


<p style="text-align: center;">STRATFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT</p> 	Type of Directive: Policy and Procedure	Updated: 02-08-2023
	Title: Marine Patrol Operations	No. 9.2
	Issuing Authority: Chief Joseph McNeil	Issued: 03-19-2021
	Reference: Tier One Accreditation 1.7.9	

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish and maintain safe and effective marine operations by the marine division of the Stratford Police Department.

POLICY:

It shall be the policy of the Stratford Police Department to follow the procedures as set forth below as they pertain to operation and maintenance of the marine unit.

PRICEDURE:

Qualifications

The officers of the marine division must posses the following minimum qualifications:

- Full-time police officer with the Stratford Police Department; and
- Graduate of an academy approved by the Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council; and
- Any other training courses relative to marine operations required by the training division of the Stratford Police Department.

In addition to the above qualifications members of the marine division must be able to adequately demonstrate proficiency in the following skill areas:

- The ability to swim in water; and
- Familiarity with basic motorized marine vessel operation in both calm and adverse weather/sea conditions, as well as low light or low visibility conditions; and
- Familiarity with the waters of the Housatonic River and the Long Island sound; and
- Familiarity with local, state, and federal boating rules and regulation, laws, and ordinances.
- American Red Cross first aid course or equivalent as determined by the training division; and

- American Red Cross CPR for the professional rescuer or equivalent as determined by the training division.

The training division commander shall be responsible for determining all marine members' current level of preparedness for marine duty through evaluating the results of each member's proficiency tests in all of the above listed skill areas, notwithstanding the minimum qualifications. Any member that is in need of refresher training in these skill areas shall complete such refresher training prior to active duty on a marine vessel. The training division shall maintain documentation supporting such refresher training.

Uniform

Members of the marine division during marine duty shall wear the uniform described below:

- Baseball cap, Navy blue, with "STRATFORD POLICE" insignia on front panel
- Short sleeve shirt, Navy blue, with the marine unit patches on both sleeves; reflective "STRATFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT" badge patch of soft material; reflective "POLICE" patch of soft material across the back of the shirt
- BDU style trousers, Navy blue
- BDU style shorts, Navy blue
- Ankle socks, white, if needed
- Boat style shoes or boat style sneakers, color tan or brown any shade light through dark
- Long sleeve shirt, Navy blue, with the marine unit patches on both sleeves; reflective "STRATFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT" badge patch of soft material; reflective "POLICE" patch of soft material across the back of the shirt
- Long sleeve three quarter zip sweatshirt, Navy blue, with the marine unit patches on both sleeves; reflective "STRATFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT" badge patch of soft material; reflective "POLICE" patch of soft material across the back of the shirt
- Nylon duty belt, black. Minimum equipment maintained on the duty belt shall be:
 - One (1) nylon handcuff case with folding cover, Velcro secured; black
 - One (1) pair of police approved metal handcuffs
 - One (1) nylon holster designed for the duty weapon carried; shall not be of the swivel, tie down, low slung, cross draw, or any other novelty style or securing device for either the weapon or the holster; black
 - One (1) nylon magazine pouch containing two magazine slots; black
 - One (1) knife scabbard with sharpened metal knife; single cutting edge no longer than 4 inches.

- Duty weapon shall be a sidearm as authorized by the department firearms policy for use while on duty.

Equipment

All equipment shall be provided by the department. An inventory of all equipment assigned to an officer shall be maintained by the Unit Supervisor. All equipment will be serviced annually. Each officer is responsible to ensure his or her equipment is in good working order and if it is not, he or she shall immediately notify the Marine Unit Leader or Unit Supervisor.

Geographical Jurisdiction

Town of Stratford's waterways: Housatonic River bordered on the north by the Town of Shelton and on the east by the City of Milford; Long Island Sound bordered on the west by the City of Bridgeport, and on the East by the City of Milford. The area of open water within the Long Island marked and designated as "middle ground" shall be this department's southern patrol border between Bridgeport and Milford.

