



**United States Power Squadrons
Nautical Program
Standard Operating Procedure
Effective 10/2023
Supersedes 01/2023**



This document describes the nautical cooperative charting program, which consists of the following survey types:

- Aids to Navigation (ATON) surveys
- Bridge surveys
- United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) chart survey
- NOAA Chart Survey
- Marina surveys (any facility is eligible that provides services of interest to a cruising boater)

Within each of the survey types are reporting options. Included with each survey type is a discussion on its purpose and reporting frequency. Suggested preparations and materials for conducting each type of survey are presented so all is well prepared in advance of the survey. The requirements for conducting a survey and credits awarded for approved reports are also described in detail. After a survey is completed, complete the appropriate form and worksheets. Problems with Aids to Navigation and Bridges should be reported to the Coast Guard or appropriate waterway management authority. All reports should be submitted to the Cooperative Charting Committee using the submittal form on the Cooperative Charting website. The data for the report is to be provided on the appropriate form that will be uploaded along with any pictures, chartlets or other associated documents. A member of the Cooperative Charting Committee will review the report and assign the appropriate number of credits if approved. After a marina survey report is approved, the information will be forwarded to Cruisers Net for them to update their marina database information. If errors are found or the information is incomplete, the submitter will be advised via email of what actions are needed to gain acceptance.

The Cooperative charting year will be from 01 January to 31 December and reports must be submitted within 30 days of the observation. Reports submitted after the end of the year will be credited in the following year.

The programs and the total credits for each report are listed in below:

ATON reports to USCG or other waterway management authority (OWMA)

ATON discrepancy/ATON	25
ATON verification/ATON	15
ATON inspection reports	
No discrepancies: 1 to 10 ATONS	15 then 5 for each additional 20 ATONS or portion thereof
Non USCG discrepancies	5
Non USCG discrepancies that are repaired by the surveying squadron	10

Bridge reports to USCG

Bridge discrepancy/bridge	35
Bridge verification/bridge	25

Chart reports to USACE

Chart discrepancy/item	25
------------------------	----

Chart reports to NOAA

Chart discrepancy/item	25
------------------------	----

Marina surveys

New marina	35
Existing marina	25

The credits awarded will be tracked by the Committee and used to recognize individuals, squadrons and districts as listed below:

Individual Honor Roll Requirement	Calculated annually
Squadron Honor Roll Requirement	Calculated annually
District Honor Roll Requirement	Calculated annually
#1 Individual	Based on percentage of honor roll requirement
#1 Squadron	Based on percentage of honor roll requirement
#1 District	Based on percentage of honor roll requirement

Aids to Navigation Survey

Some Recommended Materials

Latest chart(s) edition

GPS device with WAAS or DGPS enabled

Digital camera, GPS enabled

Pencil and paper or a small tape recorder

Binoculars

Timing device

NOAA chart(s) at

<https://devgis.charttools.noaa.gov/pod/helpDocFiles/NOAACustomChartQuickStartGuide.pdf>

USCG Light List at <https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=lightlists>

Local Notice to Mariners at <https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=lnmMain>

The Aids to Navigation (ATONs) survey is a program where the purpose of the program is to compare what is observed during the survey with what appears in print in the USCG Light List.

The USCG Light List is a publication in seven volumes that gives information on lighted navigation aids, unlighted buoys, radio beacons, and radio direction finder calibration stations, day beacons and RACONS. Information for each light can include its name and location, geographic coordinates, light characteristics, height, range of light, type of structure on which it is mounted, and remarks.

Each volume contains aids to navigation in geographic order from north to south along the Atlantic coast, from east to west along the Gulf coast and from south to north along the Pacific coast. It lists seacoast aides first, followed by entrance and harbor aides listed from seaward. Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) aids are listed last in geographic order in the direction from New Jersey to Florida to the border of Texas and Mexico.

The listings are preceded by an introduction and glossary.

ATON Verification/Discrepancy/Inspection Reports

Squadrons will be allowed to report on ATONs once each year.

Report Requirements

ATON Discrepancy – Attach the following to the report.

Must notify the USCG and attach a PDF copy of the report or their response. If contact was made by phone or VHF radio, provide details of contact.

Photograph of ATON. The photograph must contain position coordinates as well as a date/time stamp. The position and date stamp can either be imprinted on the photo or within the photo properties.

