



# **BOAT OPERATOR CERTIFICATION**

# Certifier's Manual

08 December 2013

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# Boat Operator Certification Certifier's Manual

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NOTE: *This document will be periodically updated and posted on the BOC page of the United States Power Squadron Education Department website. You will be notified by e-mail if you are active in SailAngle. Certifiers will be enrolled in the SailAngle list for updates. If you change e-mail addresses, be sure to promptly update DB2000. SailAngle is automatically updated from DB2000.*

## **I. Purpose of Manual**

This manual explains the overall program and provides roles and responsibilities for Certifiers and Directors. Every Certifier should have and use the current Manuals, Guides, and Forms. These documents are available on the Boat Operator Certification page of the USPS Education Department website. [www.usps.org/eddept](http://www.usps.org/eddept)

## **II. Terms and Conditions**

1. It is a condition of taking these courses that the candidates acknowledge the fact that there are inherent dangers involved in on water activities. These dangers range from simple inconvenience to serious injury and even death. Conditions can change rapidly, unexpectedly putting even the best planned situation at risk. To this end, safety is of paramount importance. Candidates must at all times wear a properly sized and fitted personal floatation device on the docks or the boat. Furthermore Candidates agree to comply with all regulations and safety instructions given by the instructor. Failure to comply will lead to student's immediate expulsion from the course. This decision is at the sole discretion of the instructor.
2. Boating is physically demanding. Normal access to marina and docks is required. Candidates are required to board a small, open boat unassisted. The student needs to be able to safely support their own weight and have sufficient flexibility and balance while entering and moving around in a boat on their own. Candidates must have sufficient upper body strength to secure themselves during high-speed maneuvers. Candidates must have vision sufficient to see water, boats, hazards and navigational aids at reasonable distances and lighting conditions. Hearing must be adequate to hear and understand instructions, audible warnings and sound signals.
3. Certifiers will decide how all courses are to be conducted. This includes whether or not to go on the water and when to terminate and/or reschedule on the water portions of the course in the interest of safety. Candidates are to observe all requirements, provisions, regulations and orders made by any competent authority relating to or affecting the use of the craft (such as law enforcement). If the student is using their own craft they are to inform the instructor of any special requirement, provision, regulation or order pertaining to the specific vessel. Candidates will at all times obey and carry out all lawful commands and instructions given by Certifiers necessary to complete the coursework. This shall apply regardless of who owns the vessel being used. The instructor's decision in these matters will be final.
4. All craft used in instruction, regardless of ownership, shall carry all equipment required by state, federal and local law, be legal to operate in the waters the instruction is given, and carry a current Vessel Safety Examination sticker.
5. If a candidate's craft is being used for training purposes they must maintain at their own cost a comprehensive policy of insurance covering all usual risks.

6. The student warrants that all representations made in the enrollment process are true and correct.
7. Anyone 18 or under must have a parent or guardian sign all paperwork.
8. The student warrants that they have made full disclosure of all material circumstances, including health, physical limitations, issues of vessel limitations, and of everything respecting the providing of this instruction.
9. If any of these conditions is held to be invalid or unenforceable that will not affect the validity and enforceability of the rest.
10. This agreement cannot be assigned without prior written consent. Any variation to any of these conditions is invalid unless accepted it in writing, and the terms and conditions of this agreement shall prevail over any sought to be enforced.

### **III. Introduction to Boat Operator Certification Program**

#### **A. Certification Overview**

With the Boat Operator Certification (BOC) Program, USPS will certify qualified people at various levels of recreational boating proficiency. It is expected that these certifications will become recognized across the boating community, both domestically and internationally. In the United States, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) has asked Congress to authorize the Secretary of Transportation to establish requirements for standards of proficiency for recreational boaters. The USPS BOC certifications bridge the gap between classroom instruction (academics) and actual on-the-water (OTW) navigation by providing knowledgeable Certifiers to evaluate skills and help people develop their on-the-water skills.

#### **B. United Nations Resolution 40**

The United Nations adopted Resolution No. 40 in 1998 as a basis for issuing International Certificates of Competency (ICCs) for recreational boat operators on the inland waters of Europe. Most European countries have adopted this Resolution or its predecessor, No 14, or accept the ICCs of issuing countries. Currently, U.S. citizens are caught in a "Catch 22 situation;" the U.S. has not adopted the resolution and does not have a "national certificate" acceptable in Europe for issuing of an ICC. An ICC for European operation also requires knowledge and testing of the Code Europeen des Voies de Navigation Interieure (CEVNI) navigation rules, the European code for inland waters.

The USPS BOC Program is compliant with UN Resolution No. 40 except for the CEVNI rules. The Royal Yachting Association of the United Kingdom offers an on-line program for these rules, with a fee, which would allow you to add an endorsement of compliance that should be acceptable in Europe. With CEVNI Rules endorsement this certification complies with UN Resolution No. 40.

### **C. Advantages of BOC**

On-the water training adds a new dimension to USPS training. Imagine as a new boater, instead of just learning boating in a classroom, you can also have a qualified person come on board your boat and teach you skills in the environment you will be operating in! What if you want to improve your skills for coastal or offshore boating? Or charter a boat in a foreign country? Whether you are learning new skills, honing old skills or helping others to be safer boaters, BOC on-the-water training maintains USPS as the foremost training program available.

### **D. Advantages for USPS Members**

In addition to the reasons above, often a USPS member will be involved in boating activities for which a public recognition of his or her individual skills will be beneficial.

For example when:

- obtaining insurance and reducing some insurance rates.
- speaking in public.
- testifying as an expert witness.
- serving on an advisory panel.
- being quoted in the media.
- being introduced in a public setting.
- publishing articles or books.
- building confidence in one's own abilities.
- taking the first step in learning to teach others on-the-water boat handling skills.

### **E. Certification Highlights**

There are four levels of USPS Boat Operator Certifications:

1. Inland Navigator (IN)
2. Coastal Navigator (CN)
3. Advanced Coastal Navigator (AC)
4. Offshore Navigation (ON) (under development)

The BOC Program does not affect the current USPS grade requirements. Each level of BOC certification requires completion of selected USPS courses and seminars as well as demonstrations of appropriate skills. In some cases, completion of non-USPS seminars or programs may also be required.

