



MYRTLE BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject: *Marine Unit*

Number: *244-A*

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Rescinds: *244-Interim Marine Unit SOP*

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Approved By:

PURPOSE

To establish guidelines, procedures, and criteria for the safe operation of vessels utilized by the Myrtle Beach Police Department's Marine Patrol Unit while providing services and protection on the waterways located within the City.

DISCUSSION

The Myrtle Beach Police Department's Marine Patrol Unit is maintained to effectively provide services to citizens on the waterways in Myrtle Beach and to investigate, interdict, and apprehend waterborne violators in concert with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. Recognizing the inherent hazards of this mission, it is the intent of the Myrtle Beach Police Department to provide and maintain the safest possible working conditions.

DEFINITIONS

1. Vessel Commander – The captain or master of the assigned vessel who is directly responsible for, and is the final authority on the safe operation of that vessel.
2. Vessel Crew Member – Person or persons on board the vessel, other than the vessel commander/captain, assigned to assist the vessel commander. These personnel are commonly referred to as deck hands.

3. Passenger – A person on board the vessel on official business, not participating in its operation.

PROCEDURE

1. Administration – The Marine Patrol Unit will be part of the Beach Patrol Section administered by the Uniform Division Captain.
 - A. The Marine Patrol Unit is available for call-out response 24-hours a day, seven days a week with authorization from a supervisor. This unit is also available to assist local, state, and federal agencies when approved by command staff personnel.
2. Duties and Responsibilities
 - A. Duties of the Marine Patrol Unit will include patrolling local waterways, conducting search and rescue missions, and assisting other agencies. Additionally, the Marine Patrol Unit operates in concert with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to investigate, interdict, and apprehend waterborne violators.
 - B. Marine Patrol Unit personnel assigned as vessel operators/commanders are marine certified and qualified to act as vessel commanders.
 - C. The vessel commander/captain is responsible for the safe accomplishment of the mission and the use of reasoned professional judgment in the operation of his/her vessel. The vessel commander has the ultimate responsibility for the safety of the crew and passengers and may terminate or modify operational plans as needed after giving due consideration to the mission goals.
 - D. The vessel commander/captain may deviate from any rule or procedure stated in this directive during emergencies or life threatening situations and, in doing so, shall make the final “go/no go decision.”
 - E. The authority and responsibility of the vessel commander/captain exists from the time he/she takes control of the vessel until the vessel is secured from the mission.
 - F. Vessel commanders will ensure that the vessel is properly inspected and sea worthy, and that all crew members and passengers are properly briefed and familiar with applicable operational and emergency

procedures and equipment, and properly outfitted with all required safety gear.

- G. The vessel commander/captain determines who will operate the controls during all phases of the mission. The vessel commander must exercise sound judgment in permitting other operators of limited experience or ability to control the vessel during adverse or potentially hazardous operations and undertakings. Less experienced operators should be afforded adequate opportunity to gain actual control experience other than strictly routine conditions while under supervision of a more experienced vessel commander/captain.
- H. Vessel commanders/captains will check current local weather forecast conditions prior to a mission.

TRAINING

1. Training will be a continual process - There will be two training sessions per quarter allowing each member of this section to get time on the boat. Each session will cover basic boating items such as pre-operational inspections, basic boat handling, boarding, and what to look for when doing a safety inspection. The Marine Patrol Unit supervisor will ensure that vessel operators and crew members receive training on vessels and equipment related to their marine responsibilities. Training will be documented and forwarded to the Training Unit for entry into the officer's training file.

CERTIFICATION

- 1. Vessel Commander/Captain – Vessel commanders for the MBPD will be required to attend either a DNR Law Enforcement Marine Interdiction school, MANTA Law Enforcement Marine Interdiction school, or other course of equal training as approved by the division commander prior to being given the title of “vessel commander.”
- 2. Crew member – Issued to personnel qualified by the Marine Patrol Unit Supervisor to assist vessel operators in the operation of MBPD police vessels.
- 3. All Marine Patrol Unit members will be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain qualified to continue the safe operation of our vessels. All certifications will be handled by the Marine Patrol Supervisor with training documentation forward to the training unit.

ENFORCEMENT GUIDELINES

The Myrtle Beach Police Department's Marine Unit will be utilized on the Intracoastal Waterway and, at times, in the Atlantic Ocean to provide a service of law enforcement to the citizens of Myrtle Beach and its visitors. The Marine Unit will be a highly visible unit, which will focus on safe boating to include safety inspections of vessels. We will also be aware of and enforce reckless boating, boating while intoxicated, and safety equipment violations. Some violations will be written under city code and the others will be written under section code 50 violations. Prior to conducting enforcement on the waterways, each vessel commander and vessel crew will complete a specialized DNR block of instruction on boarding's and what to look for when doing a safety inspection.

MAINTENANCE

1. Will be an ongoing process done each time the boat is used. Each time the boat is used it will be washed down and fueled to maintain its readiness. The following is a schedule for maintenance items:

- A. Spark plugs – Change every 6 months
- B. Lower end grease/oil – Change every 6 months
- C. Water pump – Change every 6 months
- D. Gas filter – Change every 6 months
- E. 2 cycle engine oil – Once a year
- F. Boat trailer – Grease hubs monthly