

# A Report on the STRATEGIC PLAN of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program 2007-2011

The following partners in boating safety endorse this Strategic Plan:



American Canoe Association

BoatU.S. Foundation

Boy Scouts of America

Marine Retailers Association of America

National Association of State Boating Law Administrators

National Boating Federation

National Boating Safety Advisory Council

National Marine Manufacturers Association

National Safe Boating Council

National Water Safety Congress

Personal Flotation Device Manufacturers Association

Personal Watercraft Industry Association

United Safe Boating Institute

United States Army Corps of Engineers

United States Coast Guard

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

United States Power Squadrons

U.S. Sailing

Water Sports Industry Association



US Army Corps  
of Engineers



Coordinated by the National Boating Safety Advisory Council and  
the U.S. Coast Guard

June 2008

## Foreword

To America's Boating Community:

We are proud to present to you the Strategic Plan of the National Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Program. This Plan represents the path to making boating even safer and more enjoyable on our nation's waters. It will be used to guide us all in the most efficient and effective use of our resources as we continue our quest to enhance America's boating lifestyle.

Since the creation of the National RBS Program in 1971, a great deal of success has resulted. While boating participation has more than doubled in this period, the number of boating casualties has experienced a significant decrease.

Still, there's more to be accomplished. We need to continue to find ways to make recreational boating even more safe and enjoyable for current and future generations of boaters. Thus, this Plan was developed to provide guidance to fulfill our mission: *To ensure the public has a safe, secure, and enjoyable recreational boating experience by implementing programs that minimize the loss of life, personal injury, and property damage while cooperating with environmental and national security efforts.*

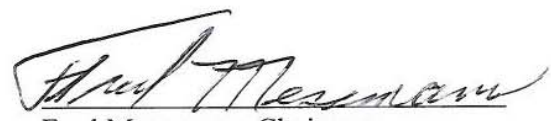
This Plan truly represents the *Power of Partnerships*; witnessed through the extensive collaboration utilized in its creation. The many boating organizations represented in the National Boating Safety Advisory Council and its Strategic Planning Panel worked closely together over a 2-year period, culminating in a signing ceremony in March 2007 that initiated this Plan. To date, 19 organizations have signed on as official partners in this Plan, and we hope that many more will join us.

We think of the numerous partners in the boating community as *Team Boating Safety*. Working together, we are confident that we will achieve our common vision of a boating lifestyle in America that provides the ultimate recreational experience, uniquely enjoyable and safe.

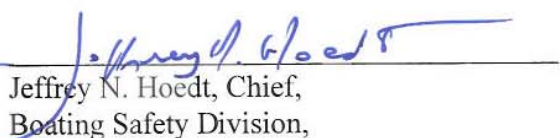
Count on this *Power of Partnerships* to work with you and for you. If your organization hasn't already signed on as an official partner, come on board and help us help America.



James P. Muldoon, Chairman,  
National Boating Safety Advisory Council



Fred Messmann, Chairman,  
Strategic Planning Panel



Jeffrey N. Hoedt, Chief,  
Boating Safety Division,  
U.S. Coast Guard Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety

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## Executive Summary

This Report on the Strategic Plan of the National Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Program, describes the goals, objectives, and strategies to reduce recreational boating injuries and deaths for the years 2007-2011. It serves as the primary framework for programmatic decision-making, budgeting, and program evaluation.

It also contains a brief history of the National RBS Program, the need for a strategic plan, the process, future steps, and appendices with timelines and acronyms.

This Report is the result of efforts of many partners of the National RBS Program and was designed so that anyone interested in planning can learn from this process, and partners in boating safety can incorporate parts of it into their own organization's strategic plans.

Initial Supporters of the Strategic Plan of the National Boating Safety Program.



Photo taken at the International Boating and Water Safety Summit in San Antonio, Texas, March 5, 2007.

(from left to right) Rear Admiral Craig Bone, U.S. Coast Guard; Ruth Wood, BoatU.S. Foundation; Buzz Watkins, Water Sports Industry Assn.; Cecilia Duer, National Water Safety Congress; Jeffrey Johnson, NASBLA; Maureen Healey, Personal Watercraft Industry Assn.; Commodore Warren McAdams, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary; Ernest Marshburn, U.S. Power Squadrons; Fred Messmann, NBSAC; Margot Brown, National Boating Federation; Pamela Dillon, American Canoe Assn.; James Muldoon, NBSAC; Jeffrey Hoedt, U.S. Coast Guard

# **A Report on the Strategic Plan of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program**

## **Congressional Mandate for the National Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Program**

The National RBS program was established by the Federal Boat Safety Act of 1971, which amended title 46 of the United States Code. The Act was designed to *“improve boating safety and to foster greater development, use, and enjoyment of all the waters of the United States by encouraging and assisting participation by the several States, the boating industry, and the boating public in development of more comprehensive boating safety programs. The Act goes on to declare, “ the policy of Congress [is] to encourage greater and continuing uniformity of boating laws and regulations as among the several States and the Federal Government, a higher degree of reciprocity and comity among the several jurisdictions, and closer cooperation and assistance between the Federal Government and the several States in developing, administering, and enforcing Federal and State laws and regulations pertaining to boating safety.”*

In 1983, Congress revised, reorganized, and codified title 46. Through this process, the Federal Boat Safety Act of 1971 was repealed and its provisions dispersed throughout the title. The Coast Guard’s authority to carry out the National RBS Program is contained in section 13102 of title 46.

## **Mission of the National RBS Program**

The mission of the National RBS Program is “to ensure the public has a safe, secure, and enjoyable recreational boating experience by implementing programs that minimize the loss of life, personal injury, and property damage while cooperating with environmental and national security efforts.”

