
USCG AUXILIARY PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST I (AUXPA1)



PERFORMANCE QUALIFICATION SYSTEM (PQS) STUDY GUIDE

Revised February 2016

Command Area of Responsibility (AOR)

01 Describe your command's AOR.

02 Comment on the working relationship with other agencies in your Area of Responsibility.

03 Detail the recall procedures at your command.

As public affairs officers, the boating public will contact us regarding recalls (example life jackets etc.) and we should be able to produce the latest recall notices and processes.

Public Information and ICS (Incident Command System)

04 In an emergency incident context, what is public information?

To communicate timely, accurate and accessible information on the incident's cause, size and current situation. Public information must be coordinated across jurisdictions, and among Federal, State, tribal and local government agencies.

05 What advantages does an integrated public information structure offer?

Ensures that lifesaving measures, evacuation routes, threat and alert systems, and other public safety information is communicated in a timely, consistent manner.

06 What is the Incident Command System (ICS)?

- Standardized management tool for meeting the demands of large or small emergency (or non-emergency) situations.
- A key component of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- May be used for planned event, natural disasters, and acts of terrorism.
- Represents "best practices" and has become the standard for emergency management nationwide.

07 Outline the five functions ICS is designed to accomplish.

- Meet the needs of incidents of any size.
- Allow personnel from various agencies to meld into a common management structure.
- Provide logistical and administrative support to operational staff.
- Be cost effective by avoiding duplication of effort.
- Can be applied from the time an incident occurs until the requirement for management and operations no longer exist.

Joint Information Center

08 Describe a Joint Information Center and its purpose.

A centralized location where public information personnel from various agencies work together to provide critical emergency information as quickly as possible to the news media and general public.

The JIC is a communications hub that expedites the flow of information and allows multiple agencies to “speak with one voice” during an emergency. Using a JIC also permits more accurate tracking of records and information, which improves post-incident assessments. These assessments are used to improve crisis communication during future incidents.

09 How is a JIC generally organized?

Centralized structure with a lead for each functional area. The lead Public Information Officer (PIO) and JIC Manager are part of the Command Staff and oversee media relations, research and writing, and special projects.

10 Explain the Public Information Officer’s role in the ICS Command Staff hierarchy.

Responsible for interfacing with the media, public or other agencies who seek information directly from the incident or event. Coordinates all JIC public information activities. There is only one PIO per incident, and he or she may have assistants. As a member of the Command Staff, the PIO reports directly to the Incident Commander.

11 How can you prepare for JIC participation?

Build relationships with other response agencies now. Talk about how a JIC will work in your area and how overall JIC functions and flow will help communication efforts, and who can be called to work in a JIC.

Media Policy

12 What is the Coast Guard’s established media policy?

Maximum disclosure with minimum delay.

13 Why is it important not to withhold information or say “no comment”?

Credibility is at stake. Unless the information is prohibited from release by FOIA or because it would violate a member’s privacy (see next question), do not hold back.

A “no comment” response gives the appearance that you are hiding something. Reporters may suspect a cover-up and go on the attack.

14 What are some general Do's and Do Not's in connecting with the media?

DO:

- Get the facts, get them right, and get them out.
- Know each medium and its audience. Be aware of time or space limitations, deadlines or special requirements.
- Know the people who work in your local media.
- Treat reporters as you would like to be treated.
- Tell the truth.
- Be available for press queries.
- Have fact sheets and background information on your unit, the Coast Guard and the Auxiliary.
- During a query or interview, tell reporters up front if you cannot comment on a particular subject.
- If you must refer a reporter to another office or source, provide the phone number and e-mail address.

DO NOT:

- Ask a reporter to kill a story.
- Beg for coverage.
- Grant exclusives or be partial to a media representative.
- Be a publicity hound.
- Speculate.
- Lie to the media or the public.
- Release information to a reporter that was given to you by another reporter.
- Ask news people to slant their copy, withhold information or do favors.

15 Under the Privacy Act, what information concerning an individual should not be released?

The idea is to protect individuals from invasions of privacy through release of information considered “privileged.” Basically privileged information includes all actions not related to performance of official duties (with the exception of acts that break the law). Do not release the following:

- Social Security Number
- Home address or phone numbers.
- Medical history.
- Other personal information.

16 Explain how the acronym SAPP is a helpful guide for releasing information.

SAPP stands for Security, Accuracy, Policy and Propriety.

- Information designation with a Security classification of CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET or TOP SECRET cannot be released.

For Official Use Only (FOUO) is not a security classification level, but a designation that means the information requires special handling and is typically not included in a news release or media interview.

- Check information for Accuracy prior to release. Stick to the facts and avoid speculation.
- Information for release cannot violate Coast Guard Policy.
- All information for release should meet acceptable standards of Propriety.

