

Currents

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Hot topics

- **USCG drops “PFD “Type” labels. What does this mean to us? (see article on this page)**
- **New Navigation Rules Handbook (see article on this page)**
- **Changes in Educational Department Staffing for 2015 (see page 2)**
- **USPS expands social media on Facebook with EdDept effort (see page 4)**



Hot Links

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New PFD Standards—No “Type” Labels

For many years we have used and taught the “Type” classification of life jackets or Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) specified under federal regulations. However, the USCG and others have concluded that the “Types” are not understood by the boating public and are, in fact, confusing.

As a result, federal regulations have been changed to drop these classifications from PFD labels. The **Federal Register** volume 79 number 183 (pages 56491-56500) of September 22, 2014 promulgated the USCG final rule to remove references to type codes (Type I, II, III, IV, V) in its regulations on the carriage and labeling of CG approved personal flotation devices (PFDs).

This action facilitates future incorporation by reference of new industry con-

sensus standards for PFD labeling that more effectively convey safety information, and is a step toward harmonization of our regulations with PFD requirements in Canada and in other countries. By the way, although the term life jackets is used in much of the new USCG documents, they still prefer PFD for the formal regulations and standards as that term includes non-wearable aids such as throwable devices.

The Coast Guard is working with the PFD community to revise the classification and labeling of PFDs. When completed, this information will be updated and hopefully be somewhat easier to understand. A Standards Technical Panel, which includes representatives from the USA and Canada will be recommending a new North American Standard.

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New Navigation Rules Published

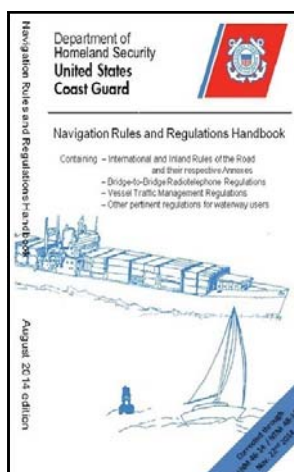
The new USCG *Navigation Rules & Regulations Handbook, August 2014 Edition*, supersedes Commandant Instruction M16672.2D *Navigation Rules: International-Inland*. The USCG navigation rules book is now titled *Navigation Rules and Regulations Handbook*.

The new handbook contains International and Inland Rules of the Road and their

respective Annexes, Bridge-to-Bridge Radiotelephone Regulations, and Vessel Traffic Management Rules.

