

UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS®



CANDIDATE'S GUIDE

FOR

INLAND NAVIGATOR CERTIFICATION



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Holders of USCG Captains licenses or Certificates may meet many of the above criteria. Where the NEO has specified that any of the above criteria can be waived for holders of these licenses, the courses, skills or seminars may be waived by following the process for courses. (See Section 20 of the BOC Manual for approved licenses.)

USPS Candidates Guide for Inland Navigator Certification

Certification Overview – Levels

Introduction

This section describes the first of the currently planned four levels of certification. Other levels include *Coastal Navigator Certification*, *Advanced Coastal Navigator Certification* and *Offshore Navigator Certification*.

Level Overview

This table summarizes the (IN) level of certification:

Certification Level>	Inland Navigator (IN)
Boating Waters>	Rivers, canals, small lakes, and protected waters within 2 nm of shore
Boat Types > (Non commercial)	Any Boat up to 7M (23 Ft.)
Boating Conditions>	Fair weather, good visibility, daylight
Maximum Winds>	Force 4 (16 Kt, 18 mph)
Maximum Waves>	1 meter (≈3 Ft.)
Applicable Endorsements>	IW, PAD, SA, EURO
UN 40 Compliant>	Yes

Certification Overview – Endorsements

Endorsements certify special additional skills such as types of boat or region of boating. They are generally independent of level. (In a few cases, endorsements apply only to higher levels of certification.)

Endorsement Overview

The following is a list of current endorsement acronyms and their definitions:

- **CAN** – Canadian regulations (includes radio operation, rules of road and navigation aids)
- **EURO** – European regulations; rules of the road, navigation aids, etc. are covered in CEVNI - Code Europeen des Voies de la Navigation Interieure - European Code for Inland Waterways
- **IW** – Inland Waterway - skills related to traversing locks, and dealing with the special hazards of canals, and rivers such as currents, rapids and dams
- **MEX** – Mexican regulations (includes radio operation, rules of road and navigation aids)
- **PAD** – Paddle boats (e.g., canoes and kayaks)
- **SA** – operating a sailboat. The first level of this endorsement, which applies to the IN and CN levels, requires the completion of the sail course or both sail modules. The second level, which applies to the ACN and ON levels, requires the above plus completion of the US Sailing Bareboat Cruising Program. Note that the member may obtain the more advanced sail endorsement at the lower levels, if desired.

Seminars

With the assistance of a certifier, the member applying for a waiver submits a seminar waiver form (or set of forms) indicating which seminar(s) he or she wishes to have waived, 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 they believe the experience or education is accurately described and adequately covers the seminars that are to be waived. The form(s) and attachment are forwarded to the regional certifier who either approves the form(s) and forwards them to HQ or rejects them in whole or in part and returns them with an explanation. The regional certifier gives the applicant credit for waived seminars via the seminar workbook.

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 HQ a copy of the course completion certificate together with a brief note indicating which course(s) that want waived. The note should include the members name, certificate number, squadron and district as well as contact information. HQ 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. (See Section 19 of the BOC Manual for approved courses.)

Criteria for Waiving Skills

The **Basic Power Boat Handling** (BPH) skill demonstration may be waived under the following conditions. The member must either take the US Sailing “*Start Powerboating Right*” course from a certified US Sailing instructor (also known as a USPS Master Advanced Certifier) or **documented significant experience** by entries in a log or a resume of experiences that can be verified. This experience documentation will be considered by the Advanced Certifier for comment and approval, and then forwarded, to the Regional Certifier and the NEO for approval.

Waiving the **navigation skill** would require experience navigating with both GPS and traditional methods on the water, including passages out of sight of land either due to restricted visibility, darkness or distance.

Waiving the **fire extinguisher** demonstration requires experience using a fire extinguisher. (E.g., the individual may have been trained on a job or as a fireman.) Similarly, experience using **pyrotechnic distress signals** is required to waive that skill demonstration. Either of the latter two skills may also be waived based upon experience successfully using the devices during an actual emergency.

Waiving the **Bareboat Cruising** skill requires experience with bareboat cruising in at least two areas for a least a week each with at least two different boats.

Waiving **Passage Making** requires a continuous offshore passage of at least 48 hours in length, and being out of sight of land for most of that time. The member must have been either the skipper or navigator and must have stood watches.

Inland Navigator Certification

Certification Level

Inland Navigator (IN) is the entry level of certification. This level certifies the member for (within their endorsements):

- boat operations in rivers, canals, small lakes, and protected waters within 2 nm of shore
- using a boat provided by the member up to 7M (23 feet) LOA.
- operation during daylight hours with good visibility and fair weather
- winds not to exceed Force 4 (16 Kt or 18 mph)
- waves not to exceed 1 meter (≈3 Ft.)

Note: It is intended at this level of certification to show a level of competency handling a small powerboat. This does not have to be the candidate’s boat and the candidate should work with the certifier to have a boat be made available for this demonstration, if the candidate does not own one. There may be exceptions to the rule. Advanced Skill Certifiers should be prepared to make decisions on what will suffice for a demonstration skill, if for example; no other boat is available and/or will not be practical to get access to a boat without considerable expense, etc. A waver should be prepared and submitted with the application outlining the reason(s) a larger/type boat was used.