## **Creation of the Strategic Plan**

Generally speaking, recreational boating is a fun and safe activity; however, every year hundreds of persons die in accidents and thousands more are injured. While these numbers are statistically low in light of the fact that approximately 77 million adult Americans and millions more youths participate in some form of recreational boating, **these deaths and injuries are preventable.** Although the National RBS Program has contributed to a significant decrease in deaths, there is still much room for improvement. To best-focus the resources of the Program, the National Boating Safety Advisory Council (NBSAC) (the Program’s federally-mandated council that advises the Coast Guard on boating safety matters) recommended the creation of a strategic plan. The goals, objectives, and strategies in this Plan can help all partners in boating safety work together to reduce the incidents of these preventable deaths, injuries, and property damage.

## **Plan Developers**

Federal law (46 U.S.C. 13110) mandates that the Secretary of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall establish and consult with the NBSAC on major boating safety matters. NBSAC created a Strategic Planning Panel comprised of representatives of the boating community. To provide as broad a representation of the boating community as possible, NBSAC invited members of the public, industry, boating organizations and associations, boating law administrators, and federal agency partners to participate. NBSAC selected the participants based on their expertise on boating safety, their experience within the boating community, and their willingness to share their knowledge. See list of participants and their affiliations in Appendix I.

## **Relationship between this Plan and the Plans of RBS partners**

This Strategic Plan:

- Puts into action the mission of the National RBS Program;
- Provides States and other RBS partners with new ideas to reduce casualties and tools to measure their programs' effectiveness; and
- Contains the performance goal of the National RBS Program for the Strategic Plan of the Coast Guard.

## **Transparency and Accountability**

The NBSAC and its Strategic Planning Panel created this Plan so everyone can understand how the RBS partners can achieve the ambitious goals, objectives, and strategies of the National RBS Program. As a federally funded program, the National RBS Program is subject to review under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), which requires governmental programs to be measurable and accountable. The Program's performance is reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Government Accountability Office (GAO). This Plan allows anyone, including federal reviewers, to measure our successes and challenges.

## **Plan Development – Overview**

Members of the Strategic Planning Panel traveled across the country on several occasions to deliberate face-to-face about this first Strategic Plan. Panel members also conducted deliberations over the Internet.

The Plan took two years to develop: the first meeting occurred in February 2005 in Arlington, Virginia; RBS partners signed the Plan in March 2007. Here are the chronological steps the Panel took to create this Plan.

### **First Meeting of the Strategic Planning Panel--February 2005**

To ensure the Panel addressed the actual problems, not just perceived ones, it employed Risk-Based Decision-Making to define the problems and chart the way ahead. The Panel:

- Studied the data from the Boating Accident Report Database (BARD) maintained by the Coast Guard's Boating Safety Division;
- Focused on the most frequent types of boating accidents and their underlying causes; and
- Brainstormed and considered initiatives (strategies) that could be effectively implemented to reduce boating deaths and injuries.

The Panel considered the following questions: How can we reduce risks? What variables can we influence directly and indirectly? How can we measure our progress? The Panel also determined that it needed to improve and incorporate measurements into the Plan. Though certain goals and objectives may be difficult to achieve, the Panel decided to be ambitious in its goals.

The Panel (agreed to and used the following definitions to develop the goals, objectives, and strategies:

**Goals:** the final outcomes desired (e.g. number of casualties). Goals must be measurable.

**Objectives:** the interim outcomes desired to achieve the goals. Objectives must be measurable.

**Strategies:** the programs implemented to accomplish our objectives (also referred to as outputs).

Another way of thinking about these terms is:

**Goals:** what do you want to achieve?

**Objectives:** what subject areas do you want to tackle and how will you measure your progress?

**Strategies:** what specific actions are you going to take to achieve your objectives and goals?

### **Second Meeting of the Strategic Planning Panel--October 2005**

At the second meeting in October 2005, the Panel further examined risks and the fundamentals of planning, specifically how the Plan will be measured under the Government Performance and Results Act. The Statistician of the Boating Safety Division, Bruce Schmidt, presented the most recent statistics on boating accidents. The Panel discussed how to prioritize its efforts and found some difficulty agreeing on the best method to do this. The Chairman of the Strategic Planning Panel, Fred Messmann,

led a discussion of the most frequent causes of accidents and what behaviors and conditions lead to these accidents, for example:

**Drowning:** lack of boating safety knowledge, lack of life jackets on board, life jackets not worn, inability to swim, operating in heavy weather, and alcohol/drug abuse.

**Falls Overboard:** overloading, lack of safety knowledge, operator inattention, boat design, weather, and alcohol/drug abuse.

**Collision with Vessel/Collision with Fixed Object (allision):** lack of boating safety knowledge of navigation rules, operator inattention, no proper lookout, and disregard of rules of the road.

The Panel also:

- Drafted a list of objectives, based on risks identified from data in BARD;
- Prioritized the objectives; and
- Completed a working set of objectives by the end of the meeting.

After this meeting, the Panel recognized that its method of calculating the goals was inconsistent with the Coast Guard's Budget in Brief (the annual performance report to the President that outlines the agency's strategic plan, performance results, and budgetary needs). The Panel therefore revised some of its calculations for consistency with the Coast Guard's efforts.

### **Third Meeting of the Strategic Planning Panel--February 2006**

At its third meeting, the Panel developed strategies. Here are some of the subject areas addressed:

- Increase general awareness of boating safety (promote a simple and consistent message similar to "Smokey the Bear" or the "Crash Test Dummies");
- Increase life jacket wear-rates;
- Equate Boating Under the Influence (BUI) to Driving Under the Influence (DUI) or Driving While Intoxicated (DWI);
- Ensure manufacturer compliance with federal regulations (identify and visit manufacturers whose boats are prone to capsizing, flooding, and swamping); and
- Increase frequency and accuracy in reporting of boating accidents.

The Panel developed a list of 95 subject areas; due to time constraints they decided to communicate over the Internet to rank them. Staff from the Boating Safety Division developed a "Strategy Prioritizer," and each panel member ranked the strategies by what would most effectively reduce casualties. Staff tallied the results for discussion at the Panel's next meeting.