BOC is an overlay program relating to levels of on-the-water recreational boating proficiency and is designed as an optional module to existing courses. For example, Inland Navigator (IN) is designed to complement the completion of ABC3 and Seamanship courses, while Coastal Navigator (CN-BOC) is designed to complement the Piloting course.

Certifications are only for non-commercial vessel operation. Commercial operations must comply with U.S. Coast Guard licensing regulations.

In this manual, unless otherwise stated, the term 'certification' means boat operator certification. This is not to be confused with the existing USPS Instructor certification program.

Each higher certification level builds on the previous skill level and certifies the candidate's

ability to operate using more advanced knowledge and skills. A person pursuing certification for one of the higher levels of certification must have first been certified for the lower levels. For example, to become a CN, a candidate must be an IN-BOC.

In addition, there are endorsements that extend the certification to cover operating various types of boats (e.g., sail boats) and in various regions (e.g., Canada). With a few exceptions, endorsements apply to all the levels.

## IV. Certification Requirements

### A. General Requirements

1. To be certified, a candidate must be at least 16 years of age, be mentally and physically capable of operating a boat safely, and have sufficient visual and auditory sensory ability to do so. Holding a valid drivers license will suffice to certify meeting these requirements.
2. Certification requires completion of all requirements of the following types as prescribed for each level or endorsement. The three types of requirements are:
  - a. **Courses** – USPS prescribed courses for each level. Individual progress will be tracked using existing USPS Headquarters record keeping.
  - b. **Seminars** –USPS seminars (and in some cases non-USPS seminars) prescribed for each level. Individual progress will be tracked using existing USPS Headquarters record keeping.
  - c. **Skill Demonstrations** – A signed-off BOC Passport provides objective evidence that the individual has completed the prescribed on-land or on-the-water skills.

Skill demonstrations and BOC certifications are recorded using BOC Tools online. Courses and seminar completions can be viewed from the same website.

### B. Certification Level Requirements

Each of the four levels of certification have academic prequalification (courses and seminars) as well as on-the-water (OTW) training and skill demonstration components designed to develop the candidate with progressively more challenging expectations. The candidate begins with IN and progresses to CN. Then move on to Advanced Coastal Navigator (ACN) and Offshore Navigator (ON). ON is under development at this writing. Additional details will be provided when it becomes available.

BOC certification requirements for IN, CN, ACN and ON as well as OTW Skill Demonstration Checklists are available for printing from the appropriate *BOC Candidates Guide* found on the USPS website. These are designed to assist the candidate and Certifier with keeping track of the skill progress made.

To insure you are working with the latest version of the guides, refer to:  
<http://www.usps.org/eddept/boc/main.htm>

The classroom materials (as applicable) and the “BOC Passport,” described below, may be ordered through your Squadron Education Officer (SEO).

## V. BOC Passport, Wallet Card, and Certificate of Completion

**A. Passports.** Candidates pursuing certification will have an original (no copies allowed) BOC Passport to record their progress. The appropriate level of Certifier signs the passport when the candidate has completed all requirements for that on-the-water skill. Other information for courses and seminars completed are recorded at headquarters and can be viewed through DB2000 or BOC Tools online.

United States Power Squadrons  
1504 Blue Ridge Road  
Raleigh, NC 27607  
1-888-FOR-USPS  
www.USPS.org

United States Power Squadrons®  
Inland Navigator - rivers, inland lakes, bays  
Coastal Navigator - regional coastal  
Advanced Coastal Navigator - extended coastal & near coastal offshore  
Offshore Navigator - global

Submit this passport along with your completed Inland Navigator application to your regional center for approval. Retain a copy for your records.  
Keep this passport with you and have it signed by your certifier as you pass skill demonstrations.  
your instructor as you complete seminars.  
your BOC as you successfully complete courses.

A series of four levels of certification recognize specific, non-professional boating skills for recreational boaters based on locale and conditions of boat operation.

USPS University Boat Operator Certification

**United States Power Squadrons Inland Navigator Passport**

member \_\_\_\_\_ certificate no. \_\_\_\_\_  
address \_\_\_\_\_  
squadron \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Courses</b>	Seamanship	Engine Maintenance	Marine Electrical Systems
<b>Seminars</b>	How to Use a Chart	Using GPS	Using VHF & VHF/DSC Marine Radio
<b>Skills</b>	Fire Extinguishing	Powerboat Handling	

**United States Power Squadrons Inland Navigator Passport**

requirements for Inland Navigator Certification have been completed as indicated by signature (name, certificate #, date)

**Courses**

Seamanship	Engine Maintenance	Marine Electrical Systems

**Seminars**

How to Use a Chart	Using GPS	Using VHF & VHF/DSC Marine Radio	Onboard Weather Forecasting

**Skill Demonstrations Endorsements**

Fire Extinguishing	Powerboat Handling	

Figure 1. Example of USPS Inland Navigator Passport

## B. Wallet Card.

The member who has been certified will also receive a small card that can be carried in their wallet.

**United States Power Squadrons**

This certifies that \_\_\_\_\_

has completed all of the requirements of  
**INLAND NAVIGATOR**  
and has exhibited knowledge and boating skills  
accorded to this certification including the following  
endorsements:

Certificate Number \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ National Educational Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Figure 2. Sample of USPS Inland Navigator Wallet Card



- C. Certificate of Completion. Inland Navigator**  
Upon completion of all requirements, a certificate will be issued.



Figure 3. Sample of USPS Inland Navigation Certificate of Completion

## VI. Skill Demonstration and Equivalency Instructions

### A. Candidate's and Certifier's Role.

For on-the-water skills, the candidate (skipper) and crew must handle the boat and navigate; the Certifier should only be involved with boat operation in case of emergency, or if the skipper is not able to demonstrate the skill and the Certifier can provide instruction. If at any time, or for any reason, the Certifier feels a dangerous situation is developing, the Certifier has the authority to terminate the demonstration. The Certifier may teach or instruct during the skill demonstration, but the candidate must perform all the skills without assistance.

