

18 January 2018

Importance: High

To: All Auxiliarists



A Message from the National Commodore Regarding a Potential Federal Government Lapse in Appropriations

January 18, 2017

We are facing the imminent possibility of a federal government lapse in appropriations. This will cause another funding hiatus (aka shutdown) within the Department of Homeland Security. Unless funding is secured by midnight, January 19, guidance received from the Coast Guard will likely mandate that most Auxiliary activities must come to full stop.

We will not be “assigned to duty” for any of our normal activities, and in the absence of a specific order from a Coast Guard Order Issuing Authority, we may not wear the Auxiliary uniform or perform any Auxiliary activity, regardless of how mundane or simple it may be. Without a specific order, we are also not authorized to travel on Coast Guard Auxiliary business for any reason, including attending Auxiliary meetings, or to travel for any Coast Guard or Coast Guard Auxiliary mission. Auxiliarists who are traveling pursuant to Coast Guard or Coast Guard Auxiliary Association orders should expect to be directed to immediately terminate such travel and return home. The expenses incurred for the return to your home will be reimbursed by the order issuing agency in accordance with existing policy. Whether traveling pursuant to orders or not, Auxiliarists who are participating in conferences should expect to be directed to immediately terminate such activity and return home. Auxiliary activity should only be expected to be performed *if it is specifically ordered by a Coast Guard order issuing authority* in direct support of an exempt mission as defined in the Coast Guard Financial Resources Management Manual, COMDTINST M7100.3 (series) Chapter 6 subsection 6.4.2. Such missions in which the Auxiliary may participate on specific orders are limited to the following:

- Search and Rescue (SAR)
- Aids to Navigation
- Port and Environmental Safety
- Commercial Vessel Safety (CVS)
- Marine Environmental Response (MER)

A possible exception to these expectations may be Auxiliarists who are in receipt of, or are already executing, C-school travel orders issued by the Training Quota Management Center (TQC). They may be directed to complete the training mission as assigned. Further guidance on this subject will be provided to those who are affected.

Though they may be limited, there are still activities in which we may engage when necessary to the conduct of the business of the Auxiliary. For example, we may take advantage of all of the electronic devices at our disposal to communicate in furtherance of the business of the Auxiliary. We are also allowed to conduct meetings and elections by electronic means following the guidance set forth in the Auxiliary Manual and the Appendix to the unit's Standing Rules if the unit has adopted an Appendix similar to the template found on the Auxiliary Chief Counsel's website. We may do those things as long as no cost to the Coast Guard or Auxiliary is involved.

The reason for this instruction to stand down is to protect Auxiliarists from economic harm. When we are performing an authorized Coast Guard or Coast Guard Auxiliary mission we are considered employees of the United States and entitled to federal benefits such as federal worker's compensation and immunity from liability under the Federal Tort Claims Act. However, both of those benefits and several others must be funded in order to be available. During the funding hiatus those benefits are not funded, so they are no longer available.

Please keep in mind that while an electronic unit meeting from a member's home is perfectly okay if the required Appendix is in place, if travel to another location, such as a conference facility or CG station is required, that is not allowed.

This message modifies previous guidance regarding activities during the period of operations during a lapse in appropriations only as it relates to electronic communication. All other Coast Guard guidance stands. Should there be any questions relating to this guidance, please refer them through the Chain of Leadership and Management to me. Thank you for your cooperation.

Respectfully,

Richard Washburn, National Commodore