

PREVENTION DIRECTORATE - NAVIGATION SYSTEMS DIVISION

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR:

ATON (Aids to Navigation), PATON (Private Aids to Navigation) VERIFICATION, BRIDGE INSPECTION AND CHART-UPDATING PROGRAMS

- A. Private Aids Verifier (AV) Program: On federal navigable waters, PATON (Private Aids to Navigation) Verification and Bridge Inspections are the responsibility of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. In order to participate in the Aid Verification and Bridge Inspection Programs a member must be a qualified Aids Verifier (AV).

Note: This qualification is not required for participation in reporting discrepancies for any Federal or Private ATON's or Bridges ("come upon's") nor is it required for reporting discrepancies for the Chart-Updating Program.

1. Initial Qualification: To qualify as an AV, a member must have participated in a D13 AV Workshop (about 8 hours) covering the Verification and Inspection Programs and must have passed the exam with a passing grade of 80% or better. Only the DSO-NS or an authorized SO-NS officer (who has been designated by the DSO) can administer the workshop and exam. Any other procedures must be approved by the DSO-NS-13.

An AV requirement since late 2011 is to complete an AV PQS (Personnel Qualification Standard). Attendees should endeavor to sign-off ~33% **before** the Workshop and ~15% at the AV Workshop.

As depicted on page 8 of the PQS, each AV must also show proof of having passed the following to take the AV workshop and to be properly certified in AuxData:

- i. ICS-100 and ICS-700
- ii. BQ (or AX). A national recommendation is also that an AV should be at least crew qualified unless he/she wants to do PATON verifications and Bridge inspections by land only.
- iii. 8 Hour Team Coordination Training (or 4-hour Auxiliary-specific TCT)
- iv. Additionally, all members must have completed the Mandatory Training classes.

After completing the D13 AV Workshop presentations and Exam, the Instructor reviews the AV PQS with the attendees, endeavoring to sign-off as many of the Tasks as justified, and as time allows. Remaining Tasks need to be signed-off by local AVs who feel confident in the Task element questions.

After completing the AV PQS, the AV-applicant forwards it to the DSO-NS who reviews, then submits the following to DirAux:

- (i) A copy of the completed PQS pages 7 and 8 (Record of Completions). Note: Task E is the D13 AV Workshop and Exam.
 - (ii) Include from their FSO-IS, sign-off's which reflect their successfully completing the two ICS classes and TCT-4 (or -8), and verifies the member having a BQ (or AX) qualification. *[deleted]*
 - (iii) A recommendation for AV certification, written by the DSO-NS, is included.
2. Maintaining AV Certification: Per D13 policy, each qualified AV should process at least one assignment (PATON Verification, Bridge Inspection, or "come-upon" discrepancy report) every year to stay qualified.
 3. Regaining AV Certification. A previously qualified member who fails to meet above mentioned currency maintenance requirements may regain certification by conducting one Private Aid Verification or Bridge Inspection under the supervision of a qualified AV or/and completing any P/ATON workshop.
 4. Process of Assignments: Assignments are given by the Prevention Department Waterways (dpw) in Seattle via a forwarded email notification of availability on a website (<http://www.uscg.mil/d13/dpw/>) to all SO-NS officers usually by the end of

March of each year. These assignments are then distributed to the respective FSO-NS officers for further distribution to qualified AV members. Although assignments should be done by August 31st of each year, D13-dpw just asks that every effort be made to complete all of the listed bridges and PATON within the calendar year annually. The Prevention Department Waterways Branch has all of the forms available on-line year round. The DSO-NS-13 is responsible for a smooth workflow and timely process of all assignments and support to all SO-NS officers.