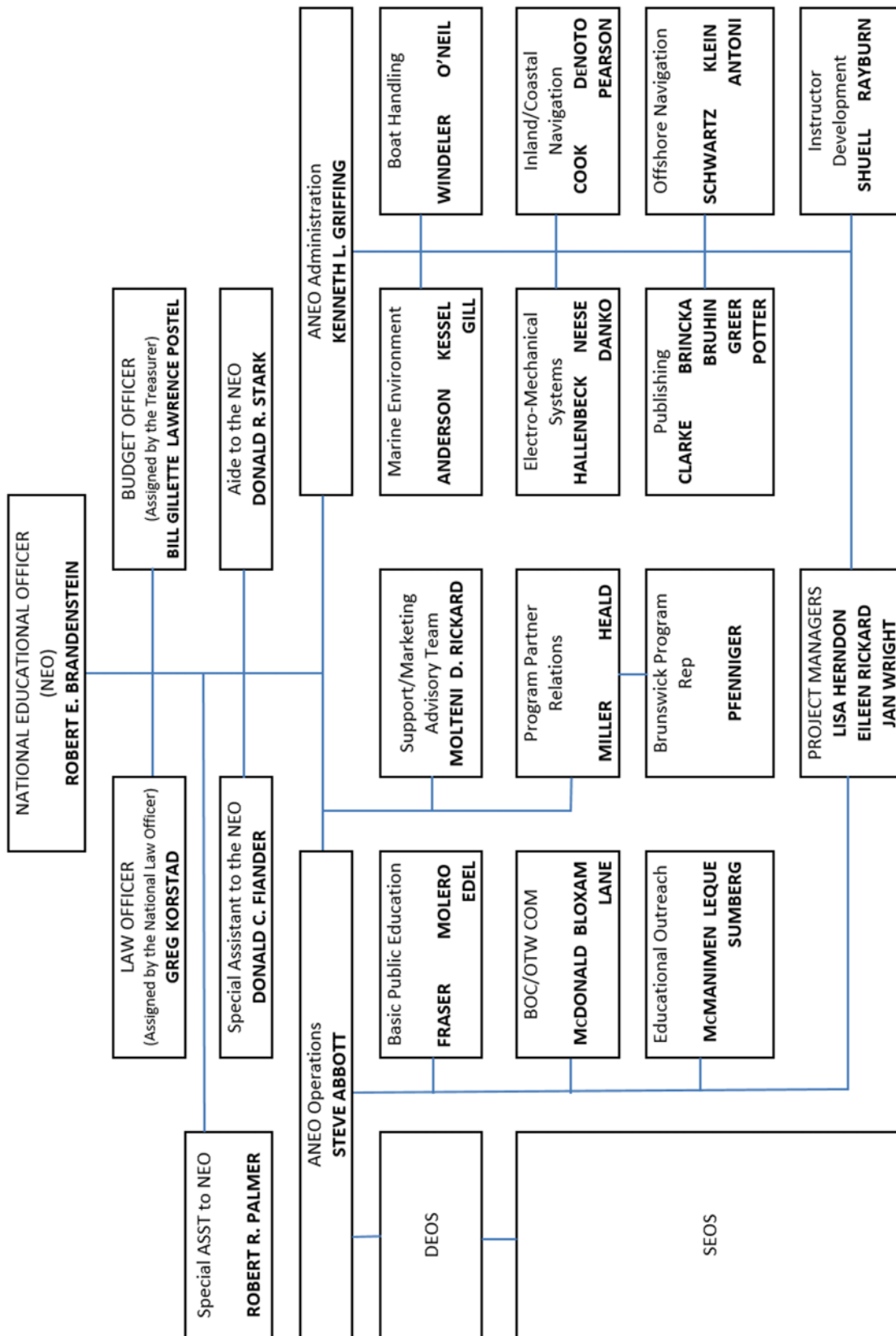
The Inland Rules in this book replace the old Inland Rules, Western Rivers Rules, Great Lakes Rules, their respective pilot rules and interpretive rules, and parts of the Motorboat Act of 1940.

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2015 EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

(Effective 24 January 2015)



Updated 31 December 2014

(PFDs -Continued from page 1)

In the meantime, the current labels, while no longer required under federal law, can continue to be used and we can continue to explain them in our classes. Furthermore, each PFD sold for use on a recreational boat must be provided with a guide to selection entitled "Think Safe – Choose the Right PFD". These pamphlets are tailored to the kind of PFD to which they are attached and are used by the boating public to ensure they are purchasing an appropriate device.

The Coast Guard also notes in the Federal Register that requirements for carrying PFDs are not affected and that existing labels can continue to be used until new standards are set. Also, PFDs meeting the old standard will remain acceptable for their lifetime.

What impact does this have on us as boating educators? For the time being, the impact is minimal as this is just the first step in a long process of standard setting and rule making which will probably take several years.

We should let our students know that the Type designations will be phased out and eventually we will have new standards. In the meantime, it is important that they have an approved device aboard for each person that is suitable for their type of boating.

We will continue to urge that life jackets be worn. We will also make the changes to our ABC material in accord with NASBLA (National Association of State Boating Law Administrators) standards for public courses.

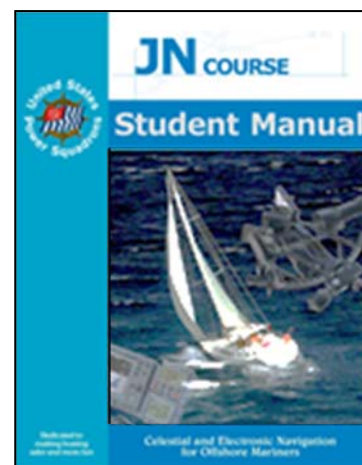
Requirement for Meridian Transit Sight to Be Moved to JN

Although GPS is the primary navigation method offshore as well as near shore, a backup is always needed. (No, another GPS will not always suffice as it can be damaged or rendered inoperative by the same event that impacts your primary GPS!)