### **Fourth Meeting of the Strategic Planning Panel--July 2006**

At the Panel's fourth meeting, they reviewed the list of prioritized strategies. The Panel winnowed the list of strategies from 95 to 59 (many overlapping concepts were merged). Once comfortable with the framework of the Plan, to ensure the goals, objectives, and

strategies were logically-organized and clear, they reviewed, reorganized, and honed the language. They also updated the mission statement of the National RBS Program. As the end of the meeting drew near, Chairman Muldoon of NBSAC, Chairman Messmann of the Strategic Planning Panel, and all Panel members agreed on the final concepts in the Plan. That said, Panel members felt they could further improve the flow of the Plan and agreed to share revisions over the Internet. After the meeting, the Panel continued to revise the Plan via e-mail, and in October 2006, Chairman Messmann presented the Plan to NBSAC, who voted unanimously in support of the Plan.

### **Signing of the Strategic Plan --March 2007**

At the International Boating and Water Safety Summit in San Antonio, Texas, representatives of many boating safety partner organizations signed the Strategic Plan thus putting it into effect.

After you review the Plan below, please take special note of the 'Future Steps' and the 'Challenge' to help implement these strategies to decrease recreational boating casualties.



# The Strategic Plan of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program 2007-2011

## Performance Goal - Reduce Casualties

Reduce recreational boating casualties as illustrated in the following table through FY 2011:

| CALENDAR YEAR | NUMBER OF INJURIES | NUMBER OF DEATHS | TOTAL CASUALTIES |
|---------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 2007          | 3288               | 671              | 3959             |
| 2008          | 3150               | 655              | 3805             |
|               |                    |                  |                  |
| FISCAL YEAR   | NUMBER OF INJURIES | NUMBER OF DEATHS | TOTAL CASUALTIES |
| 2009          | 3585               | 685              | 4270             |
| 2010          | 3492               | 675              | 4166             |
| 2011          | 3406               | 659              | 4065             |

For our goals after the year 2008, we revised our calculations for two reasons: (1) To be consistent with Coast Guard reporting requirements via the Budget in Brief and the Posture Statement (from 2009 forward we calculated the number of casualties using a five-year average based on the federal fiscal year); (2) To reflect more conservative targets because lifejacket wear-rates have not increased as quickly as expected.

## **Sub-Tier Goal 1. Reduce Five-Year Average Annual Deaths**

Reduce the five-year average of recreational boating deaths as illustrated in the following table through FY 2011:

| CALENDAR YEAR | NUMBER OF DEATHS |
|---------------|------------------|
| 2007          | 671              |
| 2008          | 655              |
|               |                  |
| FISCAL YEAR   | NUMBER OF DEATHS |
| 2009          | 685              |
| 2010          | 675              |
| 2011          | 659              |

After the year 2008, we revised our calculations for two reasons: (1) To be consistent with Coast Guard reporting requirements via the Budget in Brief and the Posture Statement (from 2009 forward we calculated the number of casualties using a five-year average based on the federal fiscal year); (2) To reflect more conservative targets because lifejacket wear-rates have not increased as quickly as expected.

## **Sub-Tier Goal 2. Reduce Five-Year Average Annual Injuries**

Reduce recreational boating accident injuries as illustrated in the following table through FY 2011:

| CALENDAR YEAR | NUMBER OF INJURIES |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 2007          | 3288               |
| 2008          | 3150               |
|               |                    |
| FISCAL YEAR   | NUMBER OF INJURIES |
| 2009          | 3585               |
| 2010          | 3492               |
| 2011          | 3406               |

After the year 2008, we revised our calculations for two reasons: (1) To be consistent with Coast Guard reporting requirements via the Budget in Brief and the Posture Statement (from 2009 forward we calculated the number of casualties using a five-year average based on the federal fiscal year); (2) To reflect more conservative targets because lifejacket wear-rates have not increased as quickly as expected.

## Objectives and Strategies to Meet the Performance Goal and Sub-Tier Goals 1 & 2:

### Objective 1. Safety Education Successful Course Completions

Create a database to track the number of National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA)-approved boating safety education successful course completions issued annually. This information will be compiled on a State-by-State basis. The United States Coast Guard (USCG) will compile available historical data about NASBLA-approved boating safety education successful course completions.

|                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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| <p>► “Successful Course Completion” is defined as one student/graduate successfully completing a recognized course of study or test that is NASBLA-approved/USCG recognized.</p> | <p><b>Strategy 1.1- Track the Number of Successful Course Completions-NASBLA</b><br/>All boating safety course providers, who issue NASBLA-approved boating safety education successful course completions, will report the number of successful course completions issued per fiscal-year to the Boating Law Administrator of that State or Territory.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 1.2- Track the Number of Successful Course Completions -USCG</b><br/>States and Territories will report to the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), on a fiscal-year basis, the total number of NASBLA-approved boating safety education successful course completions issued, as part of the Performance Report Part II reporting requirements.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 1.3- Provide Number of Successful Course Completions -Historical Data</b><br/>States or Territories that have historical data on the number of NASBLA-approved boating safety education successful course completions issued prior to 2007 will provide the numbers to USCG.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 1.4- Compare Effectiveness of Mandatory vs. Voluntary Education</b><br/>Conduct surveys to compare the effectiveness of State mandated vs. voluntary boater education programs. Surveys will be distributed (via e-mail) within 12 months of course completion to determine what behaviors the course graduates exhibit. Surveys will be used for both NASBLA course graduates and skills-based course graduates to compare net change of behavior.</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

*The Panel identified a number of proposed strategies that did not find a place in this draft of the Plan, so we captured them in this column for future consideration under ‘Future Ideas’*

**Future Ideas:**

\* Conduct a survey to determine the motivation of course takers. The results will be used to promote boating safety education courses to other boaters.

