

Mike Baron  
Commandant (CG-54222)  
U.S. Coast Guard  
2100 2nd ST SW Stop 7581  
Washington DC 20593-7581

December 31, 2012

**RE: NASBLA Final Grant Report - BUI Detection and Enforcement: Operation Dry Water Grant No. 1102.17**

Dear Mike:

Below you will find the final grant project report for the NASBLA - Coast Guard Grant Agreement 1102.17. This report is for the period October 1, 2011 – September 30, 2012.

I. Narrative Performance Report

Operation Dry Water, a multi-agency, education and enforcement initiative launched by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) in 2009 in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard, puts thousands of local, state and federal marine law enforcement officers on the water just before the Fourth of July to give boating under the influence (BUI) enforcement high visibility before a holiday known for drinking and boating – and deadly accidents.

**Media and Public Outreach & Awareness**

In an effort to increase media and public awareness around the issue of boating under the influence (BUI), the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard conducted its fourth Operation Dry Water (ODW) campaign June 22-24, 2012.

This nationwide education and enforcement effort addresses Strategy 6.5 of the National Recreational Boating Safety Strategic Plan, which calls for:

Conduct BUI Awareness and Enforcement Campaign –

Engage our nation's marine law enforcement officers, boating safety partner organizations and the media in a nationwide campaign which blends targeted

enforcement of BUI laws with a measurable increase in public awareness about the risks associated with BUI. Such an effort should include:

1. Targeted outreach to marine law enforcement agencies and their officers to enhance participation and reporting.
2. Development and distribution of single-theme media and public awareness products for use on local, state and federal levels.
3. A tracking mechanism to quantify participation and to measure media exposure.
4. A method to evaluate changes in public awareness and perception of the BUI problem.

### **Media Outreach Preparation**

Effective media outreach for a national campaign like Operation Dry Water depends on all stakeholders delivering a consistent message about the weekend and its objectives. NASBLA and Coast Guard media partners developed a range of media outreach materials for use by all participating agencies including:

- National press release.
- Agency press release template for customization by agencies
- Customizable BUI fact sheet
- Talking points for agency spokespersons which presented this year's ODW messaging
- ODW proclamation that agencies could use to encourage state/local governments to recognize the weekend.
- An awareness checklist, including tips on how to conduct a successful campaign.

All tools were available on the Law Enforcement section of the Operation Dry Water website – [www.operationdrywater.org](http://www.operationdrywater.org) -- for easy accessibility by all of the local agencies participating.

### **Communications Coordination Calls**

A variety of coordination calls were made available for participating agencies to provide information they needed to conduct the campaign and media outreach.

Beginners' Calls, Operations Calls, Best Practice Calls, Topical Calls and Coast Guard Calls were all offered to brief different segments of the ODW law enforcement audience.

### **National Media Outreach**

While participating law enforcement agencies concentrate their media outreach efforts locally, PCI Communications handled national media outreach on behalf of the Coast Guard and NASBLA. This included distributing media releases, making pitch calls to national radio, television and print outlets.

According to the media tracking service Vocus, between June 1 – July 31, 2012, Operation Dry Water generated:

- 823 unique television news stories
- 960 unique online mentions, including social media sites
- 150 unique print articles
- 126 unique wire stories/hyperlink mentions

Notable major media coverage included *NPR Coastal Connection*, *Inside Edition*, *CBS Evening News*, *Philadelphia Enquirer* and the *Chicago Tribune*.

### **Judicial Outreach**

An expanded element of outreach this year was to the judicial community – prosecutors, judges and hearing officers. With the development by NASBLA of the new, seated battery of standardized field sobriety tests and the rollout through NASBLA's BUI training we thought it important to include in our Operation Dry Water outreach this year a special effort to connect with officers of the court to assist our law enforcement officers when they have BUI cases coming before the courts that have used the new seated SFSTs. This judicial outreach includes an eight-minute video explaining the new, seated battery, a letter to judges, prosecutors and hearing officers as well as scholarly articles and other information to better inform judicial officers who will be adjudicating BUI cases.

### Law Enforcement Results

For the fourth year in a row, Operation Dry Water was a tremendous success! The increase in the number of agencies and officers participating is testament to the success and enthusiasm of many ODW supporters. Due to the timing of this education and enforcement effort (the weekend before the July 4) the NEVER Boat Under the Influence! message of Operation Dry Water continues to resonate with boaters and in the media during the one of the busiest times on the water.

ODW Enforcement Results	2012	2011	2010	2009
Reporting	Final	Final	Final	Final
Agencies/Units/Stations	505	447	175	N/A
Officers	4,519	3,687	2,708	2,442
Vessel Contacts	49,209	43,777	40,127	17,454
Boater Contacts	113,116	97,648	66,472	36,277
Citations	4,819	4,370	4,171	2,522
BUI	337	325	322	283
Safety Warnings	9,695	8,763	7,522	5,320
Highest BAC	0.38 (Michigan)	.305 (Missouri)	.303 (Kentucky)	N/A

### Conclusion

Operation Dry Water continues to deliver results and make headlines. In 2011 (the latest year for which data is available), we saw fatal accidents with alcohol as the number one contribution factor drop from 19% to 16%. Clearly the partnership between NASBLA, the states and territories, the Coast Guard and hundreds of other local and federal agencies is making a difference on our waterways.