



Information

New Requirements for Documentation of Last Day Working!

Submitted by: Lt. Mike Stone



Attention new & returning SRTs: The Beach Patrol is implementing a new policy for the upcoming season. In years past we have always asked for documentation to support an employee's last day of full-time employment. Examples of this would be a school calendar, letter of new employment, travel documents, etc. Beginning this summer we are asking for this information when you return your Employment Agreement. Why are we doing this one might ask? The answer is pretty simple. We have to work within a certain budget and can only hire a certain number of full-time employees. If an SRT has limited availability then we may have to offer one of those positions to someone who can offer the most availability to fit the needs of the Beach Patrol. We are also looking at who is making the most effort, and in some cases, the biggest sacrifice to serve the organization. This policy began to take shape last summer when part-time personnel were asked to commit to a certain number of days after August 15th. That is when the Beach Patrol starts to see a decrease in the number of full-time personnel, so we looked for people with that type of availability.

Another example of this policy has to do with rookie SRTs. Last summer we created a waiting list from the candidates who had passed our Pre-employment

Physical Skills Evaluation (PEPSE). One of the factors we looked at was how late in the season a person could work. If the availability was limited then we took a person who could work longer. We have even had PEPSE tryouts (two years ago) for people who had availability through September. This summer is no different for rookie SRTs. We have a waiting list from the August & September 2009 tryouts. Those candidates are being asked about their availability before being offered spots in Surf Rescue Academy and will also have to provide documentation to support their last day of employment.

In short, we are asking employees to give us as much as they can because our budget is no different than any other Town of Ocean City department. We have a set budget and we have to work within those constraints. Start looking for your documentation today and make sure it is returned with your Employment Agreement.

Captain's note: It is my responsibility to assure that the Beach Patrol is fulfilling its mission of keeping everyone safe on the beaches in Ocean City. To do this we need to be adequately staffed throughout the season. The Beach Patrol budget fully supports our mission and provides the funding to fill all positions. However, if we hire or re-hire someone who can only work from July 3rd through August 2nd we are choosing him or her over another person who may have availability through September 12th. We cannot ask this other person to just work from August 3rd through September 12th and it is fiscally irresponsible to over-hire (letting both work), just to allow someone to continue service.

Strategic Planning 2010

Submitted by: 1st Lt. Skip Lee

The potential for us to experience a successful 2010 season is predicated on our ability to identify what has worked well in the past and to change what has not. This year's effort to recognize those qualities started on the weekend of March 5th and 6th at the annual Strategic Planning meeting. All Officers, Office Assistants, and the Director of our department (Tom Shuster) were present to take part in identifying the achievements of our organization as well as beginning courageous conversations about things that have failed to bring us the outcomes we had hoped to realize. From all perspectives, the weekend was a success and the vision for the 2010 Season was cast.

It is important to note that due to a severe problem with the roof of the Training Room and a continued

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Captain Arbin takes Wayne Evans, the new Director of Human Resources, around to the different break out sessions where he participated in the discussions.

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desire to conduct business at headquarters, Crew Chiefs and SBF representatives were not included in this year's activities simply because of space restrictions. Both groups were, however, afforded the opportunity to submit their thoughts and perspectives on many matters relating to the business of the Beach Patrol. These were read into the record and included in the decision-making of the group.

While the focus of the weekend was spent on preparations for 2010, a huge highlight was the two important visitors who came to speak to the Beach Patrol on behalf of the Town. City Manager, Dennis Dare spoke to us on Saturday afternoon about the current economic situation the town is experiencing and the importance of "Right-Sizing" operations in order to maintain the level of services that residents and guests are accustomed to while keeping a watchful eye on the bottom line. His effort to attend and to speak with us confirms the commitment he has shared in the past. His message that we serve a very important role in Ocean City and that our purpose is in line with the mission of the town was well communicated. We continue to feel the support from City Hall and the Mayor and City Council.

Just as important was the lengthy visit of Wayne Evans, the new Director of Human Resources. His time spent observing our operation and participating in the discussions was a welcome addition to the day. His immediate appreciation for our attention to detail was shared as he addressed the group and spent time moving throughout headquarters to see the various aspects of our operations. It was a very good first impression for all and we are very happy to be able to work with him. Don't be surprised if he joins the captain someday and comes up to you out on the chair to say hello. He is that kind of person!