## Objective 2. Awareness of Safe Boating Practices

Establish a baseline measurement through the National Recreational Boating Survey of the boating public's awareness of safe boating practices, and use that data to establish a target for subsequent years.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <p><b>Future Ideas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Establish baseline measurement through the National Recreational Boating Survey of the boating public's awareness of safe boating practices.</li><li>* Create module to teach people on small boats how to avoid capsizing and how to best handle falls overboard.</li><li>* Promote USCG-approved life jackets in all advertising, media, and outreach campaigns.</li><li>* Target geographic areas to evaluate ability to increase boating safety awareness. Based on this research, develop best marketing practices.</li></ul> | <p><b>Strategy 2.1- National Boating Recreational Survey</b><br/>Conduct a National Recreational Boating Survey in no less than two-year intervals. Include questions to determine what motivates boaters to boat safely, what boating safety campaigns influence them and by what delivery system, and why individuals completed a boating safety instruction course.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 2.2- Develop Branded Messages</b><br/>Develop one branded message for each issue to use for multiple years. These issues include: life jacket wear, alcohol-use, safe personal watercraft (PWC) operation, completing a boating safety course, small boat safety (safe movement of occupants and/or gear), overloading, complying with navigation rules, getting a Vessel Safety Check (VSC), emergency preparedness, etc.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 2.3- Deliver Branded Messages</b><br/>Deliver branded messages via a campaign through mass media that includes television, radio, public service announcements, and posters. Contract national spokes-figures to deliver messages that are likely to elicit human emotions and influence behavior. Test the campaign messages and the type of communications media to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign to increase boating safety awareness on a national scale.<br/>Utilize best marketing practices and research.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 2.3.1- Social Causal Marketing</b><br/>Use multiple social/causal marketing projects designed to influence the behavior of target audiences. Resources will include a professional communications firm, under contract to USCG and grant awards from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund to generate a focus on life jacket wear. USCG will solicit support of key stakeholders, partners, USCG District Offices, the industry, and all other related resources to maximize this effort.</p> <hr/> |
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**Strategy 2.4- Reach Non-English Speaking Segment of the Boating Public**

Address the need to broaden the campaigns to the non-English speaking segment of the boating public.

**Strategy 2.5- Message from Law Enforcement**

Increase the presence of law enforcement officers on the water to act as a deterrent and provide on-the-water messaging to deliver the branded messages.

**Strategy 2.6- Promote Recognition Programs**

Promote and encourage recognition programs for outreach initiatives that demonstrate safe boating practices.



### Objective 3. Advanced Boating Education

Track the number of individuals who: 1. Complete an advanced boating education course and/or, 2. Complete an on-the-water skill-based course of instruction. Use that data to establish a baseline measurement and a target for subsequent years.

► “Successful Course Completion” is defined as one student/graduate successfully completing a recognized course of study or test that is NASBLA-approved/USCG recognized.

#### Future Ideas:

\*Increase the number of boaters who complete an advanced boating education program.

#### Strategy 3.1- Track the Number of Advanced Boating Education Successful Course Completions Through Survey Reporting

Create a database, utilizing the National Recreational Boating Survey, to track the number of advanced boating education courses taken.

#### Strategy 3.2- Track the Number of Successful Course Completions through Voluntary Reporting

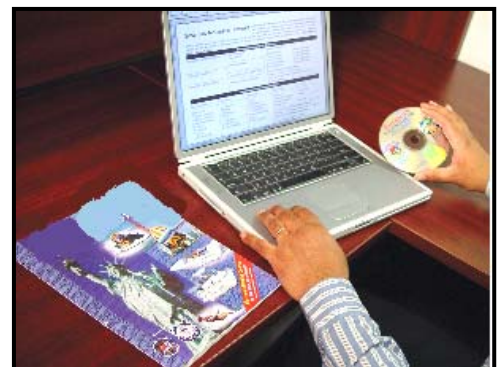
Request providers of advanced boating education to submit, voluntarily, the type and number of advanced boating education courses completed to the USCG, on a fiscal-year basis.

#### Strategy 3.3- Coordinate Guidelines for On-the-Water Training

USCG will coordinate the development of official/recognized guidelines or standards for advanced boating education and on-the-water skills-based training. Disseminate these guidelines to marine retailers and other organizations.

#### Strategy 3.4- Conduct On-the-Water Training–Marine Dealer Certification Board

Encourage the Marine Dealer Certification Board to require dealers to encourage customers to take on-the-water training and a boating safety education course.



## Objective 4. Life Jacket Wear

Starting in FY 2007, increase the observed adult life jacket wear-rate in open motorboats by 3% from the previous year's observed life jacket wear-rate. The FY 2006 wear-rate was 4.5%. The FY 2007 target is 4.63%.



### Future Ideas:

\* Expand the wear-rate study to include Spring and/or Fall days and expand to areas outside of the metropolitan area where the perception of risk is low.



### Strategy 4.1- Observed Life Jacket Wear-Rates

Conduct the National Life Jacket Wear-Rate Observation Study to: (1) measure life jacket wear-rates, (2) analyze study data to determine where the wear-rates are higher than average and why, and (3) expand the national wear rate observation study to include spring and/or fall days, and focus towards geographic areas with high incidence of boating related drownings.

### Strategy 4.2- Establish Life Jacket Wear-Rate Tiger Team

Establish a campaign to increase the life jacket wear-rate by establishing a "Wear-Rate Tiger Team" comprised of the implementing partners.

#### Strategy 4.2.1- Identify At-Risk Populations

Identify and prioritize the at-risk populations using a variety of sources including drowning data captured by the Boating Accident Report Database (BARD) System.

#### Strategy 4.2.2- Identify Decision Influencers

Identify the people, programs, and organizations who influence the decisions made by the at-risk populations.

