



B.O.A.T.S. International Inc.

Boat Operations And Training Standards

"Performance Improvement through Education and Awareness..."

6000 North Hwy 1 / P.O. Box 327, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Phone: (707) 217-6047

boats.jjfitzgerald@gmail.com

February 6th, 2013

To: James Scholfield, Eric Rienecher, Eric Fitzgerald, Chris Wahl,
Kim Reisenbichler, Paul Coenen, Thomas Hoover, Gene Massion,
Francois Cazenave Thom Maughan, Lynne Christianson, Steve Haddock

From: James J. Fitzgerald, B.O.A.T.S. International, Inc.

Subj: 2013- MBARI Motorboat Operator Training Course, Moss Landing, CA

Greetings MBARI Boaters! Thank you for your participation during last weeks' Motorboat Operator Training Course (MOTC) in Moss Landing, CA. I hope you all enjoyed your weekend and had some time to reflect on the course and our week together. Your endurance and enthusiasm was a key element to the course quality during some long days in the field and absorbing a large amount of information. Marti and I were very impressed with the amount of student experience and the quality of feedback you provided about our instruction and the course. I'm glad that we also had such wonderful weather during the field lectures and time on the water.

You will be happy to know that your comments will be put to good use in preparation for future classes and during the on-going course modifications that are always in progress. Hopefully you apply a similar de-brief and feedback process to keep your small boat operations current and relevant to the challenges you encounter in the field. Based on our experiences working with your crews, it was evident that there were some good learning challenges given the range of participant experience. Your individual participation and personal backgrounds created a productive and vibrant learning environment, each of you made it possible for the course to continue on such a high note. Great Job and Thanks to Everyone!

It was very rewarding to hear that each of you felt your time spent during the course was productive and that you all departed with a greater knowledge of the boating laws and many new skills that will be useful in your work. It was also clear that you felt that you could use more helm time to expand your skill-sets and strengthen your abilities;

this is a very important aspect of boating that we hope you pursue within your departmental programs to increase your boating talents, and specifically on the R/V Paragon. The course provided you with a solid operational foundation of best practices and an increased awareness for the federal and state boating regulations. It is up to YOU to continue to build upon your individual boating experiences. Be sure that you include your supervisors and managers as you formalize your professional boating protocols necessary for the safe operation of the vessels in your specific areas of work. Please continue to share any additional thoughts or ideas that you believe would benefit your co-workers and future participants as well as the instructors.

As you take the skills and knowledge from the course to the water to perform your work it is important to remember that this course was a basic introductory curriculum to boat operations. There are many possibilities regarding boat types and specialty operations, the best way to gain proficiency and mastery involving boats is to stay current with your reference materials, gather experience through continued training, practice, and documentation, you can formalize standard operating procedures (SOP's) for your actual operational evolutions.

Your performance during the course provides you with a good start for expanding and building best practices for your individual skills and organizational programs. I encourage you to stay involved and make a difference. It has been my experience that we can often make our boat work safer and more productive by keeping management informed and through the sharing of best practices from our individual experiences.

Your personal preparations, crew communications, and the ability to maintain situational awareness will be instrumental in the types of experiences you gain. This probably was reinforced during the rescue drills and should be factored into your risk assessment and management principles. Especially when working around recreational boaters or at the boat ramp. It is crucial that you involve your colleagues and supervisors when embarking on new or unfamiliar assignments to ensure that you have the support and necessary equipment to complete the mission in a *safe, legal and effective* manner.

Remember to do your homework before you launch. Study your areas of operation, review maps and charts of the areas, consult with the local U.S. Coast Guard, or Monterey area authorities, and seek out local knowledge from resident experts when venturing into new or unfamiliar waters, be it inland, coastal or offshore.

Some of you asked for information regarding sources of supply for rescue and survival systems equipment. Below are some links for some of the gear used during the course. We are not endorsing any particular vendor over another and we encourage you to lean towards the commercial grade equipment versus the recreational grade for increased durability and higher performance characteristics. It is important that you inspect and test your equipment before placing it into operational service. Copies of the forms that we used in class are attached to the email and can be edited for your area and types of boats. Please send us an email request if we can be of further assistance, we are happy to help support individual boating programs.

Rescue and Survival Equipment: www.lifesavingsystems.com

The “Rescue Cargo Net” can be found at: www.nrsweb.com

James Fitzgerald: Boats.jjfitzgerald@gmail.com

Ramon Martinez: Boats.marti@gmail.com

The final approval for your operator certification rests with your individual supervisors and managers at your work station. Work closely with Eric Fitzgerald and Jared Figurski to gain more helm time and using the vessels’ navigational systems and performing over the side evolutions. Make sure you take the time to review your materials and help contribute to your individual agency boating policy.

If you are uncomfortable taking on the role of “Operator” for certain evolutions, or a specific vessel, inform your supervisor, take the time to train and practice or act as crew until you are confident in your abilities, don’t put yourself or others at risk if you don’t feel prepared. **Remember: as the operator you and the owner assume complete and full responsibility for the crew and the safe operation and navigation of the vessel.** As a member of the boat crew you can also appreciate the responsibilities of the boat operator and you now have the crew skills to contribute to their success and assist with the on the job training of others.

With the completion of this course you have fulfilled the U.S. Department of Interior requirements for basic vessel operation. Provide a copy of the MOTC and CA Department of Boating and Waterways certificates to your training administrator for your employee records. The certificates may also qualify you for a discount with your insurance company for your personally owned boats.

I hope to have an opportunity to work with you again and thoroughly enjoyed meeting each of you. Thank you for the active participation and the great learning that took place during our time together.

We look forward to hearing from you. Remember; “Helm before Throttle”; know where you are going before you try to get there, and most importantly recognize when not to go boating!

CONGRATULATIONS on your boating & training accomplishments!

Sincerely,

James J. Fitzgerald
President, B.O.A.T.S. International Inc.
(707) 217-6047
boats.jjfitzgerald@gmail.com

Cc: Ramon Martinez, Steve Etchemendy, Jared Figurski, Steve Clabuesch