Caveats

The above wind condition limits (and the resulting sea states) may be too high for less seaworthy boats, or boats lacking certain equipment or a sufficient number of capable crewmembers. The operator is responsible for determining

if the conditions are compatible with safe operation based upon his skills, his boat and the capabilities of his crew. The hazard posed by waves is not only a function of wave height but also is a function of wave steepness, which is influenced by current wind velocity, water depth, currents and the interaction of different wave trains. Again, it is the responsibility of the operator to judge his limits and the safe limits of his boat and crew.

Requirements

To be certified as an Inland Navigator, members need to complete the following courses:

- A NASBLA approved boating course (i.e. ABC, Boat Smart, The Squadron Boating Course)
- Seamanship
- Engine Maintenance
- The Marine Electrical Systems (or ME 101).

The latter covers basic electrical systems. Currently ME 101 is accepted for this requirement; the new first ME course, Marine electrical Systems, will have enhanced content.

The Inland Navigator also needs the following seminars (or equivalents):

- How to Use a Chart seminar (CHT), or completing or Piloting, or Chart Smart, or the Boating Course (i.e., the longer version that includes some chart work as opposed to ABC or Boat Smart). For the options except passing P, a waiver must be approved.
- Onboard Weather Forecasting Seminar (WF), or the USPS Weather Course (either Wx or Wx 101 and Wx 102)
- Using GPS seminar (GPS) or completing the new Piloting or new Advanced Piloting Course or teaching one of those courses (a waiver is needed for this.)

Waiver Processes

About Waivers

USPS has many experienced members who have practiced most if not all of the skills required for certification or have taken courses that cover the same material as USPS courses and seminars. We are trying to attract additional experienced boaters, many of who will have such credentials and experiences. For boaters with extensive on the water experience or education covering any of the requirements for certification, we will offer waiver processes.

Skills

With the assistance of a certifier, the member applying for a waiver submits form ED-C2 (see copy on next page and sample of filed out form) indicating which skills he or she wishes to have waived, together with a brief narrative describing the applicable experience (what skills were used, where, for how long or how many times and under what conditions and types of boats). The certifier endorses this form, indicating that they believe the experience is accurately described and adequately demonstrates the skills that are to be waived. This form and attachment is forwarded by the certifier to the regional certifier who either approves it and forwards it to USPS HQ or rejects it in whole or in part and returns it with an explanation. Upon receiving the approved waiver form, HQ will file the form in the HQ BOC file for the member.

Although the certifier and regional certifier must exercise judgment in evaluating waivers, the following criteria are to be used to insure consistency.

Anchoring

Anchor and Rode Inspection
Determining Scope
Setting an Anchor
Retrieving an Anchor
Hand Signals

Mooring

Departure
Picking Up a Mooring

Coming Alongside an Anchored Boat

Effect of Wind Shifts on Coming Alongside

Person-In-Water Recovery

Recovery Procedure (a 4 part procedure) describe and demonstrate each of the following

Make physical contact with PIW

Attach PIW to the boat
Get PIW back aboard
Aftercare

- Using VHF-Radio and DSC/VHF Radio seminar (VHF), or ME 102 or the new Marine Communications Systems course.

The Inland Navigator must also demonstrate the following skills to a certifier:

- The US Sailing Safe Power Boat Handling (BPH) program or equivalent (see below) and
- Use of Fire Extinguishers (FE Skill demo).

If the member has experiential equivalents or course equivalents, consult the Waiver Processes, and the Course Equivalency or External Program Equivalencies sections of the USPS Certifier manual. The Safe Power Boat Handling course is a two day on-water program. Those who have taken it report that it is an excellent chance to perfect boat handling skills in a small powerboat. It is available at modest cost from USPS Advanced Skill Certifiers. (Note that if you complete the SPH program from an instructor who was certified by US Sailing (Master Advanced Skill Certifier), you are credited with the completion by US Sailing as well as USPS; however, if you complete the course from an advanced certifier trained by USPS you are only certified by USPS.) If you have substantial small boat handling experience, you can complete the on-the-water Basic Powerboat Handling skill demonstration instead (Section 13). If you successfully complete that demonstration, you do not need to take the US Sailing SPH program.

Endorsements

Many operators with this certification will also want to add the Inland Waterways (IW) certification for a better background on the special hazards and techniques for boating on canals and rivers and transiting locks. They should take seminar NRDL – Navigating Rivers, Dams &

Locks to obtain this endorsement. Paddle boaters (i.e., those operating canoes or kayaks) should obtain the PAD endorsement by taking the Paddle Smart seminar. Boaters using sail boats **must** complete the appropriate sail courses to be certified to operate those types of craft. Specifically they are:

- SA Endorsement: Sail or Sail 101 & 102 Courses (sufficient for Inland Navigator level of endorsement as well as the next level).