### B. USPS Course Equivalencies

USPS Courses and Seminars change over time. Some have been re-titled; others were broken into modules, and some of the modules have been merged back into a single course. See Appendix C for USPS Course Equivalencies.

### C. Schools and Association Equivalencies

Various schools and associations offer courses and on-the-water training resulting in certifying boaters. Where the NEO has determined that these certifications are equivalent in whole or in part to a USPS certification and with USPS Board of Directors approval, credit will be granted using the equivalency process.

#### **D. US Coast Guard License and Coast Guard Auxiliary Course Equivalencies**

The USPS Board of Directors has approved certain course equivalencies for those holding Coast Guard licenses and/or completing Coast Guard Auxiliary courses. Refer to EDN-89 on the education department website for details:

<http://www.usps.org/national/eddept/files/edn89.pdf>

Note: When the USPS Operations Manual is updated, existing EDN may be incorporated into the updated Operations Manual.

#### **E. BOC Equivalencies**

BOC Equivalencies are items specific to the Boat Operator Certification Program and not controlled by the Education Department nor viewed using DB2000. They will be for the Passport and BOC use only. The BOC Committee Chairman or Regional Director (RD) may grant equivalencies for non-on-the-water skills and Seminars and enter into the BOC online database. For example, an equivalency for Fire Extinguisher (FE) requires experience using a fire extinguisher such as training as a fire fighter, similar on the job training, or successfully using the devices during an actual emergency. Similarly, Pyrotechnical Distress Signals (PD) requires experience using them in training or successfully using them in an actual emergency.

A Seminar only takes two hours and it takes more time to request an equivalency than to take the Seminar, so taking or teaching the Seminar is encouraged. The BOC program does not submit evidence of course or Seminar completion. It is the student's responsibility to get his instructor or SEO to submit Seminar evidence for educational credit.

BOC on-the-water equivalencies are very difficult to acquire. There must be reliable, verifiable, credible documentation specifically dealing with all the on-the-water skill requirements. The documentation for the equivalency request must be detailed explaining the reason an equivalency is being requested. The documentation will travel up the chain of command to USPS Headquarters to the NEO for approval. The NEO's decision is final.

While equivalencies are possible, demonstrating one's skill is critical to maintaining BOC creditability, and it is generally easier to simply demonstrate the skills. Besides, on-the-water activities are fun! BOC forms can be obtained on the Internet at <http://www.usps.org/eddept/boc/main.htm#Forms>.

### **VII. Boat Operator Certification Program Organization**

There are two organizational levels within the BOC Program: the Regional Directors and the Certifiers. There are several types of Certifiers: IN, CN, ACN and ON Certifier Trainer Instructors; IN, CN, ACN and ON Certifier Trainers; IN, CN, ACN and ON Certifiers; POTW Certifiers and the Certifiers.

This hierarchy is required to provide the best effort to maintain competency, consistency, and credibility in the BOC Program.

- A. Regional Directors.** The Regional Directors are each responsible for a region consisting of one or more USPS districts. Regional Directors and their assistants are nominated by the

Boat Operator Certification Program Committee Rear Commander (R/C) and appointed by the NEO or his delegate. Together they administer the BOC Program in their region. All level Certifiers in their region report to them. All references to Regional Directors (RD) apply to the Assistant Regional Directors (ARD). The RD reports to the USPS Boat Operator Certification Program Committee Rear Commander.

- 1. Regional Director Responsibilities** The Regional Directors are responsible for all BOC activities in each region. Their responsibilities include but are not limited to:
  - a. approving certification documents, applications, equivalencies (within his/her ability) and Certifier nominations and Re-Certifications.
  - b. planning the training and making sure the region is adequately staffed and in compliance with all BOC policies.
  - c. monitoring the Certifiers within the district.
  - d. training their assistants so they are prepared to serve as Regional Directors whenever needed.
  - e. submitting merit marks for Certifiers.
  - f. conducting periodic reviews of the database with emphasis on helping Certifier performance and lastly to recommend to RC to remove non-performing Certifiers.
  - g. depending on their own level of training and certification, they may also be a Certifier Trainer or a Certifier.
  
- 2. All RDs and ARDs must:**
  - a. be a member of a squadron in their region.
  - b. be proven leaders.
  - c. have strong presentation skills.
  - d. be able to exercise good judgment, especially in the evaluation of equivalencies.
  - e. be willing to hold the position for 3 years.
  - f. be nominated by the committee or DEO and approved by the NEO or his delegate.
  
- 3. The eight BOC Program regions are:**
  - Caribbean (Puerto Rico & US Virgin Islands): D/33
  - Mid Atlantic: D/2, D/5, D/6, D/7, D/11
  - Mid South: D/15, D/17, D/21, D/31
  - Midwest: D/9, D/10, D/20, D/24, D/29, D/30
  - Northeast: D/1, D/3, D/4, D/12, D/14, D/18, D/19
  - Northwest: D/16, D/32
  - Southeast: D/8, D/22, D/23, D/26, D/27
  - Southwest & Pacific Islands: D/13, D/25, D/28

