

**GOAL SETTING FOR THE COAST GUARD:
HOW MANY LIVES CAN WE SAVE?**

At the last meeting of the National Boating Safety Advisory Council (NBSAC), in Crystal City, Virginia, I was initially surprised by the Coast Guard's request to NBSAC for input into their goals for Recreational Boating Safety. I assumed that the Coast Guard had already set goals for RBS. But, the more I thought about it, the more I realized this is an important exercise in which all supporters of safe boating should participate and take seriously.

According to the Coast Guard's own statistics, for the last two years, the number of boating fatalities has remained constant at about 700. And, most of these boaters were either not wearing a PFD or had not taken a boating education course. Of course, this is all the more reason to work harder at our campaigns for increasing PFD wear and encouraging all boaters to take an education course. But, the question of the day is how many fatalities are acceptable? How many accidents? What should our goals be? Zero fatalities? And, if so, how do we achieve this goal? What resources are needed? Do our common efforts need to be redirected in any manner?

I looked at other safety organizations to see if they had set similar goals for eliminating fatalities on the roads and in the air. I checked out the Department of Transportation's Strategic Plan for 2003-2008, and saw that, yes indeed, Secretary Mineta and DOT have set specific goals for each mode of transportation to achieve by 2008:

For highway safety:

reduce highway fatalities to 1.0 per 100 million vehicle miles traveled;
and reduce large truck fatalities to 1.65 per 100 million truck miles traveled.

For aviation safety:

reduce commercial aviation fatal accidents to 0.01 per 100,000 departures;
and reduce general aviation fatal accidents to 325.

For rail safety:

reduce train accidents and incidents to 16.14 per million train miles.

For transit safety:

reduce fatalities to 0.488 per 100 million passenger miles.

For pipeline safety:

reduce total incidents for gas and hazardous liquid pipelines to 307.

For hazardous materials safety:

reduce the number of serious incidents to 488.

Are these the types of goals and numbers we want the Coast Guard to set, or can we do better? I understand that we could be mixing apples and oranges, or boaters and passengers, but still I like the idea of specific goals that we and everyone else can measure.

Let me and other members of the NSBC and NBSAC have your thoughts about this exercise so we can provide input to the Coast Guard and then all get on the same page to reducing (or eliminating) boating fatalities and accidents.

**SUPPORTING
BOATING SAFETY
THROUGH YOUR
NSBC MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in the National Safe Boating Council is open to all non-profit and commercial organizations. It is also open to state and local marine enforcement and boating safety agencies. Just as important, individuals that express an interest in recreational boating safety can be members.

The more active, dues-paying members we have, the stronger our organization becomes. A strong NSBC will result in fewer boating deaths and a safer marine environment.

Members support the NSBC by participating in one of the following levels of membership:

1. Non-Profit (501 (c) 3) membership is comprised of organizations on a national, regional, state or local level involved in the recreational boating field.

2. Government membership is available to federal, state and local agencies involved in recreational boating and education activities.

3. Commercial and Trade membership is open to international, national, regional and local "for profit" organizations interested in recreational boating safety and education.

4. Individual membership is open to all with an interest in boating safety. (Individuals cannot be associated with an organization.)

A significant source of our support is through membership dues. Dues are based upon the level of membership and are collected on an annual basis. Membership is for a calendar year. Invoicing for 2005 will begin in January.

**Membership Classes and Annual Fees
Non Profit or Government**

Local	\$50
State/Regional	\$150
National	\$200
Commercial/Trade	\$300

Premium Levels

Sustaining	\$500
Patron	\$1000

There is also an individual membership available at a rate of \$35. Please check out our web site at www.safeboatingcouncil.org for more information on NSBC membership.

**DO NOT DELAY
JOIN NOW!**



CHECK OUT THE NEW PADDLE SMART PROGRAM ON THE SIDEKICKS WEB PAGE: WWW.BOATINGSIDEKICKS.COM. START AT THE SIDEKICKS WEB SITE, AND THEN CLICK ON "SMART START FOR PADDLERS."