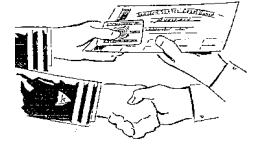

PE

Speed-gram



Number 2000-07

August 2000

John VanOsdol, DC-E

Public Education Course Fees

The 7 January 1998 edition of the *Auxiliary Manual*, COMDINST M 16790.1E, Chapter 5, paragraph M, defines applicable policy regarding Public Education Course Fees. In brief, flotillas are free to charge reasonable and appropriate prices for public education courses, with due recognition for the price of the materials, costs for classroom space, visual aids, and other components of the education effort—subject to competitive pressures. Funds collected from the sale of public education materials may not be used for social activities, but these funds may be used to support **all other authorized activities**.

As a practical matter, there is no floor or ceiling on fees charged students for Public Education courses. However, course fees should be reasonable and not excessive, considering flotilla costs and course value to the student. In the Fall 1999 issue of the *NAVIGATOR*, COMO Bertelsen, noted that “The consumer of our educational offerings will expect fair value for time and money invested in education. These people will be willing to pay a fair price for value received.”

A fair price would also indicate that we should not under price our courses. A course fee that is priced considerably less than what our students would expect to pay for other commercial boating courses or for tuition charged by local colleges and adult learning facilities, could very well indicate a “cheap”, less-than-worthy course. Many people believe that “you get what you pay for” and a low-cost course might drive away, rather than attract, students.

Flotillas are urged to conduct some local market research to find out what is being charged for similar courses, factor in course expenses and the income needs of the Flotilla, then price the Auxiliary courses accordingly. Many Flotillas do not recognize all the costs associated with the course and fail to recoup investments. Costs are not limited to fees/rental to educational institutions, but should include materials, training aids, supplies, and use of audio-visual equipment (e.g., acquisition of computers and projectors, etc.).

John VanOsdol, DC-E