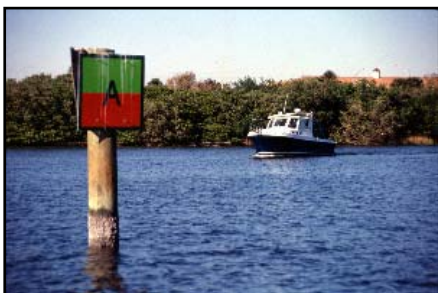
#### Strategy 4.2.3- Encourage Decision Influencers

Encourage the people, programs, and organizations who

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| <p>* Require individuals aboard a vessel at a federal, state or civic marine event to wear a USCG-approved life jacket.</p> <p>* Develop a relationship with insurers to create incentives for life jacket wear. In addition, consider a relationship with manufacturers to standardize the charging cartridge for all inflatables.</p>  | <p>influence decisions made by the at-risk populations to increase their life jacket wear-rates.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 4.3- Vessel Examiners Will Wear Inflatable Life Jackets</b><br/>The USCGAUX and USPS vessel examiners will wear USCG supplied inflatable life jackets during Vessel Safety Checks.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 4.4- Life Jacket Wear During Demonstrations</b><br/>Encourage the Marine Dealer Certification Board to add the wearing of life jackets by retailers during demos and on-water delivery of boats as a component to the Dealer Certification program.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 4.5- Develop Standards, Demonstration Kits, Incentives</b><br/>(1) Develop inflatable life jacket standards for persons under 16 years of age. (2) Develop inflatable life jacket demonstration kits that the public can test without using a cartridge..(3) Lower the cost of life jackets through incentives, sales promotions, jacket trade-ins, etc.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 4.6- Create Incentives for Free Life Jackets</b><br/>Create incentives for retailers and boat manufacturers to provide free life jackets with the sale of new and used boats, particularly life jackets boaters are more likely to wear.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 4.7- Evaluate Willingness to Wear</b><br/>Conduct surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of campaign efforts to understand what triggers an adult's willingness to wear life jackets.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 4.8- Sponsor Life Jacket Loaner Program</b><br/>Challenge boat retailers and marinas to sponsor life jacket loaner programs.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 4.9- Strict Enforcement of Life Jacket Carriage and Wear Laws</b><br/>Encourage States to strictly enforce life jacket carriage and wear laws and employ media messages announcing strict enforcement. Law enforcement will work with prosecutors and the courts to impose stiff penalties for life jacket violations. Encourage Enforcement and Rescue agencies to require their agency personnel to wear life jackets while underway and to complete a NASBLA-approved boating education course before operating any agency vessel.</p> |
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## Objective 5. Operator Compliance—Navigation Rules

Reduce deaths due to navigation rules violations from 24% of total deaths in 2005 to 19% of total deaths in 2011, in equal annual decrements. Establish a measurement, using State accident data, by consolidating five categories of navigation rules compliance (Reckless/Negligent, Excessive Speed, Improper Lookout, Operator Inattention, and Rules of the Road) into a single measure, “Operation of Vessel.”



► Navigation rules composed of five categories: (Reckless/Negligent, Excessive Speed, Improper Lookout, Operator Inattention, and Rules of the Road).



### Future Ideas:

\* Encourage the development of a NASBLA Model Act that would require a navigational violator to attend boating school for certification.

\* Create navigational rule cards for boat shows and marinas to promote navigational knowledge.

### Strategy 5.1- Boating Safety Class

NASBLA will develop a model act that requires a person to attend a boating safety class and provide evidence of successful completion who was in violation of a navigation rule or BUI. Persuade States to adopt this model act.

### Strategy 5.2- Develop Curriculum for Officer Training

Work with NASBLA to develop an officer training curriculum to improve officer knowledge and consistency of identifying/documenting navigation rule violations.

### Strategy 5.3- Focus Curriculum on Navigation Rules

Focus time and attention to navigation rules in boating safety classes and increase navigation rule awareness through other means of boating public outreach.

### Strategy 5.4- Strict Enforcement of Navigation Rules

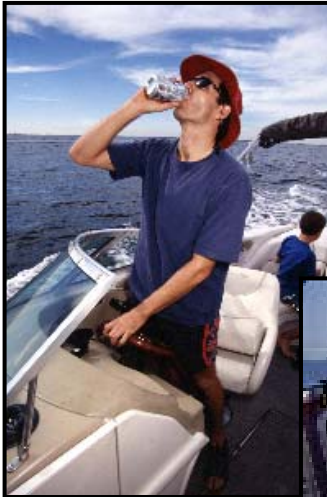
Encourage States to strictly enforce navigation rules and use media messages to announce strict enforcement. Law enforcement (LE) will work with prosecutors and the courts to impose stiff penalties for navigation rule violations. Encourage States to design outreach programs to media and other LE officials (prosecutors, judges) based on data captured in the Performance Part II Report.

### Strategy 5.5- Include Homeland Security Curriculum

Ensure NASBLA includes vessel security zones and other relevant homeland security issues as a component of the boating safety classes' curriculum. This is intended to reduce law enforcement time on security interdiction.

## Objective 6. Boating Under the Influence

Achieve a 5% annual decrease in the number of casualties by CY 2011 from CY 2010 (using a five-year moving average) where the use of alcohol by a boat's occupants was either a direct or indirect cause of the accident. In 2005, there were 504 such casualties (157 deaths and 347 injuries).



### Strategy 6.1- Create Measurement System of Alcohol Use

Create a baseline measurement for tracking trends in alcohol use while boating using the following three data sources: (1) BARD alcohol "caused" accidents, (2) BUI violations from USCG Form 4100 and Performance Report Part II reports from the States, and (3) the National Recreational Boating Survey.

### Strategy 6.2- Increase Officer Training

Increase the level and frequency of officer training to: (1) include "train the trainer" to detect and apprehend those suspected of boating while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, and (2) increase the number of BUI checkpoints to collect and report BUI and safety compliance data in the Performance Report Part II .

### Strategy 6.3- Sobriety Test Validation

Complete a validation study for the field sobriety tests suitable for use in marine law enforcement. Distribute the findings to marine law enforcement officers.

