

## FIFTH DISTRICT SOUTHERN REGION AUXILIARY POLICY MANUAL

## CHAPTER 11 – AIDS TO NAVIGATION AND CHART UPDATING PROGRAM

- Ref: (a) Memorandum of Understanding Between Chief, Directory of Auxiliary and Chief, Office of Bridge Administration, U.S. Coast Guard, for Employment of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in support of the Coast Guard's Bridge Administration Program, 29 February 1996.
- (b) Coast Guard Auxiliary Aids to navigation Program, COMDINST 16500.16 (series).
- (c) Auxiliary Manual, COMDINST M16790.1 (series).
- (d) Rescue and Survival System Manual, COMDTINST M10470.10E (series)

A. GENERAL. Auxiliarists are encouraged to participate in the Aids to Navigation and Chart Updating Program (AN/CU).

1. The Aids to Navigation Program provides for Auxiliary participation in several forms: observation of assigned Private Aids to Navigation (PATONs); reporting of discrepancies noted on Federal Aids to Navigation (ATONs); working with the Coast Guard on the servicing and repair of minor ATONs; surveying bridges over navigable waters in accordance with Reference (a) for discrepancies in operations, lighting, signage, fender system and safety of repair and construction operations; and providing administrative support to the 5<sup>th</sup> Coast Guard District, Office of Aids to Navigation (CG D5 (dpw)) and to Aids to Navigation Teams (ANTs) at their locations throughout the District. ATONs can be observed from a vessel, aircraft or from land.
2. Chart Updating, under a cooperative agreement with the National Ocean Service (NOS) of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), involves reporting to NOS needed corrections in nautical and aeronautical charts, Coast Pilots and marine facility data. No special qualification is required for Chart Updating, but training is included in Aids Verifier courses and in member training at the flotilla level.
3. To submit a verification report on a PATON or an ATON requires a qualification of Aids Verifier. Anyone can report that a PATON or an ATON is discrepant. To participate in servicing and repairing ATONs requires a higher level of training and hold a qualification of Minor Aid Technician "NE", having been so designated by the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

B. AIDS VERIFIER QUALIFICATION (AV)

1. Training for Aid Verifiers consists of a full day of classroom and practical work under the supervision of a designed Aids Verifier Examiner. Course work covers nautical and aeronautical charts, projections, private and federal aids, their characteristics and discrepancies. The course also included the use of a sextant, a hand bearing compass, GPS, plotting tools and the use of a three-arm protractor. The course also covers bridges, bridge lighting, fender systems, signage and discrepancies. Also covered in the

course are chart updating, the Coast Pilot and Auxiliary reporting and record-keeping procedures. To satisfy the requirements of Enclosure (1 to Reference (b) the candidate learns these topics and completes a series of tasks, which are signed-off on the *Private Aids Verifier Sign-Off Sheet*, Figure 11-B-1 and completes a written end of course examination. It is no longer a requirement that a candidate must be Boat Crew qualified to become an Aid Verifier. The Boat Crew requirement still is required to become an Aid Verifier Examiner or to begin the "NE" program. Upon successful completion of the one-day training course, the DSO-AN endorses the *Private Aids Verifier Sign-Off Sheet* and delivers it to the Director recommending that the member be certified as an Aid Verifier. The certified Aid Verifier is authorized by Reference (c) to wear the Operations Program Ribbon or a 3/16 bronze star for the additional qualification. It is highly recommended that a Division-level AN/CU training patrol be conducted within a month after the Aid Verifier Certification class to make use of the training in an operational environment.

2. Maintenance of the Aid Verifier qualification requires that it be used. Effective 1 January 2000, each Aid Verifier is required to complete at least one acceptable CG-5474(AUX) *Aids to Navigation Report* and attend one AN/CU workshop at the flotilla, division, area or district conference level, if one is offered. Reports not completed in a given year will be added to the requirement for the next year. Failure to complete the total in a two-year period will result in the loss of the Aid Verifier qualification. Re-qualification will require successful completion of a new Aid Verifier class.

C. AID VERIFIER EXAMINER (AVE) Aid Verifier classes and task sign-offs are conducted by Aid Verifier Examiners. They thus serve as both instructors and examiners. Aid Verifier Examiners are appointed by letter by the Director at the recommendation of the DSO-AN. The criteria established for qualification as an Aid Verifier Examiners are as follows:

1. Aid Verifier Experience. The candidate should have at least one year of experience as an Aid Verifier, and should have submitted a minimum of at least five valid 5474 reports. At least one valid Chart Updating (NOAA 77-5) or a Coast Pilot revision is also recommended. FSO/SO-AN experience is a plus.
2. Boat Crew or Coxswain level is required to become an Aid Verifier Examiner.
3. Instructor Experience. The candidate should be a certified Auxiliary Instructor (IT) with at least one year of IT experience and should have participated in planning and conducting at least one full day Aid Verifier class.
4. Division Captain (DCP) Endorsement. The candidate should have requested Aid Verifier Examiner designation by letter to the DSO-AN, citing specifics of meeting the above criteria and receive a favorable endorsement from their DCP. The DSO-AN will

review such requests and will recommend to the DCO/VCO and the Director that an Aid Verifier Examiner designation letter be issued.

5. As contrasted with Qualification Examiners, the role of the Aid Verifier Examiner includes both instruction and certification. An objective has been established of having at least one active Aid Verifier Examiner per division. Aid Verifier Examiners should be well informed on AN/CU matters, experienced instructors and willing to give active support to the AN program.

