United States Power Squadrons® 2017 Website Evaluation Form

Squadron Name or District: _____

District: _____   Evaluation Date: _____

A. Required Items for all USPS websites regardless where they may be hosted:

☐   **1. USPS link to website is active. Verify at http://www.usps.org/cgi-bin-nat/tools/bynamex.cgi** **"Website" in right column, link is active; conforms with USPS standards and may be evaluated. "NonConf" website does not conform and cannot be evaluated. A blank space means there is no website.**

☐   **2. Website has link to USPS.org on Home (opening) page.**

☐   **3. A brand logo and United States Power Squadrons® appears on every page and is the most prominent. Squadron name and logo are secondary and do not compete with the national brand. Either version includes the ® symbol. Logos are downloadable at:** http://usps.org/index.php/departments/12000/12400/2015-03-13-02-02-55/2015-06-10-17-32-13

United States Power Squadrons®
*Come for the Boating Education . . . Stay for the Friends*SM

The tag line *Come for the Boating Education . . . Stay for the Friends*SM, is in arial Italics, includes Service Mark in superscript, is smaller than and below the national name. ("Sail and Power Boating" is optional and can be used, but never in place of the official tag line.)

☐   **4. Explanation about membership and how to join or include link to USPS page on How to Become a Member http://www.usps.org/index.php/join-usps**

☐   **5. Links exist to district website for squadrons or to squadron websites for districts.**

☐   **6. Unit Privacy statement or a link to the USPS Privacy Statement on homepage http://www.usps.org/images/secretary/itcom/privacy.pdf**

☐   **7. Unit Trademark statement or a link to USPS Trademark reference on homepage http://www.usps.org/images/secretary/itcom/trademark.pdf**

☐   **8. Unit Disclaimer Statement or a link to USPS Disclaimer statement on homepage http://www.usps.org/images/secretary/itcom/disclaimer.pdf**

☐   **9. Email link to webmaster/public contact on homepage. Alias email like *webmaster@my-squadron.org* may be used. As a substitute, the homepage may contain a "Contact Us" link to a form for the reader to complete for contact with designated squadron member.**

☐   **10. Links on Homepage must be valid. Broken links are not acceptable. If link does not work AND is not a required link, advise webmaster to either fix or delete the bad link.**

☐   **11. Website displays current info - current year bridge and calendar, current newsletter, etc.**

☐   **12. Non-approved (or retired) logos and taglines have been removed. This includes, the following: Logos - the flying ensign, the 100 years ensign, the ship's wheel and ensign without the name, the now retired anniversary logo. Taglines - "Boating is fun . . . We'll show you how", America's Boating Club.**

B. Recommended Items:

☐ 1. Identification of squadron or district area of activity - where is the unit located?

☐ 2. Identify purpose of squadron, district, and USPS. Short text and link to "About USPS" is good. http://www.usps.org/index.php/about

☐ 3. Explanation of Member Benefits - text or link to USPS Benefits page is good. http://www.usps.org/index.php/memberbenefits2

☐ 4. Description of Squadron Educational Program - emphasize that we teach boating skills which lead to safety on the water; or short text about courses and seminars with link to USPS Educational page http://www.usps.org/index.php/boating-courses

☐ 5. Photos depicting fun district or squadron activities. Use good photos, no blurry images; life jackets on those participating in on the water activities.

☐ 6. Short text description of activities captured in #5 photos.

☐ 7. Vessel Safety Check program. Short text description with link to USPS VSC page is good. See http://www.usps.org/index.php/2015-05-08-10-34-31 or http://www.usps.org/index.php/2016-01-06-11-01-04/sss-vessel-examinations (public access)

☐ 8. VSC decal other than that found on USPS VSC page. Whenever displayed, must be current year. Logo can be copied from link in #7 above.

☐ 9. CoOpCharting-(member login) http://www.usps.org/index.php/departments/12000/12200 or http://www.usps.org/index.php/2016-01-06-11-01-04/sss-cooperative-charting (public access)

☐ 10. Contact info for bridge members, Boating Course instructor, event chairs. Alias email addresses, as, *commander@my-squadron.org* can be used. Email is better than phone #s

☐ 11. Photos of bridge officers - allows viewers to associate a face with a name.

☐ 12. Link to current squadron or district publication; must be visible to public for credit.

