Auxiliary Private Aid to Navigation (**PATON**) Program

I.   Introduction:

Private Aids to Navigation (PATONs) are authorized by the U.S. Coast Guard in accordance with Federal law, and are to be maintained by, and at the expense of the owners of the aid.   The Auxiliary Navigation Systems Division is assigned the responsibility for:

1. Verifying all PATONs on a CG determined periodic basis,
2. Reporting non-permitted PATONs observed in public waters, and
3. Reporting any PATON discrepancies that are observed.

Verifications and reports of non-permitted PATONs are made by AVs (Aid Verifiers) currently certified and qualified Auxiliarists, and ensure that private aids are in compliance with the conditions published on the First District Web-based Private Aid to Navigation System.

II.   Authorized Activities:

The Auxiliary PATON program involves verifying PATONs, reporting non-permitted PATONs, reporting discrepancies that are observed on PATONs, and assisting CG Units and ANTs with PATON activity.

A "PATON Verification" is defined as an on-site review of a private aid to ensure that the authorized hardware is installed as approved in the Private Aid permit as listed in the Web-Based Private Aid to Navigation System, in the Light List and on the NOAA chart of the area, and whether the PATON is watching properly.

The goal of the Navigation Systems Division is to encourage and train active participation by Auxiliarists in the PATON Program.

The Auxiliary's PATON Program can contribute significantly to the Coast Guard Aid to Navigation Program by the following authorized activities:

1. **"Verifying" Private Aids to Navigation at the direction of the Coast Guard.**

    a. Currently certified and qualified AV-Aid Verifiers and their OPFACs are authorized assignment to duty to support and augment the Coast Guard Auxiliary Private Aid to Navigation (PATON) Verification Program.

    b. Participation in the PATON Verification Program is limited to those Auxiliarists who are currently certified and qualified as an AV-Aid Verifier.

    c. Observing a PATON normally includes location (fix), depth of water, color, numbering and lettering, lighting, characteristic of light on the aid, sound signals

and overall condition of the aid. Comparisons of data shown in the Light List, the PATON's database record and on the current nautical chart(s) to the on-scene observation of the PATON are also included, while being aware that many private aids may not be listed in the Light List, nor be charted.

d. This PATON Program activity may be performed by foot, by car or on an Auxiliary OPFAC that is currently inspected & accepted and under valid patrol orders.

e. PATON "verifications," including reports showing discrepancies and PATONs found watching properly, are reported to the Coast Guard using the **Web-Based Private Aid to Navigation System**.

f. Aids Verifiers must also report all PATON activity to AUXDATA on a 7030 Activity Report Mission – Individual form, as a Mission 31.

2. **Acting as the eyes of the Coast Guard ANTs or Units by observing PATONs as they transit their AOR. Observations of private aids also include:**

a. Every Auxiliarist should observe every PATON that they pass when underway and report all observed discrepancies to the Coast Guard. Participation in this activity is open to every Basic-Qualified (BQ'ed) Auxiliarist.

b. PATON discrepancies can be observed while on a regular Auxiliary patrol, or can be "Casual Observations" of discrepancies discovered while on a private, recreational, or commercial trip, on foot or on a vessel.

c. These discrepancies should be reported to the Coast Guard on a *D1 Private Aid to Navigation Report* form available on the District NS web site, or, if AV qualified, through the Web-Based **PATON Database System**.

d. AuxData credit for this discrepancy report activity should be taken on a *7030 Activity Report - Mission – Individual* form as a Mission Code 31. AuxData credits for private aids casually observed as "watching properly" are not allowed.

3. **Identifying non-permitted private aids and reporting their location, characteristics, and names of the aid owners to the Coast Guard.**

a. Only AV qualified members may perform this activity.

b. Non-permitted Aid reports are submitted to the Coast Guard on a D1 Private Aid to Navigation Report or equivalent through the Auxiliary CG ANT Liaison in your AOR.

c. AVs must also report this activity to AUXDATA as a discrepancy on a *7030 Activity Report Mission – Individual* form, as a Mission 31.

4. **Assisting and augmenting PATON administration ashore functions of any Coast Guard unit or DPW under the direction of the C.G. unit.**

    a. The various tasks associated with the PATON Program include:

- Reviewing submitted AV Verification Reports on behalf of the CG ANT or Unit.