## DISTRICTS OF THE UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS

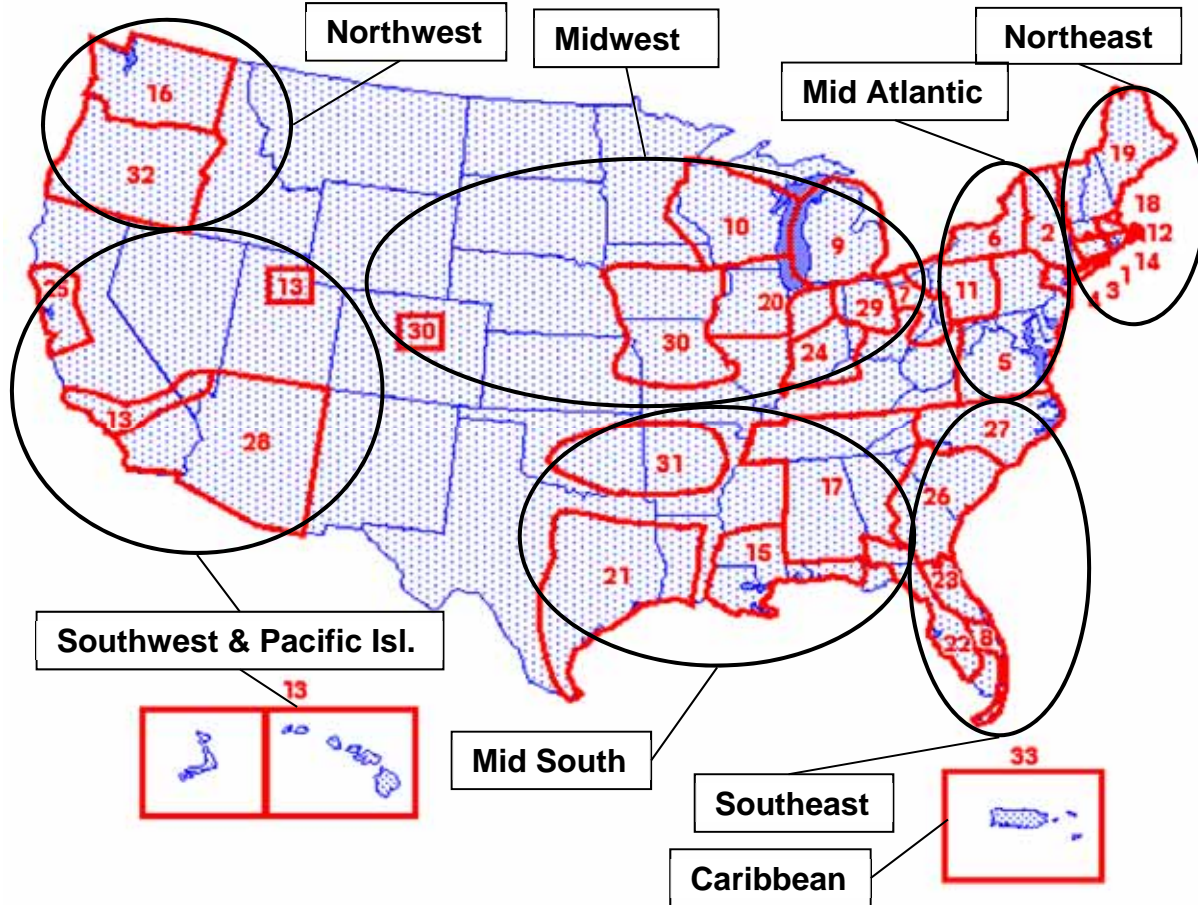


Figure 4. Approximate geographic boundaries of BOC Regions

District	Region	District	Region	District	Region
1	Northeast	12	Northeast	23	Southeast
2	Mid Atlantic	13	Southwest & Pacific Islands	24	Midwest
3	Northeast	14	Northeast	25	Southwest & Pacific Islands
4	Northeast	15	Mid South	26	Southeast
5	Mid Atlantic	16	Northwest	27	Southeast
6	Mid Atlantic	17	Mid South	28	Southwest & Pacific Islands
7	Mid Atlantic	18	Northeast	29	Midwest
8	Southeast	19	Northeast	30	Midwest
9	Midwest	20	Midwest	31	Mid South
10	Midwest	21	Mid South	32	Northwest
11	Mid Atlantic	22	Southeast	33	Caribbean

Table 1. BOC District Regional Assignments Table

**B. Certifiers.** There are several types of certifiers. In all cases after appropriate training and being nominated on ED-C5 the RD or his/her delegate approves the certifier's training and enters the candidates achievement into the BOC database.

**1. Certifier Trainer Instructors**

Certifier Trainer Instructors are approved by the RC or his delegate and are able to train Certifier Trainers at their appropriate skill level.

**2. Certifier Trainers**

Certifier Trainers are able to train Certifiers to their appropriate skill level.

**3. IN, CN, ACN, ON Certifiers**

Certifiers are able to certify members to their appropriate skill level.

**4. POTW Certifiers**

These Certifiers do not have to complete IN and are not IN Cs but are qualified to teach the POTW Seminar to the public. They are encouraged to become IN Cs.

**5. Certifiers**

Plain Certifiers may not certify OTW skills. They are our representatives to the squadrons and districts.

Certifiers at all levels report to the Regional Director. The Certifier's training determines their level access to the database and what they can certify or approve. USPS members are encouraged to recommend candidates for Certifier to their SEOs.

- a. Certifier Qualifications – General** Certifiers are volunteers who are willing to observe skill demonstrations and provide advice and instruction to candidates who are having difficulty with a skill demonstration. Certifiers should be experienced boaters who have sound educational credentials and are willing to travel to conduct certifications.

A USPS member may be nominated to become a BOC Certifier using the ED-C5 Form, BOC Certifier's Nomination Form.

**b. Certifier Qualifications - Specific** All Certifiers must:

- 1) be a USPS member.
- 2) be nominated by a RD, ARD, Certifier, SEO, ASEO, ADEO or DEO and approved by the Regional Director or ARD.
- 3) be a current USPS Certified Instructor when appointed and maintain that status.
- 4) have completed the Level (e.g. IN, CN, etc.) they will be certifying.
- 5) Have completed a NASBLA approved boating safety course
- 6) hold the grade of AP or above (ON level requirement is TBD).
- 7) have completed the Certifier's Seminar.
- 8) have substantial and verifiable on-the-water experience.
- 9) have some boating experience with night or restricted visibility operations for ACN and ON Certifier.
- 10) have been specifically trained and familiar with the requirements and

procedures for the level they are certifying.

- 11) be willing and able to observe on-water skill demonstrations and document same.
- 12) have Internet access and an e-mail address.
- 13) use the electronic database system.
- 14) for CN Certifier and above, maintain their FA certification.
- 15) having experience in both power and sail boats is a plus.

