



Date: 15 May 2020

Purpose: Provide direction for conducting virtual vessel examination via bi-directional mobile communication devices equipped with cameras; to facilitate visual verification of safety equipment and standard safety items per vessel examination criteria.

Rationale: United States Coast Guard; Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19); Auxiliary Guidance Message ALAUX; May 5, 2020 states that Auxiliarists are precluded from Coast Guard missions with any risk of exposure to COVID-19. Do not request patrol orders or assignment to duty unless an authorized OIA has specifically requested Auxiliary support for a mission. Further, Auxiliarists should recognize the uncertain nature of COVID-19's scope and its potential to spread. Additionally, Auxiliarists should follow current guidance as it is disseminated by the Chief Director of Auxiliary office (CG-BSX-1). More information can be obtained by reviewing the Auxiliary Frequently Asked Questions at <https://uscg.mil/Coronavirus/Auxiliary/>

Note: The virtual vessel examination is intended to supplement the prescribed Vessel Examination Program only. The virtual vessel examination is not intended to replace the current vessel examination program or protocol specified within the Vessel Safety Check Manual, COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 16796.8 nor replace any instruction in the Auxiliary Manual COMINST M16790.1G; SECTION B.13.a.

The virtual examination is **NOT** an official examination therefore the official 7012 and 7012a will not be used. However, excerpts from the official forms are attached for use and should be shared with the requestor/vessel owner prior to the examination.

No VSC Decals will be awarded. This is an information and equipment confirmation only.

Auxiliary time will be recorded on the **7029 Form; Section 99 B.** Standard Form 7038 will **NOT** be applicable.

1. Virtual/visual means will be used to maintain social distancing and compliance with Coast Guard guidance and Coast Guard Auxiliary public interface restrictions while continuing to promote recreational boating safety.
2. Conducting the exam will require the vessel examiner and the vessel owner to be equipped with mobile devices and applications which will provide real-time access to communicate and visually reference equipment being checked.
3. There are many programs available for video sharing including Facetime, Zoom, Skype and others. Any bi-directional visual tools which are acceptable to both parties will suffice. The vessel owner should be able to share images of the safety item to be inspected at the time of examination (Realtime Image). The Vessel Examiner must provide clear instruction to gain and determine accurately, condition, operation, dates, placards, proof of ownership, registration documents, hull numbers, etc., to determine compliance.
4. The Vessel Examiner may advise vessel owner as to any known safety requirement or deficit and provide recommendation for optional carriage.
5. The Vessel Examiner may also offer to retain information until such a time that an Official Vessel Examination can be conducted at an appropriate and authorized time.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher Wilson
Director Vessel Examination