Most mariners agree that using a sextant to take a meridian transit sight on the sun, commonly called the noon sight, and the subsequent calculation of latitude, is extremely important in the offshore environment. Currently USPS teaches the calculation of latitude

from meridian transit sights on the sun in Junior Navigation (JN) but does not require it to be part of a Sight Folder until the student takes the Navigation (N) class. The Offshore Navigation Committee agrees that this seems a bit convoluted, especially since Junior Navigation is focused on sun sights.

Effective with the publication of the updated JN12 Student Manuals, which should ship to students in a few months, a meridian transit will be required for the JN Sight Folder. The requirement for a meridian transit of the sun in the N Sight



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(Rules-Continued from page 1)

Boundaries for the Inland Waters are set forth in the Implementing Rules section, "Waters Which Certain Rules Apply". The Handbook is a welcome addition to our recreational boating documents and for use as reference material when updating and developing our courses and seminars.

The new regulations are not available yet in printed form from the US

Government printing office, but commercial versions are available, from Amazon, e.g., or you can

download the new handbook at this URL:

http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/pdf/navRules/CG_NRHB_20141118.pdf



For your smart phone, scan the QR code shown.

Larger vessels (12 meters or more (39.6 ft.)) are required to carry a copy of the regulations. The USCG says that an electronic copy will suffice, if readily available (i.e., can be accessed within 2 minutes).

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www.usps.org/eddept

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(MT Sight-Continued from page 3)

Folder will be dropped upon publication and shipping of the next N Student Manual.

At the present time, we recommend that JN instructors add the meridian transit as a requirement to the JN Sight Folder. Not only is this good experience using the sextant, but it helps the student understand the concepts taught in the Student Manual.

Look for: *JN Course Updates* on the Junior Navigation web site *JN Course Downloads* page at:

<http://www.usps.org/national/eddept/jn/downloads.htm>

This page has a description of the recommended procedure for this addition to the Sight Folder. A detailed Power Point presentation is also provided that discusses three methods of computing the observer's latitude from the sight data for use by instructors and students.

EdDept Tapped to Take Social Media Lead

The national Educational Department has a lot to offer to help USPS forge a new social media strategy for 2015 and has been tapped to take the lead with a new Facebook campaign as a first step in this effort. The goals are to (1) broaden public awareness of the educational products and services that USPS has to offer; (2) allow prospective consumers to sample the quality of those products and services, hear what other consumers have to say, and get to know us; and (3) help those consumers decide to get their boating education from us in our classrooms, on-the-water, and online.

"Today's consumers do pre-purchase research and form opinions before we even know they're looking at our products," said team leader P/C Jan Wright, AP (vjanwright1@comcast.net), who recently completed an MA in Professional Communications and Leadership. "Our Facebook campaign will help them get to know us and form positive opinions about our educational offerings and our organization." Our core campaign will comprise 104 educational nuggets (equivalent to two years of

weekly messages). The nuggets will contain original USPS educational content of value to the recreational boating community and others interested in boating safety. They will provide educational content and links; engage viewers to check their knowledge and identify gaps; spark discussion, shared experience, and fun; and showcase USPS expertise and friendly customer service. And they will make it easy for viewers to find the USPS courses they need and sign up.

"The campaign will be a team effort under Jan Wright's leadership," said P/R/C Robert Palmer, SN. (aneorpp@mindspring.com), "and it is a necessary, and good first step in harnessing the power Facebook offers to expand our market to the millions of people who use social media." We will collaborate with USPS's subject experts and our publishing and marketing teams to develop the original content and branded photos, graphics, and video clips we need in keeping with best social media practice.

We also need your help in two ways. First, we invite all members, instructors, public relations officers, and squadron leaders to share suggestions, stories, and high-

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*Information also will be
available on the ID course,
new teaching ideas, recer-
tification seminar, and oth-
er projects of the ID Com.*

resolution photos that illustrate educational concepts or their on-the-water application and showcase USPS as the "go to" organization for recreational boating education.

Second, we invite you to join us on our Facebook page—www.facebook.org/uspowersquadrons—to engage with our posts and share them when our Facebook campaign goes live this spring. With your enthusiastic support, more people will *Come for the Boating Education... Stay for the Friends!*SM