aircraft is threatened by grave or imminent danger and is in need of immediate assistance. It has absolute priority over all other transmissions and operations. A distress call or broadcast need not be addressed to any particular unit. A general distress call or broadcast will be answered or monitored until it is determined to be out of the SARDET’s AOR. This determination will only be made when another Coast Guard unit assumes control of the distress case. Calls to another Coast Guard unit will be answered if the unit being called does not answer in a 15-30 second time frame.
2. Some distress calls or broadcasts are preceded by an Auto Alarm. This alarm is used to warn communications personnel of an impending distress broadcast. Upon receipt of an Auto Alarm, immediately notify the Command Center Controller (CCC) and SARDET Lead TCO. This is also the time the Watchstander should prepare to copy impending traffic (i.e., be fully ready to fill out a distress check-off sheet) and minimize any other distractions.
3. In most cases, an initial distress message will be broadcast on Channel 16 (156.8 MHz).
4. Distress traffic will ordinarily consist of the following information/elements:
 - a. The signal “MAYDAY.”
 - b. Caller’s name/call sign.
 - c. Caller’s position.
 - d. Nature of distress.
 - e. POB.
 - f. Type of assistance needed.
 - g. Any other information that might facilitate rescue or assistance.
5. In some cases, a distressed caller may only have time to give one brief transmission, so it is imperative that the TCO give their undivided attention to the case regardless if the call is addressed to the SARDET or not. It is imperative that the TCO attempt to ascertain the caller’s position, number of people on board (POB) and the nature of distress as quickly as possible if adequate communications are established. If time further allows, then completion of a SAR check-off sheet should immediately follow.
6. Upon receipt of a distress call, the following procedures shall be followed:
 - a. Wait for approximately 15-20 seconds to allow the operational commander’s OPCEN to answer.

- b. If no answer is heard in this time, then answer the distressed caller unless it is obvious that the distress is out of the SARDET's AOR. (This will allow another ship or station that may be closer to answer.)
 - c. If no answer is heard, acknowledge the distress traffic, get as much information as possible, and alert the nearest appropriate unit. Immediately notify the CCC.
 - d. Once another unit has assumed control, monitor the case until it is determined that no other communications assistance is needed.
7. When a SARDET assumes control of distress communications, it becomes responsible for obtaining as much information about the distress as quickly as possible. This responsibility is not relinquished until properly relieved by another communications station.
 8. Permission must be obtained from the CCC prior to passing any information to the distressed caller of the SARDET's intentions or actions to assist them.
 9. Distress transmissions are normally made on Channel 16 (156.8 MHz). Depending on the nature of distress and if the situation warrants, attempt to shift the distressed caller to a working frequency (e.g., Channel 22, 157.1 MHz). No caller in distress should be shifted to the working frequency until the first seven questions of the distress check-off sheet are answered.
 10. When working a vessel or aircraft in distress, the decision to shift to a working frequency is a decision that should be made after agreement between both the TCO **and** the caller in distress. Both parties must agree to shift to the working frequency, but the final decision is up to the caller in distress.
 11. When shifting frequencies, make sure the distress caller understands that if no communication are established on a given working frequency within two minutes, they should shift back to the primary frequency (Channel 16, 156.8 MHz). If you are unable to shift the case to a working frequency, then impose silence using the following procedures.
 - a. If you are the controlling station, then make the following broadcast:

“MAYDAY (1 time) - HELLO ALL STATIONS (3 times) - THIS IS UNITED STATES COAST GUARD SARDET _____ (2 times) - SEELONCE – MAYDAY – OUT.”
 - b. If you are monitoring a distress, then make the following broadcast:

“HELLO ALL STATIONS (3 times) - THIS IS UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY SARDET _____ (2 times) -DISTRESS – OUT.”
 - c. If prescribed procedures do not work, then make the following broadcast:

“HELLO ALL STATIONS (3 times) - THIS IS UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY SARDET (2 times) - REQUEST A CLEAR FREQUENCY WORKING DISTRESS - I SAY AGAIN - REQUEST A CLEAR FREQUENCY WORKING DISTRESS OUT.”