Endorsement seminars

Operators wishing to cross into Canadian or Mexican waters should qualify for the following endorsements by taking the indicated seminars:

- CAN – Boating in Canadian waters: complete seminar CAN – Canadian Regulations
- MEX – Boating in Mexican waters: complete seminar MEX – Mexican Regulations
- EURO – Boating in Europe: complete seminar EURO – European Regulations

The completion of any other courses, seminars, or skill demonstrations is optional for this level.

Stopping

Coasting Stop
Quick Stop
High-Speed Stop

Holding Position

Holding Bow into Wind
Holding Stern into Wind

Turning Maneuvers

Low-Speed Turn
Pivot turn using directed thrust and/or pivot turn
Using rudder steering and prop walk
Sharp Turn
Avoidance Turn
High-Speed Turn

Driving Backward

Backing Toward the Wind
Backing Downwind

Returning to a Dock

Small Angle Approach
Small Angle Approach with Prop Walk
Large Angle Approach
Spring Line
Docking - Downwind Docking
Close Quarters Docking

Returning to a Slip

Upwind Approach
Crosswind Approach
Backing into a Slip

Securing a Boat

Knots
Lines

Directions: The certifier should ask the skipper (member being certified) for his or her driver's license. **If the member does not present a current license, they cannot be certified.** The certifier then asks the member to do each of the steps listed below. The sequence can be altered based on the situation. For example, if the boat is on a mooring leaving the mooring would come first. The use of horn signals is optional, based on local practice, and safety considerations, but the skipper should be prepared to give them, if needed. Navigation rules must be obeyed. The following skill demonstrations can be found in detail with graphics, in the US Sailing "Start Powerboating Right!" manual. Candidates are encouraged to obtain a copy of this manual from HQ's thru your SEO. Candidates will be asked to demonstrate competence in executing all of the following maneuvers.

Component Skills:

Leaving a Dock

- Back-away Departure
 - Departure Using Directed Thrust Steering **and/or**
 - Departure Using Rudder Steering and Prop Walk
- Straight-Ahead Departure
- Spring Line Departure
 - Springing off with an Aft Spring Line
 - Springing off with a Forward Spring Line
- Doubling a Line

Leaving a Slip

- Departure Using Directed Thrust Steering **and/or**
- Departure Using Rudder Steering and Prop Walk

Starting

- Using the Throttle Control

Certification Checklist Inland Navigator

This is a checklist that can be used by a member to track his or her progress towards certification at the above level. Look also for the Official Certification Passport available at USPS Hqs.

Requirement		Date Met	Instructor or Certifier
Courses			
	NASBLA Approved Safe Boating Course		
	Seamanship		
	Engine Maintenance (EM)		
	Marine Electrical Systems (ME 101)		
Seminars			Instructor
	How to Use a Chart Seminar		
	Onboard Weather Forecasting Seminar		
	Using GPS Seminar		
	VHF Radio and VHF/DSC Marine Radio (VHF)		
			Certifier
	BPH – Basic Power Boat Handling (USPS skill demonstration or US Sailing SPH program)		
	FE – Use of Fire Extinguishers		

Notes

1. To be certified to operate a sailboat, the appropriate endorsement is also required.
2. Either two additional seminars, excluding endorsement seminars or one additional course completes the seminar requirements.

Optional Endorsements:

	Code	Seminar or Course
	IW	Navigating Rivers, Dams & Locks
	PAD	Paddle Smart
	SA	Sail or Sail 101 & 102
	CAN	Canadian Regulations
	MEX	Mexican Regulations
	EURO	European Regulations

Note: To be certified to operate a sailboat, the appropriate endorsement is also required. At this level, completing the Sail course or Sa 101 & Sail 102 is sufficient. To be certified to operate a paddle craft, the PAD endorsement is required.

Skill Demonstration Instructions

Skill: BPH Basic Powerboat Handling

Location: Marina or mooring where boat is and nearby waters.

Boat: Using a boat up to 7M (23 ft.) LOA, provided by member; must have current VSC sticker and have all required safety equipment aboard. Boat must have a rigid bottom and wheel steering. It can be inboard, outboard, or I/O drive but must only have a single engine.

Certifier's Qualifications: Should be experienced with type of boat being used.

Conditions: Fair weather; light winds and current; minimal waves; daylight

Crew: Minimum number required for demonstration. The member being certified, all crew and certifier must wear PFD's for the entire demonstration.

Certifier's Role: The skipper and crew must handle the boat; 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.

Materials Needed: a cushion or other object to use in the person overboard demonstration, dock lines, fenders, anchor, and anchor rode. Member being certified must have a current driver's license.

Criteria for Success: The skipper should follow generally accepted practices of good seamanship. Any accident, manifestly dangerous action, or significant breach of the navigation rules, or repeated inability to accomplish a step results in an unsuccessful demonstration. If that occurs, the certifier should offer advice on correcting or avoiding the problems and direct the member to take the "US Sailing Safe Powerboat Handling" program from a Master Advanced Certifier.