During the boating season, or other periods of operation designated by the Chief of Police, the members of the marine division shall patrol the waterways within the boundaries described above, and may assist area police departments and agencies on request. The Chief of Police shall designate the hours of operation each season.

Command

The traffic division commander shall supervise the marine division members and its operations.

The senior marine member onboard a police vessel shall be responsible for command of that vessel while underway. All members onboard shall work as a team to facilitate safe and effective marine operations while underway.

The traffic division commander shall be notified as soon as practicable when an incident of significant concern to the public, environment, or marine members arises. Those members responsible for handling the incident shall contact the desk sergeant with the details of the incident. The desk sergeant shall be responsible for forwarding this information through the chain of command and contacting the traffic commander.

Objectives

The primary objective of the marine division shall be to insure the safety of the boating public, which includes:

- Maintain a high degree of visibility
- Investigation of boating accidents and emergencies
- Complaints involving the waterways

- Vessel safety Inspections
- Assisting in search and rescue operations

The secondary objective of the marine division shall be the enforcement of local, state, and federal boating rules and regulation, laws, and ordinances.

The marine division is also responsible for aiding in educating the public with regard to safe boating operations, techniques and laws.

All members of the marine division while on active duty, whether aboard a vessel or ashore, shall pursue these objectives.

General

Prior to the end of any tour of duty by any members of the marine unit, the senior member onboard shall be responsible for ensuring the completion and submission of any paperwork associated with such tour of duty. This would include the marine daily maintenance log maintained on each vessel, and the daily marine division activity sheet. Any member of the marine division on that tour of duty may complete these forms.

During any tour of duty all marine members shall maintain their assigned vessels, as well as themselves, in a state of preparedness to respond to a call for service whether docked or underway. Marine members shall monitor the police and VHF marine radios at all times while on duty unless otherwise directed by a supervisor. The main police frequency shall be monitored on all police radios, and at a minimum channel 16 shall be monitored on all VHF marine radios.

Members shall bring aboard only those personal items reasonably necessary to sustain the comfort and performance of such marine unit member while on duty. No recreational devices shall be brought onboard.

The following paperwork shall be maintained on each police vessel:

- Marine daily maintenance log
- Marine daily activity sheet.
- Town complaint forms
- Vessel safety inspection warning forms
- Infraction and misdemeanor complaint forms
- Boating accident report forms

Medical Treatment

During an emergency that requires medical treatment for any injured party retrieved from a waterway or vessel, all efforts shall be made to transport such injured party to the designated emergency medical rendezvous point, Birdseye Boat Ramp.

Dispatch should be notified of the situation and the intended rendezvous point with EMS. If the transport time involved reaching Birdseye Boat Ramp will delay life saving medical treatment for the victim the senior marine member onboard shall coordinate through police dispatch a closer, more suitable rendezvous point that will provide access for both EMS vehicles and the police vessel.

Vessel

Each police vessel shall have at least two (2) marine division members aboard in order to leave the dock for any reason, including maintenance.

At the beginning of each shift, prior to getting underway, the assigned members of the marine unit for such shift shall inspect all safety equipment of each police vessel to ensure it is functioning properly and is stowed correctly.

Prior to the end of any tour of duty by any members of the marine unit, a written report of any equipment that is missing, damaged, or inoperative shall be completed and forwarded to the traffic commander. This would include any damage to the vessel.

Underway

No person(s) of any age, other than members of the marine division, shall be allowed aboard a police vessel, when in-service, without the permission of the traffic commander. Only during an emergency shall persons other than marine division members be allowed onboard without the permission of the Chief, Deputy Chief or shift commander. Each person allowed onboard during an emergency shall don a wearable personal flotation device approved for such use. This would include officers from other departments and any other emergency personnel aboard.

Approved guests of all ages shall be required to wear a personal flotation device at all times while underway.

Members of the marine unit onboard a police vessel during non-emergency situations while underway shall not be required to wear a personal flotation device unless otherwise required in any section of this policy. However, it is recommended that members wear a personal flotation device at all times while on active duty.