**Strategy 6.4- Link BUI violations with Driver's Licenses**

Encourage NASBLA to work with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) to explore the feasibility and effectiveness of legislation that links BUI violations with a person's motor vehicle driver's license. Explore the feasibility and effectiveness of increasing penalties for BUI violators with high blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels (0.15 or higher).

**Strategy 6.5- Strengthen Law Enforcement Capabilities on the Water**

Encourage the States to increase their law enforcement patrols that target BUI violators through the purchase of: (1) mobile command centers with preliminary and evidentiary breath-testing equipment, and (2) vessels and equipment for officers' use during enforcement details targeting BUI violators.

**Strategy 6.6- Alcohol and Drug Testing for Operators**

Challenge law enforcement officials to test more operators for alcohol/drug use in accident investigations.

**Objective 7. Manufacturer Co**

Decrease the recreational boat manufacturer ratio of discrepancies per inspection by 5% from the previous year's ratio. For FY05, there were 804 inspections resulting in 1192 total discrepancies or  $1192/804 = 1.48$  discrepancies per inspection.

► "Discrepancies" defined as non-compliances with the Federal Safety regulations as recorded on the Factory Visit Inspection Checklist.

#### **Future Ideas:**

\* Based on previous accident information as well as information gathered from boating organizations, insurers and public surveys, identify low-performing manufacturers. Inspect manufacturers on an ongoing basis.

\* Use company discrepancy logs to create a report of the top ten reasons for federal recalls.

#### **Strategy 7.1- Identify Problem Boats/Manufacturers**

Target and identify boats and manufacturers whose boats are involved in accidents in which carbon monoxide (CO), flotation, capacity, or fuel systems are factors. USCG factory visit program will verify non-compliance findings. USCG will implement corrective action.

#### **Strategy 7.2- Test/Target Recreational Boats with Flotation Issues**

Test at least 50 recreational boats annually for compliance with flotation regulations. Target those boats that have a high probability of failure. Inform boat manufacturers that they may voluntarily bring their boats for flotation tests to USCG's facility.

#### **Strategy 7.3- Manufacturer Outreach**

Challenge the USCG to: (1) attend key industry meetings and boat shows; (2) staff a USCG booth at major trade shows; (3) inform manufacturers and State boating law administrators about common discrepancies from the USCG Factory Visit Program that led to federal recalls; (4) help manufacturers to raise recall response rates; and (5) produce at least one Boating Safety Circular annually.



## Objective 8. Operator Compliance—USCG Required Safety Equipment

Create a system to evaluate operator compliance with equipment carriage requirements from the Marine Information for Safety and Law Enforcement (MISLE) system and the Performance Report Part II form. Establish annual targets for compliance.

### Future Ideas:

- \* Simplify and continuously improve the vessel safety check form for USCGAUX and USPS data collection teams. Data could be analyzed to supplement information about boater safety equipment compliance.
- \* Develop safety equipment check sheets for display at point of sale locations.
- \* Develop a training course for retail and point-of-sale clerks.



### **Strategy 8.1- Evaluate Incidents of Non-Compliance with Required Safety Equipment**

Identify the number of incidents of non-compliance with safety equipment carriage requirements to determine trends. Using risk based decision making, analyze accident data, compliance reports, and vessel safety check data from MISLE and the Performance Report Part II. Provide a report on the results to the States.

### **Strategy 8.2- Target Problem Compliance Areas**

Target problem compliance areas, as reported in strategy 8.1, through increased enforcement, education, and public awareness campaigns.

### **Strategy 8.3- Enforcement Patrols**

Increase or restructure enforcement patrols to increase compliance areas identified through the reporting in strategy 8.1.

### **Strategy 8.4- Increase Boaters' Knowledge of Safety Equipment**

Increase boaters' knowledge by providing educational materials regarding required and recommended safety equipment carriage. Include a checklist of required equipment in boat-owners' manuals, posters for display at marine stores, and other points-of-sale that specify requirements and penalties for non-compliance.

### **Strategy 8.5- Inclusion with Sale**

Encourage manufacturers and dealers to include required safety equipment on each boat sold, including life jackets boaters are more likely to wear.



## Objective 9. Boating Accident Reporting

Using 2005 boating accident reports, establish a baseline of BARD data accuracy and completeness for every State. By 2011, ensure that no less than 95% of investigator accident reports submitted annually by each reporting authority are complete and accurate.

### Future Ideas:

\* Add Boating Accident Reporting (BAR) field that specifies whether an accident was “associated with boating.” This addition would seek to capture separately those swimming accidents that are caused from CO poisoning and those that occur while swimming away from a boat.

\* Pursue regulatory framework for accident reporting in conjunction with other Federal agencies.



### **Strategy 9.1- Clarify Accident Reporting Criteria**

Develop clear and concise accident reporting criteria, including definitions, procedures, and guidance. Standardize reporting criteria. Create a category of boating deaths: “associated with boating”. This category would include swimming from vessels underway and commercial white-water accidents.

### **Strategy 9.2- Increase Accident Reporting Reliability**

Increase the reliability of boating accident reporting and data analysis through gap analysis. Issue updated formal policy guidance to determine if an accident is reportable.

### **Strategy 9.3- Improve Accident Reporting Training**

Incorporate lessons learned from gap analysis (see Strategy 9.2) into reporting training, which will increase the frequency and reliability of the accident reports submitted by law enforcement investigators.

### **Strategy 9.4- Provide Reporting Criteria Training**

Provide reporting criteria and procedures training to data entry persons and investigating officers.

### **Strategy 9.5- Pursue MOA with Federal Land Management Agencies**

Pursue a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with all federal land management agencies to ensure proper and timely reporting of reportable accidents to the appropriate State reporting authority.

### **Strategy 9.6- Add Language Barrier Field to BAR**

Add a new BAR data field to the “Contributing Factors” section that captures whether a language barrier contributed to the cause of a boating accident. The new data field can be introduced and data can be gathered following the BARD-Web training provided to the States.