**c. Certifier's Role and Duties**

Certifiers at various levels have similar roles and duties. After being trained, Certifier qualifications are maintained in BOC Tools online. Their duties include the following:

- 1) Make the squadron aware of his or her availability to perform certifications and the type of certifications he or she can perform. This can be done via a newsletter or a website as well as by announcement at meetings.
- 2) Make the squadron aware of the certification program and its benefits to candidates.
- 3) Encourage all candidates to obtain the appropriate certifications for their type of boating.
- 4) Become thoroughly familiar with all aspects of certification and serve as a resource person to anyone having questions on the subject.
- 5) Keep themselves on the BOC Certifiers' national contact list (BOC-1, SailAngle) so as to receive all notices of updates to the Certifier's Manual, including all changes in requirements, procedures, and forms.
- 6) Respond promptly to all candidate requests for certifying a skill by arranging a time to do so. If a Certifier is unable to find time to certify the skill, then refer the candidate to another Certifier.
- 7) Assist candidates in their preparation of equivalencies.
- 8) Electronically process certification forms.
- 9) Maintain their competencies in the areas being certified and be recertified every four years.
- 10) Ensure that skill demonstrations are held in a safe manner.
- 11) If the candidate successfully demonstrates a skill, sign the candidate's original BOC Passport and electronically enter the skill into the BOC ED-C1 Skills database. ED-C1, Skills Demonstration Record may be signed to keep track of completed skills until the candidate has an original Passport.
- 12) When the candidate fulfills the rest of the tasks, the Certifier signs the candidate's original Passport and enters the remaining data. It is the candidate's responsibility to maintain the Passport document or the checklist.
- 13) If the candidate is unsuccessful, teach him or her how to correct any errors or refer them for additional training or study so they will be successful in the future.
- 14) Train other Certifiers, Certifier Trainers and Certifier Trainer Instructors depending on your level.
- 15) Cooperate with and take direction from the RD and his ARDs.
- 16) Follow all certification policies.
- 17) Read, understand, and use the electronic database to give candidates credit. BOC Tools Page has documentation on the database.

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- 18) Certifiers are also local experts and resources regarding certification for their own squadrons and District.
- 19) Certifiers will travel in their region and certify candidates for the level to which they are trained.
- 20) Certifier/Trainers will travel in their region and train new Certifiers for their level of training.
- 21) Certifier/Trainers Instructors will travel as required and train new Certifier/Trainers.

## **VIII. Boat Operator Certification Policies**

The following policies have been established for the BOC Program:

- A. USPS membership must be maintained to be in the BOC Program at any level.
- B. Certifiers (including IN, CN, ACN or ON Certifiers and Regional Directors) are volunteers and are not compensated for their work on certifying candidates.
- C. A candidate cannot certify himself or herself. (However, a candidate teaching a Seminar may include themselves on the list of those completing the Seminar, just as an instructor can simultaneously take and teach a course.)
- D. Should a Certifier complete the Certifier's Seminar and be found to be missing a requirement, he or she can be certified upon completion of that requirement.
- E. Certifiers may certify any candidate in any region.
- F. Certification requirements that do not involve skill demonstrations are met when a course exam is passed or by instructors documenting completion of a Seminar. These instructors require no special training beyond that to teach the material, administer the exam (for a course), or submit the completion record (for a seminar). It is the candidate's responsibility to get the SEO to submit Seminar completion to USPS Headquarters.
- G. If your certification requires training or certifications from outside agencies (e.g., Red Cross, YMCA or the American Heart Association), the Certifier is responsible for maintaining certification. Certain USPS certifications are contingent upon maintaining those external certifications. The candidate is responsible for maintaining these certifications. Failure to maintain these certification(s) places the USPS certification in suspension and may not be used until training and certification is up-to date.
- H. Boat operator certifications will not be done for certain extreme conditions, including Class III or above rapids, at latitudes greater than 70N or 70S, areas with extreme tidal ranges and tidal bores, whirlpools, waterfalls, waters with current speeds approaching a boat's cruising speed, areas with large icebergs or ice fields, etc.
- I. On-the-water skill demonstrations are typically accomplished using the boat owned by the person being certified or a boat provided by them and on the waters covered by their actual or proposed certification levels where possible and practical.
- J. In certain cases (as noted), skill demonstrations should be performed on shore for safety reasons.
- K. The Assistant Regional Directors may act for the Regional Director if the Regional Director is unavailable or if the Assistant has been delegated to act.
- L. Certifiers and Regional Directors are responsible for maintaining paper or computer image files until the information can be entered into the BOC database then the paper may be discarded.
- M. The material in this manual may be made available to all BOC candidates.
- N. Where possible, requirements will only be documented once so when changes are made

only one file needs to be corrected. Therefore, requirements for various certification levels will be in the appropriate manuals only. Where other data is referred to, “how to find it” will be included.

- O. All on-the-water skills must be certified by an appropriate IN, CN, ACN or ON Certifier, or an appropriate Certifier Trainer.
- P. The BOC Certification process is made to be electronic to minimize paper handling. See BOC Certification Process below.

## **IX. BOC Certification Process**

- A. The process is electronic in almost all cases.
- B. USPS courses are credited at USPS Headquarters when a student passes the Advanced Grade or Elective Grade exam. Seminars are credit when the SEO files information with USPS Headquarters using the online 800 System. Skills are credited when the appropriate Certifier fills out the ED-C1, Skills Demonstration, on-line in BOC Tools. If you cannot give a candidate credit it is because you do not have the correct credentials or there is a bug in the system. In the case of a bug, please notify the RD and BOC Committee R/C to have it corrected.
- C. When a candidate’s Passport is completed the Certifier completes ED-C4, Certification Application, on-line, selects the RD, and sends electronically. The candidate’s Passport and a check for the appropriate fee, if any, made out to “USPS” is sent to the Regional Director via U.S. mail. The RD does a “candidate review” on-line, and if the Passport is correct checks off complete, date and paid, after receiving the check. The RD forwards the check, if any, to Accounting at USPS Headquarters.
- D. If “RED Comments” appear when doing a “candidate review,” the RD must investigate and resolve. This usually occurs when credit was given for an activity without documentation for equivalent courses, equivalent seminar or undocumented seminar completions, or outside requirements such as First Aid.
- E. The appropriate Certifier or RD must fill out the ED-C2, Equivalent Record - Skills Demonstration; or the ED-C3, Equivalent Record – Seminars, on-line application and send with supporting data to the RD for approval. If not approved the RD replies to candidate with reason.
- F. All equivalencies for on-the-water skills will be forwarded to the NEO through the RC or his delegate for disposition.
- G. Upon the RD checking off complete, an e-mail is sent to USPS Headquarters to print the certificate and wallet card. This may take a month as certificate and wallet card are manually printed at the end of the month.
- H. After RD checks off complete, the paper documents, if any, may be discarded. At this time all files are electronic.
- I. Access to all privileges in the database is dependent on your position. The address for the database is from the Education Department Tools Page: <http://www.usps.org/cgi-bin/nat/eddept/pages.cgi?tools/BOC/index:Y>.
- J. The ability to give credit to a candidate depends on the evaluator's certification level. Since the skills are different at each level, the training is different; therefore, the observation must be performed by the correct level of Certifier. For example, an IN Certifier cannot approve a CN OTW Skill and a CN Certifier cannot approve an IN OTW Skill.
- K. Some people may become more than one type of Certifier and trained in all the skills.