#### D. AIDS TO NAVIGATION TECHNICIANS (NE).

1. In today's funding and resource limited environment, the Coast Guard is making increased use of the Auxiliary as a force multiplier in all phases of the Coast Guard Aids to Navigation Program. Starting in 1995, in accordance with Enclosure (2) of Reference (b), selected Auxiliarists are undergoing special training conducted by the District Training Team from the 5<sup>th</sup> Coast Guard District Office of Aids to Navigation (CG D5 (dpw)) assisted by local Aids to Navigation Teams (ANTs). Upon completion of the classroom and bench training (usually three to four days), trainees perform practical work servicing Federal Aids to Navigation under Coast Guard supervision for approximately six months or until the OINC of the ANT unit feels the Auxiliarist is qualified. The CO/OINC of the unit to which the Auxiliarist is assigned may then designate the individual as "NE" qualified. A copy of the qualification letter should be forwarded to the District Staff Officer – AN. The DSO-AN will then submit a letter to the Director's Office requesting the individual be named NE qualified. Only "NE" qualified Auxiliarists are employed in the Federal Aids to Navigation Program; they are authorized to service only those minor aids as directed by the CO/OINC of the responsible ATON unit, but in waterways remote from active duty Coast Guard resources, may be required to perform independently of the Coast Guard.
2. Because the work is potentially hazardous, physically demanding and must be performed to high standards, and to conserve scarce Coast Guard training resources, criteria have been established for entry into "NE" training. Accordingly, Auxiliarists will meet the following criteria before being allowed to enter "NE" training.
  - a. The candidate must have been certified by the Director of the Auxiliary, Fifth District Southern Region, as an Aids Verifier.
  - b. The candidate must have been certified by the Director of the Auxiliary, Fifth District Southern Region, as at least Boat Crew qualified.
  - c. The candidate should, in the judgment of the Flotilla Commander, be physically capable of performing aid-servicing tasks. The candidate should be able to meet physically demanding tasks such as climbing a ladder, handling heavy batteries, day boards, solar panels and lamp changers and moving between a small facility and the aid in a seaway. Physical characteristic necessary for these types of tasks include agility and range of motion adequate to enable carry a fifty pound load unaided for

thirty feet along a deck and for rapid climbing of steel rod ladders, no hearing disability that would restrict reasonable ability to communicate on the job in high winds, corrected vision adequate for close electrical and mechanical work and have reasonable endurance.

- d. The candidate must have indicated a commitment to performing the work of servicing aids on the water.
  - e. The candidate must have the recommendation of their Flotilla Commander, taking account of the previous criteria and the endorsements of the Division Captain.
3. Once an Auxiliarist has been designated a Minor Technician “NE” by the CO/OINC of the ANT unit to which they are assigned and approved by the Director of the Auxiliary they are qualified to service Federal Aids to Navigation. “NE” qualified Auxiliarist are required to work in pairs, with neither of the pair serving as operator of the facility from which they are servicing the aid if they are not under the direct supervision of the active duty Coast Guard. The requirement to work in pairs can be reduced to one “NE” if the “NE” does not climb the aid or leave the facility. “NE” qualified Auxiliarist are restricted to working and servicing fixed Aids to Navigation, unless specifically directed, in writing, by the CO/OINC of the responsible ANT unit.
  4. “NE’s” are assigned to an ANT team and as such, have the same requirements, as does the active duty.
    - TCT requirements - First and foremost is the requirement by all active duty personnel and any Auxiliarist working with an active duty unit, in an operational capacity to have the initial 2 day/16 hour TCT course followed by an 8 hour refresher course within two years of the original 2 day/16 hour course. If the member fails to receive this 8-hour refresher, then the 2 day/16 hour course must be repeated. If the member continuously meets the 2 year/8 hour refresher course, in theory they would never have to attend the 2 day/16 hour course again.
    - PPE requirements - All Coast Guard operations are conducted with a major concern towards safety. There is no direct specific guidance written that spells out what PPE shall be worn when conducting Osprey nests removal. However, there are other specific minimum mission PPE requirements that shall apply:
      - PFD/Anti-Exposure Coveralls/Dry Suit (all of which is determined by ref (d))
      - Safety shoes
      - Eye protection
      - Gloves
      - Long sleeve shirt rolled down
      - Long pants
      - Dust mask
      - Hard Hat

- Because of the known health hazards associated with the dust, debris and nitrates in the nests, in addition to the hazards involved in climbing a buoy or fixed aid, the above listed items are considered the minimum protective gear requirements. Coast Guard Auxiliarists who perform Osprey nest removal within the 5th SR shall adhere to the above listed requirements in addition to those stated below.
    - In lieu of wetting nests down, all members of the removal crew and members of the boat crew shall remain upwind from the nests during the operation. (This is an attempt to minimize exposure to airborne dusts and particulates.)
    - All operations performed, with regard to Osprey nest removal, shall be conducted only when specifically tasked by the ATON Officer in Charge of that respective area.
    - Coast Guard Auxiliary NE qualified personnel are not to train other Coast Guard Auxiliarists in Osprey nest removal.
  - When not working under direct active duty Coast Guard supervision, a minimum requirement of two (2) Aids To Navigation Technician, (NE qualification), Auxiliarists. These Auxiliarists shall work together as a pair, neither one of the pair may serve as the operator of the facility from which they are working.
5. Attention is invited to Reference (b) regarding requirements for Coast Guard orders to Auxiliarists servicing Federal Aids. Work performed will be reported on the Activity Report – Mission report form, using Category 30, describing the aids serviced, the nature of the mission and the authority requesting the mission.