Unlike years past when Day II of the Strategic Planning Weekend was spent conducting Pre-Employment Physical Skills Evaluations, this year's time was dedicated to reviewing the work that had been accomplished on Day I and casting the vision for the upcoming season. The three groups (Lieutenants and Captain, Sergeants, and Office Assistants) were tasked with specific assignments relating to their roles with the patrol. Ample time to speak openly and make decisions about the future was provided. Training Academy responsibilities, supervision, the calendar, Mid-Atlantics returning to Ocean City, and evaluations were some of the discussion topics. More detail about each will be published as the spring moves forward but the calendar is already posted on the Beach Patrol website for your review.

In the end, a great deal of information was discussed (and it is important to note that not all of it was seen the same by everyone present) and a cohesive group left the weekend with a clear set of expectations and "marching orders" for the upcoming season. As Captain

has said in the past, "significance is the driving force behind why people desire to work for the beach patrol. The work we do is significant. We make a difference." The weekend was no exception. There was a lot of significant work accomplished and we all hope that the summer that lies ahead will be as successful as those we have experienced in the past...with improvements!

The work session was closed at 4:30 PM on Sunday by Tom Shuster who as always thanked everyone for giving up their weekend and traveling to Ocean City to participate in this very important process.



Captain Arbin and Tom Shuster on group picture day 2009

New Roof for Training Room

Submitted by Lt. Ward Kovacs

In a recent email message Captain Arbin gave a new name to our former training room. Simply dropping the "t" made the "raining room" much more appropriate. On a recent warm day, the sound of water dripping from the ceiling and the damp, musty smell that greeted me as I climbed the stairs of the former court room reminded me of the Tropical Rainforest display at the National Aquarium in Baltimore. The good news is that the city has decided to replace the roof instead of trying to put more patches on top of the layers of patches that have been building up for decades. This option is far better than one of the other options that was being considered, tearing down the building and replacing it with trailers. But thankfully, our needs and discussions with City officials persuaded them to agree to making the necessary repairs. Bids were opened on Friday, March 26 and work is supposed to be completed prior to the start of our first Training Academy. As part of the efforts to make the space more suitable for the Training Academy, Junior Beach Patrol, Veteran Recertification, First Aid and CPR classes and other uses, there will also be new ceiling panels and new carpet installed.

Permanent Assignment

Submitted by: Lt. Mike Stone

Where will I be placed for the upcoming season? Can I switch crews? Can I have my old stand back? Can I have a stand in another crew? Can I sit in Crew Chief (CC) so and so's crew? These are all common questions for both new & returning personnel as the Beach Patrol season gets underway. The easiest solution used to be just asking 1st Lt. Lee or Lt. Stone. As 1st Lt. Lee has changed roles, Lt. Stone has taken over doing the stand assignments and crew placements. The answer is still very much the same though, just ask Lt. Stone. The Beach Patrol has a policy called squatter's rights, and that is how crew placement and stand assignments are determined.

Too many times deals are made and things are promised that may not be accurate. Don't assume something to be true before asking the right person. Lt. Stone has an open door policy and works very hard to perfect the assignment sheet. Without an assignment sheet it is impossible to do a days-off schedule. The sooner the assignment sheet is done, the easier it is to do the schedule.

When return packets are mailed out, look for an "Assignment Request Sheet". Fill that form out completely and Lt. Stone will use it to place you for the summer. If you change your mind, just put your new request in writing and date & sign it before sending it to

the office. If a particular SRT sat a certain stand last summer then he/she is entitled to sit that stand for the upcoming season. There are some exceptions to that rule but we will not get into that discussion unless one of those extraordinary circumstances arises. Just ask Sgt. Weingard and his wife (former SRT Anna Meyers-Weingard) why she could not sit in the South Area!

If an SRT were in a rover position for a crew, then he or she would have first option to any open stand(s) in their former crew. If there is more than one rover interested in an open stand then the decision would come down to seniority and/or number of days worked. As always, there are some exceptions to the rule and any controversy would be discussed if necessary.

There is one other concern and that has to do with Assistant Crew Chief (ACC) appointments. For example, last summer in crew 16, every crewmember returned and there was a new ACC appointment. There really was no room to put another person in that crew so we worked with a neighboring crew to place one SRT nearby. My hope is that we have a high return rate again this summer and that we have very few open assignments or stands! Last summer we also had every Crew Chief return which made for very little room for advancement. What does the summer of 2010 hold? We will have to wait & see. One thing for sure, the OCBP will have all of its crews and stands full of qualified SRTs once the season begins!