17 Discuss the terms “libel” and “slander.”

Libel is untrue or defamatory information that is written, printed or broadcast. Slander is spoken defamation.

Since both are based on state (not Federal) law, definitions can vary by state. In general, both can injure the reputation of an individual, company or organization.

18 Describe four types of “difficult” media questions you may encounter during a crisis situation.

- Hypothetical question (Do not speculate; label question as hypothetical and reiterate what your unit did).
- Bait question (Don’t get snared by any provocation—if the Coast Guard is called “insensitive,” for example, refute the word without repeating it).
- Question for another agency (Refer to appropriate authority. Speak only about what your unit has done or is doing).
- Circumstance you haven’t seen or heard (Do not respond to something you know nothing about).

19 How do you handle the same unanswerable question asked over and over?

Politely, but firmly signal that you’re not going to give in. Repeat your Command Message and state policy.

20 For “bad news” stories, you should develop at least three positive and neutral key messages based on what themes?

- Empathy - Current response - Future action

Force Multiplier for Team Coast Guard

21 Name Coast Guard enlisted personnel grade structure from lowest to highest.

Seaman Recruit (SR)

E-1



Seaman Apprentice (SA)

E-2



Seaman (SN)

E-3



Petty Officer Third Class (PO3)

E-4



Petty Officer Second Class (PO2)

E-5



Petty Officer First Class (PO1)

E-6



Chief Petty Officer (CPO)

E-7



Senior Chief Petty Officer (SCPO)
E-8



Master Chief Petty Officer (MCPO)
E-9



Command Master Chief Petty Officer (CMC)
E-9



***Gold Stars and Gold Shield denotes**
Area CMC/MCPOCG in Coast
Guard Reserve

Master Chief Petty Officer of the
Coast Guard
E-9



22 Repeat for warrant officers and commissioned officers.

**Chief Warrant Officer 2
(CWO-2) W-2**



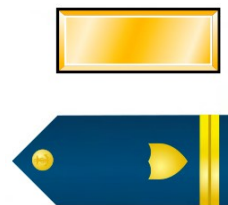
**Chief Warrant Officer 3
(CWO-3) W-3**



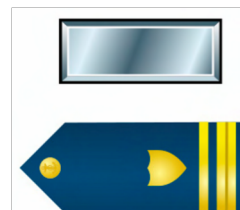
**Chief Warrant Officer 4
(CWO-4) W-4**



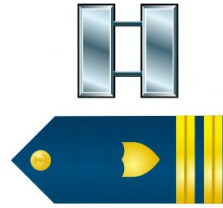
**Ensign (ENS)
O-1**



**Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG)
O-2**



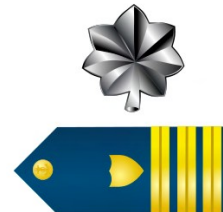
Lieutenant (LT)
O-3



Lieutenant Commander (LCDR)
O-4



Commander (CDR)
O-5



Captain (CAPT)
O-6



Rear Admiral (lower half) (RDML)
O-7



Rear Admiral (upper half) (RADM)
O-8



Vice Admiral (VADM)
O-9



Admiral (ADM)
O-10



23 *Recite the Phonetic Alphabet. Spell your name using Phonetic Alphabet.
How do you pronounce Phonetic Numerals?*

<i>Alpha</i>	<i>November</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Spoken As</i>
<i>Bravo</i>	<i>Oscar</i>	0	<i>ZEE-RO</i>
<i>Charlie</i>	<i>Papa</i>	1	<i>WUN</i>
<i>Delta</i>	<i>Quebec</i>	2	<i>TOO</i>
<i>Echo</i>	<i>Romeo</i>	3	<i>TREE</i>
<i>Foxtrot</i>	<i>Sierra</i>	4	<i>FOW-ER</i>
<i>Golf</i>	<i>Tango</i>	5	<i>FIFE</i>
<i>Hotel</i>	<i>Uniform</i>	6	<i>SIX</i>
<i>India</i>	<i>Victory</i>	7	<i>SEV-EN</i>
<i>Juliet</i>	<i>Whiskey</i>	8	<i>AIT</i>
<i>Kilo</i>	<i>X-ray</i>	9	<i>NIN-ER</i>
<i>Lima</i>	<i>Yankee</i>		
<i>Mike</i>	<i>Zulu</i>		

24 USCG Core Values should underscore everything we do in support of the Coast Guard. What are they?

Honor

Integrity is our standard. We demonstrate uncompromising ethical conduct and moral behavior in all of our personal actions.

Respect

We value our diverse work force. We treat each other with fairness, dignity, and compassion. We work as a team.

Devotion to Duty

We are professionals, military and civilian, who seek responsibility, accept accountability, and are committed to the successful achievement of our organizational goals. We serve with pride.

25 Contact and introduce yourself to active duty public affairs staff within your district.