## X. **Recertification**

Starting April 1, 2014, all BOC and POTW Certifiers at any level will have to re-certify every 4 years in order to maintain their status. There are three parts to re-certification: A) Policy & Procedures, B) Additional Requirements, & C) OTW Training.

The initial re-certification date will be based on their "C" date of becoming a certifier. Once recertified, the BOC database provides their next Certification Expiration Date.

A) The website will send an e-mail to the Certifier 60 days prior to the expiration date as a reminder, but it is the Certifier's responsibility to maintain their certifications. Each Certifier will go to the Certifier's Re-certification webpage. The webpage will require the documents (Certifier Manual, Certifier Seminar, IN Guide, CN Guide, ACN Guide, Endorsement Manual, etc.) to be downloaded and a box checked acknowledging they have been read before continuing. The webpage will automatically notify the RD of the certifier's request for re-certification.

B) Each Certifier will meet all the requirements of the Certifiers Manual for his/her level(s) of Certifier, such as membership, USPS Certified Instructor, etc.

C) Each Certifier will conduct two OTW certifications at any level or two trainings to create OTW certifiers or certifier trainers. The BOC database automatically tracks and identifies the number of OTW certifications that were performed by individual Certifier.

The RD automatically receives an email from the database indicating a certifier has met A) above and is requesting re-certification, the RD will check the database for conformity to A), B), & C) above by reviewing the certifier webpage. If everything is in order the RD will re-certify them and the system will reset for another four years based on this date. The trainings accomplished will reset to zero.

All Certifiers, at any level, if their "C" date is before 4/1/10 (4/1/10 plus 4 years is 4/1/14) must accomplish A) and B) above. No exceptions. As certifiers approach the 4-year date from their "C" date they must do the same going forward. This starting date gives you several months to accomplish this if you are deficient.

To get started an additional year will be allowed to achieved the OTW requirement C) above. The enforcement of the 2 OTW trainings will start in 4/1/15 to maintain certifier status. In the meantime, certifiers will be allowed to perform their duties and certify or train as long as they have complied with A) & B) above by 4/1/14. There will be "red" marks in the database until all is corrected.

Examples:

1. "C" date of 5/4/07 will need to A) & B) above by 4/1/14. They may do it at any time before that date. They will have an additional year to 4/1/15 to complete C) their 2 OTW trainings.
2. "C" date of 4/3/11 will need to A), B) & C) above by 4/1/15. The additional time for C) completion is still available but expires for all on 4/1/15.
3. "C" date of 6/7/13 will need to A), B) & C) above by 6/7/17.

Deficient Certifiers going forward will be re-certified when they meet the requirements of A), B) and C). Example: Certifier who was to be re-certified by 4/1/15 and did not, maybe re-certified at a future date, if they complete A), B) and are re-trained for C) unless they have 2 trainings on record within the 4 years of the requested re-certification.

RDs may exercise judgment and resolve problems as required.

## Certifier Details

**Region:**  **RD:**  **ARD:**

**Cert Expiration Date:** [04] / [01] / [19] Recertification expiration date used for subsequent recertification  
**Cs and CTs last 8 years:** 0  
**OTW Count last 8 years:** 1 [View Details](#)  
**OTW Count since last cert:** 0 **Not qualified for re-certification**  
**IC Expiration Date:** [11] / [11] / [13]  
**CPR Expiration Date:** [09] / [07] / [15]  
**First Aid Expiration Date:** [09] / [07] / [15]

	<input type="checkbox"/>	mm/dd/yy	Cert#	
C	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	04 / 01 / 11	E194828	<a href="#">View</a>
POTW Training				
POTW C	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	04 / 01 / 11	E194828	<a href="#">View</a>
Inland Navigator				
IN C	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	04 / 03 / 11	E194828	<a href="#">View</a>
IN CT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	01 / 02 / 13	E194828	<a href="#">View</a>
IN TI	<input type="checkbox"/>	/  /		
Coastal Navigator				
CN C	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	08 / 21 / 11	E105868	<a href="#">View</a>

Certifier date used for first recertification

At times there are more Certifiers than can be working in the boats OTW. If the Certifier is actively participating in the program but does not get an opportunity to be OTW the Certifier should get credit at the RD's discretion. A screen shot from the BOC Tool Skills website showing the date fields used for recertification and other required due dates is provided below.

**Skill Completion - ED-C1**

**If applicable**

**Skill:**

**Date:**  /  /

**Certifiers:**  [View](#)  [View](#)  [View](#)

**Location:**

**Docs:**  All applicable documents have been validated

[Add New Skill](#)



## Certifier Details

**Region:**  **RD:**  **ARD:**

**Cert Expiration Date:** [11] / [03] / [15]  
**Cs and CTs last 8 years:** 3  
**OTW Count last 8 years:** 65 [View Details](#)  
**OTW Count since last cert:** 15 [Qualified for re-certification](#)

**Re-certification:** [Re-Certify](#)

**IC Expiration Date:** [04] / [14] / [15]  
**CPR Expiration Date:** [01] / [30] / [14]  
**First Aid Expiration Date:** [01] / [30] / [14]

Clicking on “ View Details” will display the OTW activity. If the person has two or more OTW trainings not including the same person than press the re-certify button.