12. In order for communications with the distress caller to be successful, the TCO should:
 - a. Remain calm and professional. Speak with an even authoritative tone. Remember, if a Coast Guard communicator remains calm then so will the distress caller.
 - b. Speak clearly and be concise with questions to the distress caller.
 - c. Listen before transmitting – two units transmitting over each other wastes valuable time.
 - d. Remain alert, listen and give the distress caller their complete and undivided attention. The TCO is in charge of the radio watch and all associated communications. If they cannot hear or concentrate because of personnel talking and background noise, then the SARDET should be cleared.
13. In addition to distress signals and alarms, the TCO should monitor and copy all non-Coast Guard, urgent and safety signals in their AOR.
14. Urgent signal – “PAN PAN” (pronounced PAHN PAHN). This call is used to predicate an urgent message concerning safety at sea (e.g., fire, man overboard, grounding, sinking, medical cases, overdue vessels).
15. Safety signal – “SECURITÉ” (pronounced SAY-CURE-A-TAY). This call is used to predicate important navigational or meteorological warning messages (e.g., hazards to navigation, larger vessel movements, storm/hurricane/gale warnings, small craft advisories).
16. The following general rules shall also be followed:
 - a. When on watch, remain alert and maintain a close listening watch for weak distress signals or calls. Everyone hears loud distress calls – weak ones sometimes go unnoticed or unanswered.
 - b. Do not use the word “Mayday” as part of a reply to a distress caller. Use of the word “Mayday” is only reserved for the distress caller except when the controlling station is imposing silence using procedures described above.
 - c. Do not continue to call a distress unit if unable to establish communications after a few attempts. Monitor and allow another unit to attempt communications.

- d. Do not get excited – remain cool and professional.
- e. Do not leave an inexperienced operator or someone who is having problems on watch during a serious distress case. Get help or a relief – there is no room for fatigue or error during a distress when lives are at stake.
- f. Do not needlessly shift frequencies. If necessary to shift frequencies, advise the distress caller to shift back to the original frequency if communications are not established in a reasonable time, usually two minutes.
- g. Do not attempt to shift a distress caller to another frequency until their name, call sign, exact nature of distress, position, and the number of people on board are known. This is required in the event communications are lost.
- h. Always treat every “Mayday” call as real. It is not a hoax until the CCC determines it as such. Copy all information so it can be used to locate (and possibly prosecute) the hoax source.
- i. Always remain alert – a distress caller may only broadcast their position once.

FIFTH DISTRICT – NORTHERN AUXILIARY REGION (D5NR)

COMMUNICATION STANDING ORDER (CSO) – 6

SEVERE WEATHER AND HURRICANE PLANNING

1. Severe weather and hurricane warnings will normally be issued by the Fifth District Commander. However, this does not preclude an operational commander from establishing such warnings when appropriate.
2. The following Hurricane conditions are defined as follows:
 - a. Condition Five Annual seasonal alert from 1 June through 30 November.
 - b. Condition Four Hurricane force winds are expected within 72 hours.
 - c. Condition Three Hurricane force winds are expected within 48 hours.
 - d. Condition Two Hurricane force winds are expected within 24 hours.
 - e. Condition One Hurricane force winds are expected within 12 hours; if the SARDET supervisor determines it is appropriate to evacuate, they shall be sure the matter is discussed with the CCC before doing so.
 - f. Post Condition Hurricane has passed and no further threat exists.
3. Hurricane Categories.

Category	Damage	Barometric Pressure (inches Hg)	Winds (kts)	Storm Surge (feet)
1	Minimal	>28.94	65 – 82	4 – 5
2	Moderate	28.50 – 28.93	83 – 95	6 – 8
3	Extensive	27.91 – 28.49	96 – 113	9 – 12
4	Extreme	27.17 – 27.90	114 – 135	13 – 18
5	Catastrophic	<27.17	>135	>18

4. The TCOW will keep abreast of weather forecasts and ensure the SARDET supervisor has the most recent weather status and forecast at all times.
5. Current weather forecasts may be obtained from the Command Center Controller.