Enter the Light List number, Light List Volume and ATON name in appropriate report fields or attach a chartlet with the inspected ATON highlighted if ATON is not listed in the Light List.

ATON Verification – Attach the following to the report.

Photograph of ATON. The photograph must contain position coordinates as well as a date/time stamp. The position and date stamp can either be imprinted on the photo or within the photo properties.

Enter the Light List number, Light List Volume and ATON name in appropriate report fields or attach a chartlet with the inspected ATON highlighted if ATON is not listed in the Light List.

ATON Inspection – Attach one of the following to the report.

Excel or PDF file that contains the following information of the ATONs inspected with
Chart number (if available), name and location of waterway OR
ATON number, coordinates and characteristics.

Chartlet with the inspected ATONS highlighted.

USCG Light List page(s) with the inspected ATONs highlighted.

Note: ATON Inspection reports are designed to cover two scenarios:

Allow members who boat on waters not under USCG jurisdiction to participate in the program.

Squadrons and/or districts on non-USGC waterways can make arrangements with that waterway's management to report their results.

Allow members who want to report on multiple USCG ATONs without providing a photograph and other detailed information that is required for an ATON verification report.

Reports will be submitted, selecting ATON Inspection as the report type.

Special note: If there is a discrepancy in a Light List ATON inspection, take the time to report the discrepancy as an ATON discrepancy following procedures outlined above.

Procedure

Confirm the following conditions about each aid checked. Report any inconsistency to the Coast Guard as an ATON discrepancy. Report serious discrepancies to USCG by appropriate means depending on the nature of the problem:

Critical-report immediately by VHF radio or other means where failure to report could result in loss of life and/or property.

Urgent-report by phone after returning to shore where failure to report may result in no danger of loss of life or property, but could contribute to a stranding, grounding or collision.

Routine-report by phone or email where failure to report could result in a very slight chance of grounding or stranding, but corrective maintenance is needed. These can also be reported by utilizing the Coast Guards discrepancy reporting system at <http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=atonOutageReport>

Check the on-scene observation of the aid against the aid's characteristics in the Light List. From the aid's name in the Light List, discern the aid type, the aid color, the aid's number or letters, the latitude and longitude, deployment schedule, whether it is a Federal or Private aid, electronic equipment, sounding devices, fog signals, signal characteristics, light, light color, light characteristics, RACON, light height, etc. The aid type, the aid color, the aid's number or letters, etc. must be clearly visible in the photograph.

Compare the on-scene observation of the aid against the Light List and chart. Verify the location (LAT/LONG Fix) of the aid. Do not report off station unless it is at least 150 feet from its designated location. Scan the aid for discrepancies. Any discrepancies should be reported to the Coast Guard as stated previously. Photograph the aid for the report and/or Coast Guard verification.

Bridge Survey

Some Recommended Materials

Latest edition of the chart(s)

GPS device with WAAS or DGPS enabled

Digital camera with GPS enabled

Pencil and paper or a small tape recorder

Binoculars

Timing device

VHF radio to verify communications

Form(s) 7055 at <http://www.usps.org/oysterbay/7055.xls>

NOAA chart(s) at

<https://devgis.charttools.noaa.gov/pod/helpDocFiles/NOAACustomChartQuickStartGuide.pdf>.

USCG Light List at <https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=lightlists>

Local Notice to Mariners at <https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=lnmMain>

Bridge Lighting and Other Characteristics at

https://www.usps.org/images/Exec/CoopCh/PDFs/USCG_Bridge_Admin_SOP.pdf

Bridge Verification/Discrepancy Reports

The bridge survey is a program where the purpose of this program is to compare the bridge condition with the characteristics it is supposed to have listed in the Bridge Lighting and Other Characteristics document.

Squadrons will be allowed to report on bridges once each year.

Bridges that commercial vessels pass under will have the characteristics listed in the Bridge Lighting and Other Characteristics document. Otherwise, bridges that no commercial vessels pass under (i.e. recreational vessels), may not have the characteristics listed in the Bridge Lighting and Other Characteristics document. USPS Form 7055 will be used to report only bridge discrepancies. Form 7055 is not needed for bridge verifications. These forms are available on the Cooperative Charting web page. Completed forms should be submitted with the report on the Cooperative Charting website.

