



United States Power Squadrons Nautical Program Standard Operating Procedure (Revised 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 surveys
- Marina surveys (any marina is eligible that provides transient dockage, i.e., Great Lakes, rivers, inland lakes, US coastal waters, etc.)

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
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 verification/item	15

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://www.charts.noaa.gov/ChartCatalog/MapSelect.html>

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 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 their response.

Photograph of ATON. The photograph must contain position coordinates as well as a date/time stamp.

Enter the Light List number, Light List Volume and ATON name in appropriate report fields OR

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.

Enter the Light List number, Light List Volume and ATON name in appropriate report fields OR

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://www.charts.noaa.gov/ChartCatalog/MapSelect.html>

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.

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.

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: http://ienccloud.us/ienc/web/main/ienc_011.cfm

USACE chart(s) IHO S-57 cells: http://ienccloud.us/ienc/web/main/ienc_009.cfm

USACE chart(s) ESRI shapefiles: http://ienccloud.us/ienc/web/main/ienc_010.cfm

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

Chart Verification/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. Squadrons will be allowed to report on chart features once each year.

Report Requirements

Chart Discrepancy – Attach the following to the report.

Must notify the USACE and attach the email notification.

Photograph of feature. The photograph must contain position coordinates as well as a date/time stamp.

Chartlet indicating change of feature or absence of feature.

Chart Verification – Attach the following to the report.

Must notify the USACE and attach the email notification.

Photograph of feature. The photograph must contain position coordinates as well as a date/time stamp.

Chartlet indicating feature.

Procedure

Confirm the accuracy of the charted features. 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). Photograph the feature for the report and/or USACE verification. In the email to the USACE, information to be provided includes observation date, location of observation (river, river mile marker), a list of discrepancy features and a list of verification features.

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://www.charts.noaa.gov/ChartCatalog/MapSelect.html>

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 position coordinates as well as a date/time stamp.

Optional: 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 transient dockage is available with a marina representative and then complete the marina survey forms appropriately. Obtain a photo of the marina or surrounding area that shows the marina.

Revision History:

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.