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p><b>Strategy 9.7- Study Human Factors in Boating Accidents</b><br/>Encourage boating accident investigators to populate the human error reporting section of the BARD-Web application. USCG will analyze the data to determine what human factors are involved in accidents and why accidents occur. Use this data to pursue preventive measures.</p> |
|  | <p><b>Strategy 9.8- Link the BARD and Vessel Identification System (VIS)</b><br/>Link the BARD System and VIS so that USCG can quickly identify the frequency of vessel characteristics involved in recreational accidents.</p>                                                                                                                         |
|  | <p><b>Strategy 9.9- Study 12+5 Character Hull Identification Number (HIN)</b><br/>Study potential benefits of the proposed 12+5 character HIN to improve data accuracy.</p>                                                                                                                                                                             |



## Objective 10- Determine Participation Denominator

Determine a participation denominator of recreational boaters on the water to allow USCG to determine levels of risk for death, injury, or property damage.

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p><b>Strategy 10.1- Measure Boating Participation Days</b><br/>To measure boating participation days, use the National Survey of Recreation in Environment (NSRE) as a current baseline for boating participation days established as a denominator of 10 million participation days.</p> |
|  | <p><b>Strategy 10.2- Determine Exposure Hours</b><br/>To determine exposure hours, use the National Recreational Boating Survey and explore other sources and instruments.</p>                                                                                                             |

### Sub-tier Goal 3. Measuring Effectiveness

Evaluate the impact of grant programs in achieving the goals of the Strategic Plan.

#### Objective and Strategies to Meet Sub-Tier Goal 3:

##### Objective 1. Review Annual Reports from Grants

The Strategic Planning Subcommittee of NBSAC will review annual reports from grant recipients to ensure the strategic plan objectives are being met and make recommendations to NBSAC.

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p><b>Strategy 1.1 Review Performance Report Part II</b><br/>The Coast Guard will provide NBSAC with the performance measures as reported by the States in the Performance Report Part II for review. NBSAC will make recommendations to USCG for improvements and commendations for successful programs.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Strategy 1.2 Review Non-Profit Grants</b><br/>The Coast Guard will provide NBSAC with final reports submitted by the non-profit grant recipients for review. NBSAC will make recommendations to USCG for improvements to the programs.</p> |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

| RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY (RBS) PROGRAM                   |                           |                                                                    |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Performance Report Part II - Statistical Data               |                           |                                                                    |          |
| (Used to report Activities funded with RBS Program Dollars) |                           |                                                                    |          |
| STATE OF _____                                              |                           | Note: Definitions are provided as Attachment A to the report form. |          |
| For the Period October 1, _____ to September 30, _____      |                           | All fields are required unless otherwise noted.                    |          |
| LAW ENFORCEMENT (LE)/SEARCH & RESCUE (SAR)                  |                           |                                                                    |          |
| 1. State or Local - Commissioned or Sworn RBS Officers      |                           |                                                                    |          |
| a. RBS Full Time                                            | b. RBS Part Time/Seasonal | c. RBS Other                                                       |          |
| 1) Primary _____                                            | 1) Primary _____          | 1) Primary _____                                                   |          |
| 2) Secondary _____                                          | 2) Secondary _____        | 2) Secondary _____                                                 |          |
| 2. Total RBS LE/SAR Hours _____                             |                           |                                                                    |          |
| 3. On-the-Water RBS Hours _____                             |                           |                                                                    |          |
| 4. RBS Enforcement Actions                                  |                           |                                                                    |          |
|                                                             |                           | Citations/<br>Arrests                                              | Warnings |
| a. Safety Equipment Carriage Requirements                   |                           |                                                                    |          |
| Wearable PFDs _____                                         |                           | _____                                                              | _____    |
| Type IV PFD _____                                           |                           | _____                                                              | _____    |
| Fire Extinguisher _____                                     |                           | _____                                                              | _____    |
| Visual Distress Signals _____                               |                           | _____                                                              | _____    |
| Sound Producing Device _____                                |                           | _____                                                              | _____    |
| b. BUI/OUI _____                                            |                           | _____                                                              | _____    |
| c. Careless/Negligent/Reckless Operation _____              |                           | _____                                                              | _____    |
| d. Navigation Rules _____                                   |                           | _____                                                              | _____    |
| e. Mandatory PFD Wear _____                                 |                           | _____                                                              | _____    |
| f. Registration/Numbering Violations _____                  |                           | _____                                                              | _____    |

## **Future Steps**

To continue to support our Strategic Planning process into the future, members of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program are taking five new steps.

### **1. NBSAC Created New Strategic Planning Subcommittee**

NBSAC revised its committee structure to create a Strategic Planning Subcommittee that will carry on the work started by the Strategic Planning Panel. The Strategic Planning Subcommittee joins NBSAC's two existing subcommittees: Boats and Associated Equipment and Prevention through People. The Subcommittee will use the following tools to measure its progress: the Performance Report Part II from each State; reports on the grants of the national nonprofit public service organizations, the National Recreational Boating Survey, and BARD.

### **2. Award of Grants for National Nonprofit Public Service Organizations tied to the Strategic Plan**

The Coast Guard's Boating Safety Division has evolved the grant evaluation process for national nonprofit public service organizations. Grant applicants are strongly encouraged to tie their projects to specific objectives or strategies of the Strategic Plan and to have measurements of effectiveness for each project.

### **3. Implementation Plan**

For each objective, the Chairman of NBSAC, James Muldoon, established NBSAC member Working Groups comprised of a chairperson and two members. The Boating Safety Division assigned a staff contact for each working group. The Working Group members will connect with the RBS partners to implement each of the objectives and strategies and will attempt to develop performance measures

### **4. National Recreational Boating Survey**

The Coast Guard's Boating Safety Division is working with two panels of boating safety experts to develop the National Recreational Boating Survey. The results of the Survey should provide scientific information about boaters' behavior on the water to compare to fatality and injury data to identify the greatest risks. The Survey will be administered every two years.