☐ 13. Access to publication archive (more than one past issue). Again, must be visible to public.

☐ 14. Current and future calendar; including courses, meetings, civic and boating activities.

☐ 15. Password protected access to membership roster.

☐ 16. Explanation of Merit Marks: http://usps.org/newpublic2/meritmarks/criteria.pdf

☐ 17. Links to other websites such as NOAA, BoatUS, local tide info, float plan, weather, etc.

☐ 18. Link to SailAngle with standard logo – primary means of internal USPS communication.

☐ 19. Integrate Social Media to websites with links to FaceBook, Twitter, YouTube, or LinkedIn.

☐ 20. Appearance of "Buttons" and title header should be same on every page.

☐ 21. For ease of use: Date of last update; Search option; Viewable on mobile devices?

C. Bottom Line: What is your overall impression?

- ☐ 1. Does this site increase interest in USPS?
- ☐ 2. Does website communicate what district or squadron does?
- ☐ 3. Does it convey the message that belonging has benefits and is fun?
- ☐ 4. Ease of navigation – Not a USPS requirement, but a CommCom goal.

Discussed with webmaster: Name _____ Date _____

Pass: ☐ Y ☐ N **Additional work:** ☐ Y ☐ N

Distinctive Communicator Award: ☐ Y ☐ N

Evaluator: _____

Comments:

GUIDELINES

A website needs all items A1 – A12 checked.

What is a common problem? The link between USPS and the squadron/district website is deactivated. The website will be marked **NonConf** (non-conforming). The problem is often due to <u>no IT Contact</u> on the unit's OD-2 (or OD-1). ITCom generates messages to commanders when there is a problem, providing some time before "the plug is pulled". Websites are great marketing tools so an active link with USPS is necessary. **NonConf** websites cannot be reviewed.

Are the new Branding Standards in place? Items A3 and A12 involve the new branding changes, and must be in place by the final review/evaluation in the fall of 2017. Work with your webmasters to incorporate these items into their web pages. The **Brand Standards Manual** and the **Ensign Style Guide** are linked on the CommCom website or:
http://www.usps.org/images/Exec/Marketing/Branding_Manual.pdf
http://www.usps.org/national/commcom/Standards/The-Ensign-Style-Guide.pdf

The ITCOM has a list of requirements for all websites:
http://www.usps.org/images/secretary/itcom/Web_site_requirements.pdf

Defective links? Item A10 may be conditionally overlooked (comments required to justify). Links can go haywire any time and webmasters are usually not the first to notice. Remember that some defective links can simply be removed to eliminate the problem. **Defective links to USPS references must be corrected.**

Current information? Unless something is obviously out of line like displaying last year's Bridge, ancient newsletters, or previous year calendars, it's not always clear as to what is or is not "current". Go to USPS Job Info Center http://www.usps.org/cgi-bin-nat/tools/pages.cgi?beg and choose District Jobs by District or Squadron Jobs by Squadron to verify current-year Bridge Officers. The current OD-1 or OD-2 will be displayed. *(**Note:** Some squadrons may keep an entire year's calendar on their websites. It is <u>not necessary</u> to remove months along the way.)*

Does the website qualify for the Distinctive Communicator Award or DCA?
Unto itself "passing" does not imply DCA recognition. For the DCA a website:
- Must "Pass" items A1 – A12 as defined above.
- Needs any 11 of 21 Recommended Items (B1 – B21). Obviously, more are better.
- Must satisfy at least two of the 4 items under Bottom Line (C1 – C4).

Websites should be reviewed at least twice during the year. Copies of each review should be sent to the webmaster. The last review should be no later than 31 October to allow webmasters time to make final corrections. Providing copies of each review serves to foster a good relationship and understanding between webmaster and adviser. Final DCA (Distinctive Communicator Award) reports must be submitted by 30 November unless an earlier date is mandated. Reviews may be shared with commanders for interaction with their webmaster and adviser as may be appropriate.

There are no scores, which tend to be subjective. Checkmarks indicate a defined feature or capability was observed or not. The results of each website evaluation should contain comments for webmasters. This gives a webmaster the opportunity to follow-up with the adviser on any comments, suggestions or clarifications.

Note to webmasters and advisers: Be aware that websites may appear differently with different browsers or on different platforms such as smart phones and tablets.

Revised 17 March 2017