Report Requirements

Bridge Discrepancy – Attach the following to the report.

Must notify the USCG and attach their response.

Photograph(s) of bridge. The photograph must contain position coordinates as well as a date/time stamp. The position and date stamp can either be imprinted on the photo or within the photo properties.

Completed Form 7055

Enter the USCG Light List number, Light List Volume and bridge name in appropriate report fields if the bridge is listed in the Light List.

Bridge Verification – Attach the following to the report.

Photograph(s) of bridge. The photograph must contain position coordinates as well as a date/time stamp. The position and date stamp can either be imprinted on the photo or within the photo properties.

Enter the USCG Light List number, Light List Volume and bridge name in appropriate report fields if the bridge is listed in the Light List.

Procedure

Compare the bridge lighting to the Bridge Lighting and Other Characteristics from the Coast Guards Bridge Administration Program and report any discrepancies on Form 7055. Check the clearance gauges for damage and readability. Check any regulatory signs for readability and damage. Check for any bridge signaling devices or communication signs. Contact the bridge operator via radio to verify quality of signal. Check fender system for damage, deterioration or other problems. Check for obstructions into the navigable channel.

Report serious discrepancies to USCG by appropriate means depending on the nature of the problem:

Critical-report immediately by VHF radio or other means where failure to report could result in loss of life and/or property.

Urgent-report by phone after returning to shore where failure to report may result in no danger of loss of life or property, but could contribute to a stranding, grounding or collision.

Routine-report by phone or email where failure to report could result in a very slight chance of grounding or stranding, but corrective maintenance is needed. These can also be reported by utilizing the Coast Guards discrepancy reporting system on their web site:

<http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=atonOutageReport>

Discrepancies should be recorded on Form 7055 (internal Power Squadron use only) and reported to the Coast Guard. Photograph the aid for the report and/or Coast Guard verification.

USACE Chart Survey

Some Recommended Materials

Latest edition of the chart(s)

GPS device with WAAS or DGPS enabled

Digital camera with GPS enabled

Pencil and paper or a small tape recorder

Binoculars

USACE chart(s) Google Earth KML: [KML Download \(ienccloud.us\)](#)

USACE chart(s) IHO S-57 cells: [Charts Download - S57 Format \(ienccloud.us\)](#)

USACE chart(s) ESRI shapefiles: [Charts Download - SHP Format \(ienccloud.us\)](#)

USACE email notification: agc-ienc@usace.army.mil

Chart Discrepancy Reports

The USACE chart survey is a program where the purpose of the program is to compare the features of the chart(s) (either missing or additional items) with on-scene observation(s). The acceptable report area covers the Mississippi River system and its tributaries. The IENC Discrepancy reporting tool will be used to file chart discrepancies. Squadrons will be allowed to report on chart features once each year.

The Chart Discrepancy report will be two parts:

- 1) completing the IENC Discrepancy report to USACOE
- 2) filing the report data to receive credit

It is suggested to keep the data for each report in a separate computer file as it will be used more than once in the submittal.

Report Requirements

Chart Discrepancy – Attach the following to the report.

Must notify the USACE and attach the email notification.

Upload the PDF file of the IENC discrepancy report.

Photograph of feature. The photograph must contain position coordinates as well as a date/time stamp. The position and date stamp can either be imprinted on the photo or within the photo properties.

Chartlet indicating change of feature or absence of feature.

Note: Up to five (5) chart discrepancies can be submitted in one report. However, each discrepancy must have its own separate IENC discrepancy report form attached.

Procedure

Items that can be reported include bridge names, charted river crossings (submerged and/or overhead, power lines, ferry crossings, etc.), charted features (marinas, industrial facilities). Information to be provided includes observation date, location of observation (river, river mile marker), a list of discrepancy features. Photograph the discrepancy feature for the report.

Submit a discrepancy to the USACE using the IENC Discrepancy Reporter. Use the computer browser print function to print a copy of the report before clicking the “submit” tab. **This information will be needed for the Nautical Report.** USACE will send an email confirmation shortly after submittal. **A copy of this Confirmation notice and the copy of the reported items are REQUIRED to be uploaded in the Nautical report.**

Accessing the IENC Discrepancy Reporter

Go to the following URL:

<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/23c7285fd65e4a6481da30bb91beccfc>

The tool can be used on a mobile device or computer.

