

Florida International University
Boating Safety Committee Meeting

May 4th, 2021

Attendance via Zoom: Dr. Mark Butler IV, Bill Chamberlain, Roger Garcia, Dr. Piero Gardinali, Dr. Evelyn Gasier, Rafael Gonzalez-Collazo, Chris Grayson, Anne Sevon

Start: 1:00 pm

Introduction to Annie

- First meeting for her attendance (hi everyone! Wish we could meet in person, but virtual is what we have)
- Second meeting for Mark!

Old business

- Nothing necessarily brought up to the table, so we jumped into things from Annie

From the Boating Safety Officer

- Boating statistics for 2021
 - o In January we had 85 Crew Chiefs and 124 crew members
 - o End of April we have 86 Crew Chiefs and 108 crew members
 - Within the past two months I have been trying to update these numbers as much as possible with who has left FIU
 - When sending out emails, I do have quite a few that kick back, but I do not want to take these boaters off the active list until I have 100% confirmation they are no longer with FIU
 - o At the end of April, we have had 348 trips
 - o 62.11% compliance with checklists
 - April was 66.23% meanwhile February was less than 50%
 - I believe that number will rise when we have a more user-friendly checklist (I have heard quite a few complaints of the current checklist)
 - o With these statistics, Rookery Bay was not included
 - Bill and I are receiving the float plans from Rookery Bay
- Updating Boaters' credentials
 - o Since we can only have three students per course, I have been actively putting together CPR/First aid and Emergency oxygen courses for our boaters and scientific divers
 - So far have had over 30 CPR/First Aid students
 - These have primarily been the Crew Chiefs
 - Still have 46 boaters out of date, but most of these are the crew members who are not required to have a certification
 - I have had 7 emergency oxygen provider students

Proposed Changes to Boating Safety Manual

1. Call tree → needs to have current information for the BSO as well as a few other changes
 - Everyone in meeting gave the okay to update
2. Responsible person needs to change to Crew Chief Emergency Contact

- Everyone in meeting agrees that for continuity purposes that the “responsible person” should be changed to crew chief emergency contact (found on float plan and call tree)
 - Major thing – all boaters need to be aware of the boating safety manual and that this crew chief emergency contact is **not** next to kin, this is an affiliated FIU person who knows the what the research group is doing, when they should be back, are of sober mind, and know they need to call the BSO in case of an emergency
 - The updated float plan will not submit if the student puts in a nonaffiliated FIU person as their crew chief emergency contact
2. There needs to be a timeframe for the float plan
- In the current version of Boating Safety Manual, there is no timeframe mentioned, so for continuity purposes we are adding a 2-hour timeframe (students need to do it before the boat departs)
 - Old version of float plan had a 48-hour timeframe but due to changes in weather, a shorter time frame is better
3. Swim test documentation
- Adding a signature for documentation for the swim test
 - Three options: they have successfully completed the swim test, they are exempt, or they are opting out and know they need to always wear PFDs
 - Need to change wording – it can be signed off by an approved Boating Safety Committee member (does not need a lifeguard signature)
4. Table of contents
- When it becomes a PDF, the table of contents will make it easier to look at different sections of the manual
5. Definition of a passenger
- It is reiterated in passenger for hire
6. Policy numbers
- To identify if any policy numbers have changed as well as updated Coast Guard regulations
7. Section 2.6.2 only talks about PLBs
- We need to add EPIRBS
 - Since all FIU motorized vessels have EPIRBS it will be recommended but not required to have a PLB
 - If the crew knows they are going to an area out of range of radio/cell phone service, then it is highly recommended for redundancy
8. Diving supervisor/Lead diver oversees diving activities however the Crew Chief is ultimately responsible for boat operations
9. Need to add a section of snorkeling/breathe hold diving due to standards from AAUS
- Current issue is that the Boating Safety Manual has no guidelines or references to snorkeling/breath hold diving used in research
 - It will not be added to the proposed changes of the manual at this time until a more accessible version of training for shallow water blackouts is available (potentially an online training with the Environmental Health & Safety training videos)
 - We could potentially introduce the concept of shallow water blackout training during the swim test
10. If all committee members could review the PQS, that would be much appreciated
- I know they were implemented in the past few years, so if anyone has any changes or recommendations to make them better

11. We currently have a requirement of holding a USCG license to drive the research vessels larger than 26 feet

- The original number of 26 came to be due to the fact 26 was one of the largest vessels in the past
- Since our fleet is growing, maybe we should reconsider this requirement, so others have the larger boats available for research?
- Chartering a class or others will still need the USCG requirement
- I will work with Roger for verbiage to send to the committee

Flares

- Since non pyro visual distress signals are becoming more common in the industry, we may consider putting them on the airboats
- The airboats have flashlights as well as a spotlight, but maybe consider Coast Guard approved visual distress signals for our students

BAFA Boxes

- The Boating Advanced First Aid (BAFA) boxes were brought into the mixture due to a student heavily bleeding
- The employee who implemented the BAFA boxes is no longer with FIU and when Annie reached out to ORED, they said they are no longer a part of restocking the BAFA boxes
- Some of the BAFA boxes have expired items
- BAFA boxes may not be necessary, having a first aid kit in a pelican box makes sense so that everything stays dry, but we may take out the entry and exit wound sealants
- I will work with Roger and Mark to have an advanced first aid kit (make sure nothing is expired in current kits) but not one that contains equipment our students are not trained on

COVID Protocols

Roger asked about vaccinated FIU policies due to all personnel at Aquarius being vaccinated, but no define answer

- At this point no different policies (they're still struggling with what they're doing for people in labs)
- We're going to have consequences with funding if we can't get back to normal
- But unfortunately, the COVID protocols are out of our committee's league until FIU generates policies in the future

Newest addition to the fleet

- 43' Hatteras
- We need a rate that will allow people to actually use the boat but we're not losing money
- There's a chance we could use it for three years and then potentially flip it (if none of our students/research teams are using it, why should we keep it?)
- Figuring out rates for overnight trips
 - o Due to the size of the vessel and overnight trips, we need to keep in mind the USCG regulations of having someone extra on the vessel for keeping watch
 - o Since we're charging double for overnight prices, adding extra personnel will up the price as well

End: 2:30pm