Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) Frequently Asked Questions

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20 Questions and Answers for state, local and county maritime responders or law enforcement agencies.

1. **Q – What is NASBLA?**

   A – *The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) is a national nonprofit organization that works to develop public policy for recreational boating safety. NASBLA represents the recreational boating authorities of all 50 states and the U.S. territories. NASBLA offers a variety of resources, including training, model legislation, education standards and publications. NASBLA's mission is to strengthen the ability of the state and territorial boating authorities to reduce death, injury and property damage associated with recreational boating and ensure a safe, secure and enjoyable boating environment.*

2. **Q – What is NASBLA's BOAT Program?**

   A – *The Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) Program establishes a national standard for the training, qualification, credentialing and typing of maritime law enforcement and rescue personnel. While the BOAT Program is not mandatory, adoption and implementation of the program will provide a true national standard for the purpose of maritime interoperability at the federal, state and local levels. Standardization ensures maritime agencies can interact together and will bolster their ability to act as force multipliers nationwide.*

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3. **Q – Did the U. S. Coast Guard play a role in the development of NASBLA's BOAT Program?**

   A – *Yes, the program was adapted from the U.S. Coast Guard's boat forces training framework. The BOAT Program is comprised of vital maritime training and management components, including:*
   - *System Policy*
   - *The Training and Qualification Process*
   - *Boat Crew Qualification Tasks*

- *Program Manager Roles and Responsibilities*
- *Boat Crew Currency Maintenance*
- *Documentation Requirements*

4. **Q – Why is NASBLA's BOAT Program important to the Coast Guard?**

   A – *"The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) Program has created a comprehensive standard for training and typing in support of all hazards response. Through collective partnerships of federal, state, county, and local first responders, the BOAT Program will unify national resources and enhance the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's capabilities in the safety and security of our citizens within our maritime domain."*

   Rear Admiral Sally Brice-O'Hara
   Deputy Commandant for Operations
   U.S. Coast Guard

5. **Q – Can a Coast Guard member sign off qualification tasks for state & local partners?**

   A – *Yes, certified Coast Guard boat crew members and coxswains may sign off qualification tasks for state and local partners appropriate to the level of certification for which they hold.*

6. **Q – Can anyone sign off on qualification tasks within the BOAT Manual?**

   A - *NASBLA Certified Instructors, any Coast Guard Petty Officer certified at an equal or higher competency, can sign off tasks in Volume II of the BOAT Manual.*

7. **Q – Is the BOAT Program just for Law Enforcement?**

   A – *No. The program is designed to establish standards and train emergency responders as well as law enforcement personnel. An example of that training beyond basic boat operations is the Search and Rescue Course that will be offered for all rescue personnel.*

8. **Q – What is NASBLA's BOAT Tactical Operator's Training Course?**

   A – *This course provides those skills and knowledge necessary for security zone enforcement (including escorts) and vessel pursuit similar to the Coast Guard's Tactical Coxswain and Pursuit Coxswain resident courses located at Joint Maritime Training Center (JMTC).This course insures that state and local law*

enforcement operators are a true force-multiplier to the Coast Guard Captain of the Port, using the same tactics, techniques and procedures as Coast Guard boat crews.

9. **Q – Does the CG support NASBLA's BOAT Tactical Operator's Course?**

   A – *Yes*

10. **Q – Can Coast Guard members attend NASBLA's BOAT Tactical Operator's Course?**

    A – *Yes, coxswains at units with assigned Ports, Waterways and Coastal Security (PWCS) (escort/security zone enforcement) duties may attend.*

11. **Q – What does a student receive if they attend NASBLA's BOAT Tactical Operator's Course?**

    A – *Coast Guard coxswains who attend this course will receive a letter of course completion. In addition, and similar to other Boat Forces resident "C" schools, the student will receive a list of completed qualification tasks (aligned with BOAT Manual Vol III). This course will not provide certification - that responsibility will remain with the unit Commanding Officer or Officer in Charge.*

    State and local law enforcement officers will receive a certificate of completion.

    All certificates will be sent from NASBLA Headquarters in Lexington, Kentucky, and by receiving the certificates in this manner, will automatically be included in a national database of trained tactical boat operators.

12. **Q- What is the advantage of having a NASBLA BOAT Course coming to my area, versus going to a resident course?**

    A- *By having a course delivered by a deployable team to your location, you have the advantage of training on your platforms, in your Area of Responsibility (AOR). Additionally, local agencies don't have to worry about paying overtime or per diem. And lastly, as a one week course, officers are not taken away from their operating area for extended periods of time.*

13. **Q – How much does NASBLA's BOAT Tactical Operator's cost and who pays?**

    A – *Current cost of the five-day course is $24,000 for up to 20 students. Funding from DHS Port Security Grant, Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention, State*

Homeland Security Grant, Operation Stonegarden, Buffer Zone Protection, or FEMA training Programs can be used and applied to this course.

14. Q – Can anyone become NASBLA instructors?

A – *Yes, to become a certified NASBLA instructor a member must successfully complete the BOAT Tactical Operator's Training Course, attend a second course as an assistant instructor, and attend a third course as a primary instructor. Members should contact NASBLA with specific questions.*

www.nasbla.org/BOATinfo

15. Q- Can instructor trainers from other agencies offer the advanced training on their own?

A. *In order for this program to be executed in partnership with the Coast Guard and our other federal partners, and for us to ensure standardization, safety, and oversight, NO ONE is allowed to provide this training without coordination through NASBLA's Boat Operation and Training Director. Additionally, anyone providing this training or receiving this training will only receive national recognition from NASBLA, if coordinated through a NASBLA. This is the one and only way they will receive their NASBLA certificate for the class, and be entered into the national database.*

16. Q - What is the requirement to certify LE officers in the basic part of the program?

A - *Officers can get tasks signed off on the basic part of the program by anyone designated by their agency's Program Manager (see page 6 and 7 of the BOAT Manual, Volume I.) What the BOAT Program allows, is every agency to adapt the program to their unique needs and application.*

17. Q – How do I ensure that our agency's maritime training program is in alignment with the NASBLA BOAT Program?

A - *Agencies are encouraged to make contact with the National Program Director, to ensure that their elements of qualification are in alignment with the national program.*

18. Q – Why should my agency strive to align our training program with the NASBLA BOAT Program, or get recognized by NASBLA?

A - *This becomes significant when that agency seeks national accreditation by NASBLA or team typing recognition by FEMA and the USCG.*

19. Q – Does NASBLA have a database to capture who is certified or credentialed?

A – *NASBLA is establishing a national database that program managers can access, and that captains of the port, emergency operations centers, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) can access for immediate identification of qualified personnel in their region and throughout the country.*

20. Q - Where do I begin?

A – *The first step is to review Volume I and II of the BOAT Manual from the NASBLA BOAT Program web site (www.nasbla.org/BOAT). If you have a training program in place, that you would like evaluated, contact the Program Director for consultation. If you have a training request or would like training in your area, you can go to the web site and submit a request (www.nasbla.BOATinfo)*