Using the IENC Discrepancy Reporter

Email

An email address is necessary to get a response to a report.

Customer type

Use the drop-down menu to choose type of user.

Describe the discrepancy

Include detailed information regarding the discrepancy or issue that was found.

Product type

IENC, Paper Chart book, Other

Enter observation date.

Location of Discrepancy

Enter the location by typing it in or picking the location from the map.

Attach File (optional)

Add an image or a file

Once the report has been submitted, if an email is requested, a confirmation email will be sent in approximately 10 minutes acknowledging receipt.

NOAA Chart Survey

Some Recommended Materials

Latest edition of the chart(s)

GPS device with WAAS or DGPS enabled

Digital camera with GPS enabled

Pencil and paper or a small tape recorder

Binoculars

NOAA chart(s) at

<https://devgis.charttools.noaa.gov/pod/helpDocFiles/NOAACustomChartQuickStartGuide.pdf>

USCG Light List at <https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=lightlists>

Local Notice to Mariners at <https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=lnmMain>

Chart Discrepancy Reports

The NOAA chart survey is a program where the purpose of the program is to compare the features of the chart(s) (either missing or additional items) with on-scene observation(s). The acceptable report area may cover the entire NOAA chart or a portion of the chart. Chart Discrepancies will use the ASSIST Discrepancy reporting tool to file the report. Squadrons will be allowed to report on chart features once each year.

The Chart Discrepancy report will be two parts:

- 1) completing the Assist Discrepancy report to NOAA
- 2) filing the report data to receive credit

It is suggested to keep the data for each report in a separate computer file as it will be used more than once in the submittal.

Report Requirements

Chart Discrepancy – Attach the following to the report.

Must notify NOAA using the ASSIST Discrepancy Reporter.

Upload the PDF file of the ASSIST Discrepancy report.

Photograph of feature. The photograph must contain position coordinates as well as a date/time stamp. The position and date stamp can either be imprinted on the photo or within the photo properties.

Chartlet indicating change of feature or absence of feature.

Note: Up to five (5) chart discrepancies can be submitted in one report. However, each discrepancy must have its own separate ASSIST form attached.

Procedure

ATON chart discrepancies are NOT to be reported using NOAA Chart Survey. Use the Aids to Navigation Survey to report ATON discrepancies. Items that can be reported include sunken features such as wrecks, rocks, or other obstructions that may cause groundings. Any feature that is charted as “Visible” but was not seen upon inspection. Another item is charted islands that are no longer visible, etc. Information to be provided includes observation date, location of observation using the format recommended by NOAA, and a list of discrepancy features. Photograph the discrepancy feature for the report.

Submit a discrepancy to NOAA using the ASSIST Discrepancy Reporter. Use the computer browser print function to print a copy of the report before clicking the “submit” tab. **This information will be needed for the Nautical Report.** No email confirmation will come from NOAA. A copy of the reported items are **REQUIRED** to be uploaded in the Nautical report.

Accessing the NOAA Discrepancy Reporter

Go to the following URL:

<https://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/customer-service/assist/>

Click on “Ask a Question/Report an Error”.

Click on “Report an Error” tab to bring up report form.

Using the NOAA Discrepancy Reporter

Email

An email address is necessary for a report.

Enter the location by typing it in or picking the location from the map.

NOAA prefers DMS format, but the other choices are acceptable.

Customer type

Use the drop-down menu to choose type of user. Enter “Boating Organization”.

Under Type of Organization enter “U.S.Power Squadron”. Enter the 4-digit squadron number under USPS ID.

Describe the discrepancy

Include detailed information regarding the discrepancy or issue that was found.

Product Type

Select the chart type from the drop-down menu.

Enter date of observation.

Attach file (optional).

Add any additional supporting image or file.

Marina Survey

Some Recommended Materials

Latest chart(s) edition

GPS device with WAAS or DGPS enabled

Digital camera, GPS enabled

Pencil and paper or a small tape recorder

NOAA chart(s) at

<https://devgis.charttools.noaa.gov/pod/helpDocFiles/NOAACustomChartQuickStartGuide.pdf>.