New Quads and Jet Ski for 2010

Submitted by Lt. Ward Kovacs

For the past three years the Beach Patrol has been replacing three of our ATVs per year in our attempts to keep them on a four-year rotation. We have been replacing one Jet Ski per year, keeping them on a five-year rotation. ATVs and personal watercraft models, like car models, usually stay on the market for five to six years before they go through major facelifts or changes to mechanical components. The Kawasaki Jet Skis and Honda Fourtrax ATVs that we have come to favor are in the middle of their production lives and are relatively unchanged over the past three years. Knowing this, the Beach Patrol has been sending out bids for past year's vehicles that are still "new", or unused. This winter we requested bids for "2009 or 2010" models, hoping that we could get a new quad or Jet Ski that may have been manufactured in the last model year. Typically, these vehicles can be purchased at significant savings to the Town of Ocean City. The only difference between 2009 and 2010 quads is the last two digits of the serial numbers that are stamped into the frame. The only difference in the 2009 and 2010 Jet Skis is the color and graphics package available. 2010 models are not available in red.



Will you be able to sign up for Jet-drive School this summer?

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Last year, we were able to find quads that were a year old, yet still in the shipping crates on the dealer's lot. This year, we only received bids on 2010 models, and so, purchased three of them. However, we were able to locate a 2008 model Jet Ski that was still crated. This PWC is identical to the 2010 models, except for the color. It is red, like three of our Jet Skis. This is an added bonus on top of the \$1,200.00 savings we were able to gain over the 2010 model bids. This ski comes with the same warranty as a current model year ski.



Updates from Unit 12

Submitted by: Sgt. Brent Weingard

Greetings newsletter readers. I hope all is well with you and your families in your part of the world. It is almost that time of year again. The best 6 months of the year are approaching soon. I am, of course, referring to May through October. The Ocean City Beach Patrol season!

I hope you got a chance to enjoy the snow. Maybe you went skiing, snowboarding or made a few snowmen or igloos. I love the snow and skied in Pennsylvania and, for a few days, in Colorado. Winter was good for me because I worked for a landscaper, plowing snow when we got it. This winter we got a few inches right? Well, we got enough for me to pay off my summer rental in about 5 days of plowing. After I did that I'd had enough of it and just relaxed as much as I could with my 3 kids and wife by the fireplace.

Well, I don't have anything to report on for off-site PEPSEs. (Pre Employment Physical Skills Evaluations) We did not hold any this spring. The last PEPSE we held was in the summer of '09. I know Captain Arbin will give you all the details on who we have hired and who are on the waiting list. I am assuming again a record number of returning SRT's which would be great news for the Town of OC, its residents and tourists that visit. Having a veteran staff means more experienced eyes and ears to educate, prevent and intervene, when needed, on our beaches.

Here are some of the other things I get involved with for the OCBP as we are returning this summer. First: Friends United Floor Hockey on Tuesday nights 19:00hrs at Northside Park on 125th Bayside will continue. The games will cost 5.00 dollars a person. The

cost is to pay for the indoor space in the gym. We play for at least an hour, sometimes longer. All you need to play is athletic shoes. If you have a stick and gloves bring them. If not, I have all the equipment needed. We are always looking for goalies and we have full pads with helmets for them. Games are co-ed and all city employees are welcome along with friends or family members. The first game is scheduled for Tuesday June 22nd and they will run every Tuesday for 8 weeks.

Second, Polarized Von Zipper sunglasses will be back again for purchase. Save your money if you need new shades. Prices will remain the same as last year. I am hoping to start taking orders in early June. Paintball will occur again this summer. If you have a paintball gun bring it down. That usually occurs later in the summer.

Third, Crossfit OCBP will resume again this summer. A big thank you to the owners of Crossfit Ocean City Steve and Kelly Rakow. I spoke with Steve a few weeks ago and he says he would like to offer Crossfit classes again to our guards. The times, days, and cost will be worked out this summer. If you Crossfit you already know how great it is. If you have not tried it yet check them out on line. www.crossfit.com and www.crossfitocmd.com (see article written by Steve Rakow in this newsletter on page 15)

Finally, new adventures for all that love a challenge, which should be everyone. It will occur after the summer near Baltimore in Aberdeen, MD. The event is called the Warrior Dash!!!! The Warrior dash is a 3.15 mile trail run will 11 different obstacles to challenge your fitness and mental toughness. Some of the obstacles include hill climbs, high knee tire runs, 6-8 ft wall climbs, tunnels to crawl through, fire pit jumping, crossing under logs floating in water, mud crawls under barbed wire and a few more you can check out at www.warriordash.com If you finish the race you get a furry Viking helmet, yes, I know that would be enough for most of us, a warrior dash tee-shirt, and completion medal. The event is held on Saturday October 9th. I am signed up for the 13:00hrs start wave. Starsky and Hutch say "Doo it!" "Doo it!"

