

E-MAIL COMMUNICATIONS

An efficient method to get the job done . . .

When used in conjunction with phone calls, radios, and face to face communications

COURTESIES and ETIQUETTE

Internet technology provides Auxiliary members an additional way to communicate. With concerns of privacy and security, it is important to observe general guidelines of etiquette.

Misunderstandings occur in most types of communication. Nevertheless, it is possible to repair glitches in a face-to-face dialog or telephone conversation before any lasting damage occurs.

The following guidelines for email etiquette will help Auxiliary members:

- convey a professional image within and outside the Auxiliary
- communicate what is intended and avoid misunderstanding
- be aware any message sent is permanent and referred to later

Sending

Effective Messages

Target your audiences when selecting language and style. Identify yourself and your position clearly. Use clear and meaningful subject lines that your reader will understand.

Separate opinion from facts to promotes clear understanding.

Avoid messages to multiple administrative levels when communication on a single level is appropriate. Limit the list of recipients and Cc:'s only to the people who are directly involved with the subject. When referring to another member's involvement, always copy the member.

For mass e-mailings use the Bcc: field (Blind copy).

Do not copy or forward a message or attachments without the author's permission.

Read email regularly, keep current. Let senders know you have received a message with a simple response. Be aware messages may be filtered out by a providers.

Form and Tone

Impressions last

Write single subject email messages. Send multiple messages when using multiple topics. Take the time to proof your message. Use the spell check.

Use good structure and layout. Keep paragraphs short and place blank lines between each paragraph.

Place a table of contents at the top of your message if you have several detailed pieces of information to convey. Documents should be placed in an attachment.

Descriptive subject lines get attention and enables your reader to file and retrieve your message later.

The more succinct the message, the more likely email will be read, understood and acted upon.

Flaming

Reduce Flaming

Misinterpretation of an email message causing a likelihood for recipient to fire off a hasty response, often escalates situations. This expression of extreme emotion or opinion is referred to as flaming.

Unlike conversations that fade with time, impulsive email responses can sit around in mailboxes, be printed out, circulated, and acquire a level of importance that was never intended.

Barriers to effective communication can have a negative impact on our missions. Keep the following in mind to avoid flaming email messages:

- It is easy to create an immediate and not necessarily thoughtful response to an email message.
- Interpersonal cues that aid the face-to-face communication process, such as immediate feedback and the ability to judge body language are completely absent from this communication medium.
- Without face-to-face communication, attempts at humor, irony, sarcasm, and wit are often misinterpreted. Some may view a joke as criticism.

PITFALLS

In addition to the serious problem of **flaming**, there are multiple other situations to consider.

WARNING: email is like a postcard, visible to those with the technical knowledge.

Blockage & Filters

All Internet Service Providers (ISP) provide filtering services to protect customers from some spam and other mischief. Filtering is helpful, but also prevents some desired messages from being delivered.

To increase receiving messages from senders, put email addresses in your address book, add addresses to "white list" or "safe list."

When sending important emails, ask for a response. If none, make a phone call. A message sent is not always a message received.

Spam

E-mail spam, also known as "bulk e-mail" or "junk e-mail," involves nearly identical messages sent to numerous recipients by e-mail.

Spam exponentially grew for several decades. Now, the total volume of spam has leveled off slightly, mostly due to better filtering.

E-mail addresses are collected from chatrooms, websites, newsgroups, and viruses, then are sold to other spammers. Much of spam is sent to invalid e-mail addresses as spammers move on to new lists.

Never respond to spam, specially to 'unsubscribe' which identifies you email address as valid. Spammers use different sending email addresses, so reporting spam to your ISP is more effective than blocking the spammer's address on your computer.

Security

Always have the firewall activated which is usually provided by the computer system. Others choose to use a firewall in conjunction with a virus protection program.

Many ISP request that email encoding is activated on the computer. Digital certificates secures email messages. This service may be provided by a current program or downloaded free from the web.

Personal information, such as credit card numbers should only be used on a secure email message.

When sending to a large group, protect the addresses by sending a blind copy "bcc"

Forgery and Spoofing*

Email spoofing describes fraudulent email activity in which the sender address and other parts of the email header are altered to appear as though the email originated from a different source. E-mail spoofing is a technique commonly used for spam and phishing to hide the origin of an e-mail message.

Phishing*

Phishing is a type of deception designed to steal your valuable personal data, such as credit card numbers, passwords, account data, or other information. Con artists might send millions of fraudulent e-mail messages that appear to come from web sites you trust, like your bank or credit card company.

Web listing of e-mail address

Having an e-mail address on the web site allows others in the Auxiliary to easily send a message to you, a valuable communication. Be aware there are programs and individuals searching the web for addresses to send spam or create mischief.

Use a different email address for web listings which are free such as gmail or yahoo. Access your email while on the web where it is easy to report spam.

**Common usage may vary.*

Additional information regarding the above topics is available on the web.

BEST PRACTICES

Members respect the privacy of an e-mail address to use in a professional manner for Auxiliary business:

- Maintain current email address in AUXDATA.
- We do not send chain letters, jokes, or other unrelated business to Auxiliary group lists.
- Politics or sexually oriented content do not belong in Auxiliary communications, we are professional.
- Following the Chain of Leadership is an essential part of e-mail communication.
- Do not forward emails sent via distribution lists

D11NR DISTRIBUTION LISTS

To keep members informed, there are various Auxiliary email distribution lists. These lists are derived from email addresses in AUXDATA. It is recommended that Auxiliary members list an email address in AUXDATA separate from their normal email address. There are many free addresses by ISP available such as www.gmail.com which does not have advertising.

From national, the CHDIRAUX office sends out "ALAUX" comparable communication to "ALCOAST" sent to the regular Coast Guard. Also, all members receive "USCG Auxiliary eNEWS" which keeps us informed of national Auxiliary activities. These go to all members and do not need to be forwarded.

Our district has distribution list services for both district and divisions @d11nuscgaux.info. The purpose is to provide beneficial information which relates to Auxiliary activities. It is strongly recommended that all members keep their addresses updated in AUXDATA.

D11NR provides specialized distribution lists such as those qualified in IT, OPS, and VE. In addition, self subscribe areas such as MS are developed. Elected and appointed officers have separate distribution lists to provide information. This way all members do not need to receive specialized information.

Members without email capabilities also need information. A good practice, FSO-CS officers make copies of distribution email for those members.

Not recommended for members, but if for some reason a member wishes to be removed from distribution lists, then remove email address from AUXDATA. To unsubscribe only temporarily removes address until the next updating from AUXDATA.

Most serious is to report district distribution email as spam to an ISP. This creates an automated message sent to the district web service provider stating all service from district provider will be blocked. In that case, the member will be contacted to determine the best way to provide service.

For additional information, please contact Morris Farmer ADSO-CS, [ePostmaster](mailto:Postmaster@D11NR.org).