During normal operations while underway all members aboard shall maintain an organized environment, both inside and outside the cabin, with the deck being kept free of any loose items such as ropes, bumpers, or other equipment that could be otherwise stowed properly. The cabin shall be organized to prevent confusion during emergency situations. All equipment and personal items aboard a vessel shall be stowed properly prior to getting underway.

One member of the marine division shall remain at the helm at all times whenever a police vessel is underway unless an emergency situation requires other actions. It shall be the responsibility of all members aboard to monitor a

360-degree field of view while underway and assist the member at the helm.

Underway – work assignments

When performing the following work assignments a personal flotation device shall be worn by all members onboard a police vessel:

- Fueling of any police vessel
- Docking procedures of any police vessel
- Towing procedures of any kind
- Emergency situations of any kind
- Boating accident investigations
- Safety inspections of other vessels
- Boarding of other vessels underway or anchored/moored away from a land dock
- Enforcement activities

Vessel Towing Procedure

A member of the marine division onboard a police vessel that is preparing to conduct a towing procedure shall explain to the owner or operator of any vessel to be towed by this department that the Town of Stratford shall be held harmless for any damages or costs sustained as a result of any towing, docking, or storage procedure.

All efforts should be made to find an alternative safe assistance method that does not require a towing procedure. The senior marine member onboard the police vessel shall determine if a towing procedure shall take place and the type.

Towing procedures shall only be conducted on vessels less than 24 feet in length within the above outlined jurisdiction. Burning boats shall not be towed.

A police vessel shall not be used to attempt a towing type assist of a vessel that has run aground. All other normal assistance practices may be used to assist such grounded vessel to include contacting Sea Tow at the vessel owner's request.

All persons onboard a vessel to be towed shall be instructed to don a wearable personal flotation device prior to any physical contact between with the vessel in need of towing assistance and the police vessel and/or equipment. Under normal conditions the occupants of such vessel shall remain onboard such vessel and not transferred to the police vessel. Such persons shall continue to wear such personal flotation devices until safely docked. In the event that all persons onboard such vessel will not comply with the personal flotation device requirement the towing procedure shall not take place.

The operator of the vessel to be towed shall be instructed on what his/her responsibilities will be during the towing procedure. At a minimum the operator should be instructed to monitor a specific channel on the VHF marine radio, if equipped, with such radio, and to require all his/her passengers to remain seated. In the event that all persons aboard such vessel in need will not cooperate with instructions by marine members the towing procedure shall not take place.

During any towing procedure the police vessel conducting such tow shall display emergency lights and maintain a slower speed that is not likely to damage either vessel, taking into consideration weather conditions, surf conditions, vessel size, and equipment condition. All marine members aboard either vessel shall wear a personal flotation device and shall notify headquarters of such towing procedure.

Those vessels towed shall be towed to the nearest dock chosen by the senior marine member onboard the police vessel. Efforts should be made to consider a safe public dock or marina before considering a safe private dock or marina.

Those members aboard such police vessel shall document an emergency situation that requires violation of the towing procedure policy in order to protect life or limb from immediate danger on an incident report.

Boating Accident Procedure

A boating accident includes, but is not limited to capsizing, collision, flooding, fire, explosion, and the disappearance of a vessel, other than by theft. In the event of a boating accident as described below, those investigative methods and procedures associated with motor vehicle investigations shall be followed using the state boating accident form. Incidents that are of a less serious nature than as set forth below shall be documented on a department incident report.

C.G.S. 15-121, A7 and A8 require a boating accident report for the following incidents to be forwarded to the State of Connecticut, Department of Environmental Protection:

- The death of any person from whatever causes while on/in a vessel;
- The disappearance of any person from on board a vessel under any circumstance which suggests any possibility of their death or injury;
- The injury of any person sufficient to require medical attention beyond first aid;
- The loss or damage to property of any kind in excess of \$500