### **5. Assess and Update Plan Every Five Years**

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed every five years to:

- Determine our progress. (Are we meeting our goals?)
- Analyze our measurements. (Are we measuring the right things? Can we measure them better?)
- Consider new strategies. (What new actions can we take to decrease deaths and injuries?)

**Challenge to Our RBS Partners and the Boating Public**

What will you do to decrease recreational casualties?

Will you ensure your friends and families get boating safety education? Will you ensure all persons on board vessels wear life jackets and drink responsibly? Will you be sure all required safety gear is on board before you get underway?

If your organization would like to show its support by signing the Strategic Plan, helping implement these strategies, or if you have feedback or questions about this Report, please contact:

Strategic Plan

Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety (CG-542)

Boating Safety Division (CG-5422)

U.S. Coast Guard

2100 Second St. S.W.

Washington, DC 20593

phone: 202-372-1062

fax: (202) 372-1933

You can find this Report and other strategic planning-related documents on our website at [www.uscgboating.org](http://www.uscgboating.org).

## Appendix I. Participants

The following persons helped create this Strategic Plan.

|                                                               |                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bob Askew, Personal Flotation Device Manufacturer Association | Dave Marlow, Brunswick Boat Group                                                     |
| Carolyn Belmore, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary                   | Dan Maxim, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary                                                 |
| Alfonso Campos, Boating Law Administrator, Texas              | Warren McAdams, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary                                            |
| Ed Carter, Boating Law Administrator, Tennessee               | Bernice McArdle, National Marine Manufacturers Association                            |
| Virgil Chambers, National Safe Boating Council                | Larry Meddock, Water Sports Industry Association                                      |
| Peter Chisholm, Mercury Marine                                | Fred Messmann, Boating Law Administrator, Nevada, (Chair of Strategic Planning Panel) |
| Bob David, National Boating Federation                        | Richard Moore, Boating Law Administrator, Florida                                     |
| Pam Dillon, American Canoe Association                        | Jim Muldoon, US Sailing (Chair of NBSAC)                                              |
| Cecilia Duer, National Water Safety Congress                  | Penny Orth, National Boating Federation                                               |
| Randy Edwards, Boating Law Administrator, Iowa                | Bruce Rowe, Forever Resorts                                                           |
| John Fetterman, Boating Law Administrator, Maine              | Cindy Squires, National Marine Manufacturers Association                              |
| Monita Fontaine, National Marine Manufacturers Association    | Bill Stump, US Sailing                                                                |
| Fernando Garcia, Bombardier Recreational Products             | Scott Swanby, ACR Electronics, Inc                                                    |
| Maureen Healey, Personal Watercraft Industry Association      | Ray Tsuneyoshi, Boating Law Administrator, California                                 |
| Bill Husted, U.S. Power Squadrons                             | Brenda Warren, Army Corps of Engineers                                                |
| Larry Innis, Marine Retailers Association of America          | Ruth Wood, BoatU.S. Foundation                                                        |
| Jim Manues, member of boating public                          | Ted Woolley, member of boating public, (former Boating Law Administrator, Utah)       |

The following personnel from the U.S. Coast Guard's Boating Safety Division (formerly Office of Boating Safety) participated in the development of the Strategic Plan: William (Vann) Burgess, Phil Cappel, Jeff Hoedt, Jeff Ludwig, John Malatak, Barry Nobles, Audrey Pickup, Bruce Schmidt, and Jeanne Timmons.

In addition, support during this process was provided by Potomac Management Group, Inc, especially Elizabeth Cusumano, Susan Tomczuk, and Rachel Warner.

## Appendix II. Strategic Planning Timeline

| OCTOBER<br>2004                                                                                                                                  | FEBRUARY<br>2005                                                                                                                                            | APRIL<br>2005                    | OCTOBER<br>2005                                                                                                                                                                               | NOVEMBER<br>2005          | FEBRUARY<br>2006                                                                                  | JULY<br>2006                                                       | OCTOBER<br>2006                                            | MARCH<br>2007                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NBSAC chartered the Strategic Planning Panel</li> <li>Formerly the “Blue Ribbon (Goals) Panel”</li> </ul> | First meeting: Strategic Planning Panel Drafts Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed Performance Goals for National RBS Program</li> </ul> | NBSAC Approves Performance Goals | Second meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>USCG Chief of Staff Approves Performance Goals</li> <li>Strategic Planning Panel Drafts Objectives for National RBS Program</li> </ul> | NBSAC Approves Objectives | Third meeting: Strategic Planning Panel Begins Development of Strategies for National RBS Program | Fourth meeting: Strategic Planning Panel Finalizes the strategies. | NBSAC endorses Strategic Plan for the National RBS Program | National RBS Program is Signed in San Antonio, TX at the IBWSS. |

### **Appendix III. Acronyms**

|        |                                                          |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| BAC    | Blood Alcohol Concentration                              |
| BARD   | Boating Accident Report Database                         |
| BUI    | Boating Under the Influence                              |
| CO     | Carbon Monoxide                                          |
| DUI    | Driving Under the Influence                              |
| DWI    | Driving While Intoxicated                                |
| GPRA   | Government Performance and Results Act                   |
| HIN    | Hull Identification Number                               |
| LE     | Law Enforcement                                          |
| MISLE  | Marine Information for Safety and Law Enforcement        |
| MOA    | Memorandum of Agreement                                  |
| NASBLA | National Association of State Boating Law Administrators |
| NBSAC  | National Boating Safety Advisory Council                 |
| NHTSA  | National Highway Traffic Safety Administration           |
| NSRE   | National Survey of Recreation in Environment             |
| NTSB   | National Transportation Safety Board                     |
| PWC    | Personal Watercraft                                      |
| RBS    | Recreational Boating Safety                              |
| USC    | United States Code                                       |
| USCG   | United States Coast Guard                                |
| VIS    | Vessel Identification System                             |
| VSC    | Vessel Safety Check                                      |