- Maintaining PATON records and files at the CG ANT or DPW.

- Contacting PATON owners at the direction of the CG ANT or Unit regarding compliance resulting from AV-Aid Verifier Discrepancy Reports.

- Scheduling follow-up verifications by AV qualified Auxiliarists for PATONs that are reported as corrected by PATON owners.

- Coordinating PATON permit updates and inquiries with the DPW at the direction of the Coast Guard.

- Members must be assigned to duty by the CG unit or Auxiliary Staff Officer in order to perform these ashore functions.

    b. Auxiliarists report their time for this activity on a *7030 Activity Report Mission – Individual* form, as a Mission 41 referencing the CG Unit for whom the work was performed.

III. AV – Aids Verifier Qualification

Members pursuing AV qualification should be currently or formerly boat crew or coxswain qualified. If not, they must complete the following sections of the Boat Crew Qualification Guide: BCM-02-08 through 02-14 tasks addressing survival equipment, and BCM 06-01 through 06-08 tasks or equivalent training. This ensures that AV candidates have on-the-water knowledge in safety and of Aids to Navigation systems.

AV qualification is obtained by:

1. Attending a district sponsored Aids Verifier training program. Prior to attending the class, the candidate must download and read the pre-class readings that will be located on the district NS web site, and pass an open book exam to ensure the readings were completed.

2. Passing an open book exam with a grade of 90% or better at the completion of the class.

3. Performing the supervised verification and reporting of three PATONs and the reporting of this PATON activity to both the Coast Guard and to AUXdata. These verifications must be done under the supervision of an AVQ – Aid Verifier Qualifier.

- AVQs are experienced, currently certified and qualified AVs who have been designated by the DSO-NS to perform AV training.

4. On successful completion of the 3 supervised inspections, the AVQ will notify the DSO-NS. The DSO-NS will check that the candidate meets all of the above criteria, and the DSO will then notify DIRAUX that the member has completed all requirements and requests certification as an Aids Verifier.

IV. Restrictions:

1. Auxiliarists may not climb or board any Private Aid to Navigation.

2. Auxiliarists are not allowed to pull a private aid to short stay in order to determine its exact position. Therefore, a private aid will always be reported by the Auxiliary as located anywhere within its watch circle. Auxiliarists are trained to take fix and depth reading for floating aids upwind or up-current from the aid in order to minimize the watch circle error.

3. Auxiliarists may not enter private property without following the district procedures for gaining access to the property where the private aid exists.

4. Auxiliarists may not repair, correct or reset any Private aid to navigation.

V. Currency Maintenance

1. In order to maintain their AV qualification, each AV qualified member must be active in the program, and is required to have filed at least two ATON, PATON or Bridge reports annually. These reports must have been properly reported to the Coast Guard, as well as into AuxData. Reports that are acceptable for currency maintenance are:

   - An ATON (Federal Aid) discrepancy report.
   - A PATON (Private Aid) discrepancy or verification report, or
   - A Bridge discrepancy or annual survey report.

2. Failure to maintain annual currency will result in going into REYR status.

3. Failure to perform the currency procedures for five (5) consecutive years will result in loss of qualification. The member will then be required to meet the initial qualification criteria in order to regain qualification.

VI. <u>References:</u>

The following references will aid you in completing the required study in the AV PQS.

- COMDINST M16500.7A USCG Aids to Navigation Manual – Administration

- United States Coast Pilot - http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/nsd/coastpilot.htm.

- The Light List - http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/pubs/LightLists/LightLists.htm

- The LNM – Local Notice to Mariners - http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/lnm/default.htm

- Traditional Paper Charts - http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/mcd/paperchart.html.

- NOAA Chart Catalogs: U.S. - http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/mcd/ccatalogs.htm.

- U.S. Chart Number 1 - http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/mcd/chartno1.htm.

- Dates of Latest Editions - http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/mcd/dole.htm.

- Title 33, United States Code, Section 883b.

- Title 14, United States Code, Section 141.

- Title 14, United States Code Section 823a.

- Title 14, United States Code, Section 827 and 828.

- USCG Aid to Navigation Booklet – ANSC 3022.