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**Re-certification:** [Re-Certify](#)

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Upon recertification, the number of trainings will go to zero and the 4 year period will start over.

## **XI. Presenting the BOC Certifier's Seminar**

A PowerPoint presentation is available for Certifier Seminar training. Members of the BOC/OTWCom, Regional Directors and any level Certifier may present the BOC Certifier Seminar.

Refer to ID procedures and training to presenting a Seminar. Downloads are provided on the website for Candidates to prepare hard copy manuals and for the presenter to make nametags.

An attendance sheet with printed names and certificate numbers is required. Submit the attendance list, registration forms, and an ED-C5, BOC Certifier's Nomination Form, nominating the student to the Regional Director.

- A. Conducting a Certification Seminar (any Level)** Guides are provided for each level of certification. Please be sure you obtain and use the latest Guide from the USPS website.
- B. Submitting Corrections and Comments** Insure you are using the current version of the material before submitting a correction or comment. Be specific in your comments as to issue number, date of page, and section and page number or slide number. If you discover errors in this manual or the presentation, or have suggestions for improvement, please send via SailAngle to the BOC Committee R/C.

## **XII. Practical On-The-Water Training (POTW)**

POTW is not part of the BOC series but shares some aspects of the BOC program. It is an eight hour Seminar with the perfect combination of classroom training and hands-on On-The-Water training. It provides an explanation of how your boat handles and why. Video clips let you visualize the maneuvers prior to your experiencing them on the water. It covers use of lines, departing the dock, operating in a fairway, pivoting, mooring, backing, docking, steering - slalom, holding course - range, and a quick stop.

- A. Conducting a POTW Seminar.** POTW seminars are created like any other USPS seminar. Registration and payment for the seminar is available on line. Once the candidate is registered, course materials are sent by HQ to the individual.
- B. Who can teach the POTW Seminar.** The classroom portion may be taught by any ID qualified USPS instructor. The OTW portion of POTW may only be taught by an IN Certifier or a POTW Certifier.
- C. Qualifications for a POTW Certifier.** POTW Certifiers are required to have the following:

- 1) be a USPS member.
- 2) be nominated by a RD, ARD, Certifier, SEO, ASEO, ADEO or DEO and

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approved by the Regional Director or ARD.

- 3) be a current USPS Certified Instructor when appointed and maintain that status.
- 4) have completed have completed a NASBLA approved boating safety course, Seamanship and BPH.
- 5) have completed the Certifier's Seminar.
- 6) have substantial and verifiable on-the-water experience.
- 7) be willing and able to observe on-water skill demonstrations and document same.
- 8) have Internet access and an e-mail address.
- 9) use the electronic database system.

**D. Credit for POTW.** A POTW candidate in attendance is to receive credit for the POTW seminar. Upon successful demonstration of all OTW skills, the POTW candidate is to receive credit for BPH.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Acronym Glossary**

This glossary includes acronyms for Boat Operator Certification. Standard USPS abbreviations and acronyms are covered in the USPS Operations Manual.

ACN	Advanced Coastal Navigator - third level of certification (BOC-AC)
ADN	Advanced Coastal Skill – Required for ACN
AED	Automatic External Defibrillator
ARD	Assistant Regional Director
BPH	Basic Power Handling Skill – Required for IN
BOC	Boat Operator Certification
BOC-1	Boat Operator Certifiers e-mail list in Sail Angle
CAN	Canadian Endorsement (BOC-CAN)
CHT	How to Use a Chart – a seminar
CN	Coastal Navigator - second level of certification (BOC-CN)
COMP	The Mariner’s Compass – a seminar
CPR	Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation
ED-C1	Skill Demonstration Record
ED-C2	Equivalency Record - Skill Demonstrations
ED-C3	Equivalency Record - Seminars
ED-C4	Certification Application
ED-C5	Certifier Nomination Form
EO	Emergencies on Board seminar
EURO	European waters endorsement (BOC-EUR)
DEO	District Education Officer
FA	First Aid
FE	Fire Extinguisher – a skills demonstration
GPS	Global Positioning System – a seminar
ID	Instructor Development Course
IN	Inland Navigator - first level of certification (BOC-IN)
IW	Inland Waters endorsement (BOC-IW)
NAV	Navigation Skill – Required for CN
ON	Offshore Navigator - fourth level of certification (BOC-ON)
PAD	(1) Paddling endorsement (canoes, kayaks) (2) Paddle Smart seminar
PD	Pyrotechnic distress signal skill demonstration
R/C	Rear Commander
RAD	Using Radar – a seminar
RD	Regional Director
SA	(1) Sail endorsement (BOC-SA) (2) Sail Course
SAX	Advanced Sail endorsement (BOC-SAX)
SailAngle	Internet web-based communication tool for USPS
SEO	Squadron Education Officer
VHF	Using VHF and VHF/DSC Marine Radio seminar
WF	Onboard Weather Forecasting – a seminar

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Endorsements**

Endorsements are described in the Boat Operator Certification Endorsement Handbook.

## APPENDIX C

### Equivalencies Processes

BOC Equivalencies are items specific to the Boat Operator Certification Program and not controlled by the Education Department Database nor acknowledged by DB2000. The BOC Committee Chairman or RD may grant equivalencies for non-on-the-water skills and seminars and enter into the BOC database. The BOC program does not submit evidence of course or seminar completion. It is the candidate's responsibility to get his/her SEO to submit seminar evidence for DB2000 credit.

#### 1. Courses

If a member has completed one or more non-USPS courses approved by the NEO as equivalent to a USPS course(s), he or she submits to the NEO via the SEO and USPS HEADQUARTERS, a copy of the course completion certificate together with a brief note indicating which course(s) the member is seeking equivalency. The note should include the members name, certificate number, squadron and district as well as contact information. USPS Headquarters will verify that the course has been approved as equivalent by the NEO and then will give the member credit for completing the course as of the date of receiving the request.

For those holding Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary licenses refer to EDN-89 for course equivalencies.