Existing Cruisers Net database marinas: <https://cruisersnet.net/utills>

Username: AmericasBoatingClub

Password: USPS1914

Marina survey form at https://www.usps.org/images/Exec/CoopCh/PDFs/Blank_Marina_Form.pdf

Report requirements

Attach the following to the report.

Complete the report by filing out all the appropriate fields from the information obtained during the marina visit.

Photograph of marina. The photograph must contain marina name, position coordinates as well as a date/time stamp. The position and date stamp can either be imprinted on the photo or within the photo properties.

Business card or marina brochure

There is a limit of one marina per report.

Procedure

Squadrons will be allowed to report on marinas once each year unless significant changes have occurred. To submit a new marina survey or update an existing one, a site visit is required. In Cruisers Net database, either select a marina by name or region. Also contained in the database is the last survey date. Their marina information can be viewed 3 ways: downloaded, printed or viewed on line. Verify that services of interest to a cruising boater (transient dockage, fuel, mechanical/electrical repairs, etc.) are available with a marina representative and then complete the marina survey forms appropriately. Facilities such as private yacht clubs, private community marinas, etc. should NOT be surveyed. Obtain a photo of the marina or surrounding area that shows the marina and a business card or marina brochure.



Revision History:

10/2023: Updated revision date. Added Supersedes date. Added NOAA chart survey to list of cooperative charting programs. Changed marina surveys from a marina being required to have transient dockage to any facility providing services of interest to a cruising boater. Updated ATON inspection report credits awarded for No discrepancies: 1 to 10 ATONS: 15 then 5 for each additional 20 ATONS or portion thereof. Deleted USACE chart verification credit. Added NOAA chart discrepancy credit. Added to the ATON discrepancy section that the Coast Guard response should in pdf format and all details must be listed for phone or radio contact. Added to all photograph listings that the position and date stamp can either be imprinted on the photo or within the photo properties. In the ATON Discrepancy and ATON Verification sections, combined the last 2 sentences together. Updated all USACE hyperlinks. Deleted all references to USACE Verification reports. Inserted and defined the process used to file USACE discrepancy reports. Inserted and defined the process used to file NOAA discrepancy reports. Updated marina survey photo requirements to include the marina name. Changed marina survey business card or brochure from optional submittal to required submittal. Changed marina surveys from a marina being required to have transient dockage to any facility providing services of interest to a cruising boater. Added facilities such as private yacht clubs, private community marinas, etc. should NOT be surveyed to marina survey section.

01/2023: Updated revision date. Page 6, added “Bridges that commercial vessels pass under will have the characteristics listed in the Bridge Lighting and Other Characteristics document. Otherwise, bridges that no commercial vessels pass under (i.e. recreational vessels), may not have the characteristics listed in the Bridge Lighting and Other Characteristics document”. Amended procedure to not require a completed Form 7055 for bridge verifications, but for discrepancies only. Deleted need to submit completed Form 7055 for bridge verification report.

07/2022: Updated revision date. Page 1, deleted “that make submitting a report a rewarding experience”. Removed all you/your references throughout the document and replaced with passive/direct instructions. Page 3, deleted “or on a nautical chart” and “that is well worth the reading even by seasoned boaters”. Removed all new program since the restart of the nautical cooperative charting program references throughout the document. Page 5, added “the aid type, the aid color, the aid’s number or letters, etc. must be clearly visible in the photograph”.

01/2020: Removed district review of reports. Adjusted point values: ATON discrepancy 50→25, ATON verification 25→15, ATON inspection (no discrepancies 1-10 ATONS) 25→15 and Bridge discrepancy 50→35.

05/2020: Updated title. Reorganized the first sentence of the procedure and added the United States Army Corps of Engineers chart survey work. Deleted the end-of-the-year report January 15th cutoff submission date and replaced it with reports submitted after the end of the year will be credited in the following year. Added USACE chart survey work credits. Added USACE chart survey work instructions (some recommended materials, chart verification/discrepancy reports, report requirements and procedure).

11/2020: Added marina surveys and marina surveys geographic eligibility into the survey types of the first sentence of the procedure. Added the information that our survey results will be forwarded to Cruisers Net after report approval. Added marina survey credits. Deleted all references and links to the Adopt-a-Chart program. Inserted marina survey program procedures.