- B. PATON Verification or Bridge Inspection Patrols: Verifications or Inspections can be done by boat or car (some – where justified). A qualified AV member can request a patrol by boat or be part of one such patrol in order to do the AV work, or can conduct their NS activity by land or other means - in specific circumstances (ensuring that they comply with "Assignment to Duty" parameters in the Auxiliary Manual Ch2.B.4-5, 2.B.18; Ch4.F.11, Ch4.G.4, Ch5.J.3-7 and Operations Policy Manual Ch2.A.7). PATON and Bridge forms (documents) are furnished to the SO-NS officers, who then forward them to FSO-NS, who then make copies of their “AOR” assignments and distribute them (email preferred) to qualified AV members. The Study Guides for PATON Verifications and Bridge Inspections refer to and itemizes the equipment required for AV work.
- 1: AVs will not board, replace, adjust or climb on any aid for any reason.
 - 2: AVs do not have the authority to direct a PATON owner to make changes to their navigation aid.
- C. After-Action Requirements: All processed forms must be returned to D13 dpw within 48 hours of verifications or inspections, to show that they are watching properly or are discrepant. Electronic submittals are to: d13-pf-paton@uscg.mil for PATONs and d13-pf-d13bridges@uscg.mil for Bridges. Unauthorized PATON’s or discrepant ATON’s should also be reported to Prevention Department Waterways Branch, Seattle (dpw). Additionally, all discrepancies are to be reported immediately (during or at the end of Patrol) to the nearest CG Sector by radio or phone, 24 hours/day. Sector Puget Sound (206-217-6001,2,3); Sector Columbia River (503-861-6211, 12); or Sector North Bend (541-756-9212).
- D. Application for PATON: A qualified AV can assist a private party or entity in the application process for installing a new PATON. He/she should refer the potential PATON owner to contact D13 Waterways Branch-ATON (dpw) at (206) 220-7285 to request a PATON Application (CG-2554) questionnaire. An application questionnaire may also be found at <http://www.uscg.mil/d13/dpw/paton.asp> or by e-mailing d13-pf-paton@uscg.mil to request one. All further correspondence is resolved between the applicant and the USCG, Waterways Branch, Seattle, WA (dpw) directly.
- E. Discrepancy Reporting. Any member may report ATON, PATON or Bridge discrepancies (“come upon’s”). This consists of reporting any problem (discrepancy) with an Aid to Navigation that prevents it from serving its intended function. Discrepancy Reporting also includes bridge fender condition and bridge lighting. Discrepancies shall be immediately reported to the nearest CG Sector by radio or phone, 24 hours/day (see above for numbers), with a Form -NS7054.xls (P/ATON) or NS7055.xls (Bridge) also being submitted to D13 Waterways Branch-ATON (dpw). Note: Proper discrepancy report processing includes ascertaining that the discrepancy has not yet been reported - via review of the most recent Local Notice to Mariners and contact with the relevant NS Staff Officer. Any requested Post Storm Survey patrols (which summarize all Federal ATON’s found to be watching properly) shall be reported on a Form NS7054.xls.

- F. Chart Updating Program. Any member may participate in the Chart Updating Program, which consists of reporting landmarks and/or topography that are new and those that have been removed or changed. Also, any discovery by members of shoaling depths, and gathering of documentation of waterfront changes (i.e., from engineering offices) are valuable input. This permits charts to be updated by NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOS). Such changes should be reported in the CU Web online reporting system (<https://www.ccweb.noaa.gov/cuweb/>) as soon as possible. The report is then reviewed (online) by the DSO-NS and submitted to NOAA. A CU Web Users Manual can be downloaded from the website to assist with system details.
- G. Chart Updating Requirements: It is strongly suggested that any member wanting to submit chart-updating information to NOAA have attended a Chart-Updating Workshop. Chart Updating may be done from land or while on-water patrol. The Chart Updating Program can include providing updates to any of the following:
1. Chart Updating
 2. Coast Pilot Corrections
 3. **Note:** All chart-updating information to NOAA must be submitted via CU Web where it waits in a queue for the DSO-NS-13 to review and verify its accuracy, credibility and completeness. CU Web= <https://www.ccweb.noaa.gov/cuweb/>
- H. NE Program. If a CG ATON Unit is soliciting, a member may participate in the maintenance, troubleshooting and repair of Federal ATON's by working with an Aids to Navigation Team (ANT) or buoytender. To qualify in this program, the Auxiliarist must attend a Minor Aids to Navigation School and complete sufficient on-the-job training. Upon completion, the member will receive the Coast Guard "NE" designation with authorization to service Federal ATON's. This requires a long-time commitment by an auxiliary member and must be approved by the USCG.
- I. Mission Hour Reporting. All members engaged in any ATON, PATON, or Bridge inspection activity (and complying with "assignment to duty" parameters) shall report their hours on the Mission Activity Report (form 7030/ Individual), separate from the coxswain's Mission Activity Report (in AOM) for the OPFAC. This form shall be completed and forwarded to their FSO-IS. Failure to submit this form will result in the member not being credited for their NS Program hours or activities. Only one AV may take credit on any one 7030/Individual for a P/ATON/ Bridge. (I.e., use multiple 7030/Individual forms for multiple AVs.) Also, the number of P/ATONs or bridges completed is the number of assignments (i.e., the number of Verification Sheets or Bridge Inspection Packets) – **not** the number of lights. Plus, the AV needs to enter some number for PATONs and/or Bridges verified on their 7030/Individual for AuxData to reflect their NS activity.

(For any questions or recommendations, please call/email either the DSO-NS-D13 or the ADSO-NS for your D13 Area).