**Table 1: USPS Course Equivalencies**

Requirement	Course Equivalents
Completion of a NASBLA approved boating safety course	i.e., ABC, Boat Smart, The Boating Course
S	S 101 + S 102
P	Piloting (2004 and later) or old edition plus GPS seminar
AP	Adv. Piloting (2005 and later) or old edition plus GPS seminar
JN	JN (any edition)
N	N (any edition)
Engine Maintenance	EM 101 + EM 102
ME	ME 101 + ME 102 + ME 103
Marine Electrical Systems	ME 101
Marine Communications Systems	ME 102
Marine Navigation Systems	ME 103
Sa	Sa 101 + Sa 102
W	W 101 + W 102

*Key: The three new ME courses are accepted as equivalent to the three existing ME modules.*

#### 2. Seminars

**The ED-C3 Form, Boat Operator Certification Equivalency Record – Seminars**, is used when requesting a seminar equivalency request. The form is submitted with the assistance of a certifier indicating which seminar(s) he or she wishes to have considered for a BOC equivalency, together



with a brief narrative describing the applicable experience or education (what experiences or courses taken by the member cover the seminar material). The certifier endorses this form, indicating that he or she believes the experience or education is accurately described and adequately covers the seminar subject and content.

The form(s) and attachment(s) are forwarded to the Regional Director who either approves the form(s) and forwards them to USPS Headquarters, and on to the NEO, or rejects them in whole or in part and returns them with an explanation. The Regional Director gives the applicant credit for equivalent seminars in the BOC database. If the NEO approves equivalency, the DB2000 database is changed by USPS Headquarters. If a RD gives the equivalency, it will only be in the BOC database.

## Tabular Summary of Level Qualifications

### Qualifications for Certification Levels

This section contains tables summarizing the qualifications for all four levels. Information on ON is preliminary as qualifications for this level is not expected to be available until 2014. In some cases, course content will be updated as noted to better fit the needs of certification.

**Table 2: Course Requirements for each Level of Certification**

Certification Levels Required Courses	Inland Navigator (IN)	Coastal Navigator (CN)	Advanced Coastal Navigator (ACN)	Offshore Navigator (ON) Preliminary Information
NASBLA approved boating safety course	Y	IN	IN	IN
Seamanship	Y	IN	IN	IN
Engine Maintenance	Y	IN	IN	IN
Marine Electrical Sys. ( ME101)	Y	IN	IN	IN
Piloting		Y	CN	CN
Marine Communications Sys. (ME 102)		Y	CN	CN
Weather		Y	CN	CN
Cruise Planning (CP)			Y	ACN
Marine Navigation Systems (ME 103) (1)			Y	ACN
Advanced Piloting			Y	ACN
Junior Navigation				Y
Navigation				Y

**Key:** *Marine Navigation Systems* – course will cover navigation devices and instruments: flux gate compass, GPS, radar, digital charting as well as integrated systems; networks, and Computer Aided Navigation Systems (CANS).

#### Notes for Table 2

(1) The definitions for the various courses do not necessarily correspond exactly to the current modules (101, 102, etc.). However, the current modules will be accepted until updated material is available.

(2) The Instructor Development course is not listed as it is only required for Instructor Certification - a separate program from Boat Operator Certification. However, certifiers are required to be current certified instructors.

**Table 3: Seminar Requirements for Certification Levels**

Seminars \ Certification Levels	Inland Navigator (IN)	Coastal Navigator (CN)	Advanced Coastal Navigator (ACN)	Offshore Navigator (ON) Preliminary Information
CHT - How to Use a Chart (1)	Y	IN	IN	IN
VHF - VHF Radio & VHF/DSC Marine Radio	Y	IN	IN	IN
GPS - Using GPS (2)	Y	IN	IN	IN
WF - Onboard Weather Forecasting (4)	Y	IN	IN	IN
Tides and Currents (5)		Y	CN	CN
Mastering the Rules of the Road (6)		Y	CN	CN
Anchoring		Y	CN	CN
COMP – The Mariner’s Compass		Y	CN	CN
EO - Emergencies on Board			Y	ACN
Marine Radar			Y	ACN
Other Seminars for ON				TBD

*Notes for Table 3:*

- (1) *The seminar on using a chart equivalency for the Boating course (i.e., the course that includes chart navigation work), or Piloting or Chart Smart.*
- (2) *Those qualifying for CN certification or above should take the GPS Seminar unless it has been taken or taught the **new P** or AP course or have substantial experience using GPS.*
- (3) *The non-USPS seminars (e.g. First Aid) that may expire before USPS certification does; any USPS certification requiring them is only valid if the member’s certification in the above non-USPS seminars is current. **It is the member’s responsibility to maintain those certifications.***
- (4) *Onboard Weather Forecasting is not required if the member has completed the Weather course.*
- (5) *Tides and Currents equivalency allowed for AP.*
- (6) *Mastering the Rules of the Road equivalency allowed for current U.S. Coast Guard Licenses.*

The following skills are demonstrated on the water except where noted.

**Table 4: Skill Demonstrations for Certification Levels**

Certification Levels \ Skill Demonstration	Inland Navigator (IN)	Coastal Navigator (CN)	Advanced Coastal Navigator (ACN)	Offshore Navigator (ON) Preliminary Information
BPH – US Sailing Safe Powerboat Handling or USPS BPH skill demonstration	Y	IN Required	IN Required	IN Required
FE – Fire Extinguishers (use of a fire extinguisher – should be done ashore)	Y	IN Required	IN Required	IN Required
NAV – Navigation (ability to navigate by GPS waypoints and traditional methods in daylight)		Y	CN Required	CN Required
PD – Pyrotechnics (use of pyrotechnic distress signals should be done ashore)		Y	CN Required	CN Required
ADN – Advanced Cruising Skill			Y	ACN Required
TBD Skill designation(s) –Offshore				TBD

*Notes for Table 4:*

- (1) *Once a skill has been demonstrated at one level, it need not be repeated for higher levels.*
- (2) *The above skills are demonstrated on the water in daylight and good weather, except that the Pyrotechnics and Fire Extinguisher skills are done on shore for safety reasons.*
- (3) *A practical approach to the fire extinguisher and pyrotechnic signals skills demonstrations is to do them with a number of members at a squadron or district event.*
- (4) *The US Sailing programs are listed as skills demonstrations rather than courses because they are hands-on on-the-water training.*