United States Coast Guard Auxiliary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

First Northern Navigation Systems
We verify the AtoNs and PATONs, check the Bridges, and update the Charts of First Northern

How to become AV (Aid Verifier) Qualified

Navigation Systems watch words are *Professionalism*, *Credibility*, *Accuracy*, *Timeliness* and *Service* to the Coast Guard. Aid Verifiers work directly with the Coast Guard as direct support of their Private Aid to Navigation and Bridge programs.

The Navigation Systems (NS) program is heavily computer oriented. AV candidates will need access to a broad band Internet connection and be proficient with Word, Excel and PowerPoint. The NS computer system requirements use an on-line PATON Reporting System Database, called Harbormaster, and an on-line Bridge Reporting System. We also use on-line Open CPN NOAA Charts. All of the required computerized navigation documents that an AV, will need to use, are on our Navigation Systems Web Site at www.uscgaan.com. We are not able to teach you basic computer technology. But, we can teach you how to use the two NS reporting systems and how to use and interface GARMINmaps 78s GPS sets. We will also show you how to download and use the OpenCPN NOAA Charts and interface into these systems, the GPS and a personal computer - PC.

1. Every Aid Verifier Candidate (AVC) must be Basically Qualified (BQ, AX or AX2) in order to participate in AV training programs and perform as an AV. We welcome Boat Crew Program trained Auxiliarists since the majority of our field work is performed aboard OPFACs.

2. Every AVC must have completed Mandated Training in order to participate in the AV Training Program. Mandated Training must always be current.

3. Everything that an AV will need to know about the Private Aid (PATON) and Bridge Navigation Systems programs is available on the ***D1NR Navigation Systems Web Site*** at **www.uscgaan.com**.

4. Advise the DSO-NS Frank Larkin at FrankJLarkin@verizon.net of your intention to complete the AV Qualification Program. Include your e-mail address so you can be added to the Navigation Systems Mailing address. You will start to receive copies of the latest issues of the Navigation Systems Newsletter and AV Training notices.

5. **Print out the** "***District Specific AV Qualification Guide***" available on the NS Web Site at www.uscgaan.com.

   - This check-off explains and lists all of the District specific tasks that must be completed as part of your AV qualification process.

- There are a significant amount of required readings that are part of your qualification process. Generally, these readings cover background information that every AV needs to know to be effective in the field. This information will assist you when you are in the field checking or verifying private aids and bridges,

- There are many navigational reference documents that each AV must learn how to readily access and use in the field. These documents are referenced in this guide and are available from the Navigation Systems Web Site at no charge. These documents are continuously being updated by the Coast Guard, NOAA and the D1NR District Staff.

- This District Specific Task Guide also lists 18 groups of tasks that define specific skills that an AV must acquire during the qualification process.

- **AVC**s **(Aid Verifier Candidates)** may use any qualified and current AV as their mentor to assist with their AV training.

- The ADSO-NS for the AOR is qualified to check-off AVs as they acquire knowledge and skills. A Boat Crew QE – Qualifying Examiner must check off all required Boat Crew tasks. Currently qualified and current Coxswains are not required to be re-checked on these boat crew tasks.

- Formal training programs are available. Schedule dates for this training will be published in the Navigation Systems Newsletter and on the Navigation Systems Website.

- Underway on-the-job training will be required as part of Aid Verifier training.

6. **Print out the** "*AV/PQS Performance Qualification Standard*" from the NS Web Site-www.uscgaan.com. It is available in the PATON web page.

    - This National AV Task check off list references all of the National-designated training requirements that an AVC (Aid Verifier Candidate) must complete in order to become a qualified AV-Aid Verifier.

    - Use any qualified and current AV to assist you as a mentor.

    - The ADSO-NS Staff Officer in your AOR is qualified to check off AVs as they acquire knowledge and skills. Formal training programs are also available. Schedule dates for this training will be published in the Navigation Systems Newsletters.

7. **Helpful Hints for becoming qualified quickly.**
    - Immediately check with your **MT Staff Officer** and sign up for the **_4-hour TCT course_** as soon as possible. This course must be completed for AV qualification and noted in your personnel record at DIRAUX. Show proof of this qualification to your Mentor who will sign off this task. The TCT Training leader updates your personal record when this task is completed. The CGAUX computer checks for these ICS qualifications and disallows AV updates when they are not recorded in an AVCs personnel record.

    - Immediately, check with your **MT Staff Officer** for information on completing **_ICS100_** and **_ICS 400._** Testing is available on-line. Be sure to send

copies of the completion certificates to COMO Belmore [Carolyn.V.Belmore@uscg.mil] at DIRAUX Cape Cod for entry into your personnel records. The CGAUX computer checks for these ICS qualifications and disallows AV update when they are not recorded in an AVC's personnel record.

- Immediately, check with your **MT or OPS Staff Officer** for information about Boat Crew training in your area. Get these prescribed tasks checked off by a QE on a standard Boat Crew Program Check Off form.

  - Show this documentation to your AV Mentor who will who check them off on the AV Task lists.

    - If you are already Boat Crew or Coxswain qualified, advise your AV Mentor who will check off the boat crew tasks as completed.

- Start the prescribed readings.

  - Download a copy of **Chart No.1** to your Desktop and review this document so you become aware of the various symbols and abbreviations found on a NOAA Chart and learn how to reference them in this document.

- While we use the "Corrected" Light List in our field work, for these tasks you will need to view a copy of the **USCG Light List** for the First CG District. [Open the "Most Popular" Web Page on the WWW-USCGAAN/COM Navigation Systems Web Site where you will find the "**Light List**" and the "**Corrected Light List**." Reference the front pages of the "Light List" to complete these tasks. These tasks will give you an overview of the Navigation Systems PATON and Bridge programs. You will not remember all of the minor details at this time but you need to be able to find the references to this data when needed in the field.]

  - Look up a few private aids in your area for practice.

  - Study the aid to navigation symbols, abbreviation and configurations located at the front of the **Light List**.

  - Read pages vi to ix about **Aids to Navigation**.

  - Read pages ix to xv about **Bridges.**

  - Read pages xv to xvi about **GPS and DGPS.**

  - Review the terms in the **Glossary of Navigational Terms** on pages xvii to xx.

  - Review the abbreviations used in the **LNM** on pages xxi to xxii.

  - Review the various **Light Characteristics** on page xxiii.

  - Familiarize yourself with all of the aids to navigation located in your area.

8. Plan to attend any special PATON training session that are scheduled on WebEX. Check the Navigation Systems Newsletter for dates and times.

9. Participate on as many PATON Patrols that you can during your training period. Your AV education training comes together when you can participate in practical activities while underway and on-scene at a private aid or a bridge. Check with the ADSO-NS in your area for underway opportunities.

10. **AVC**s should join or help form a Navigation Systems Team in their AOR.

11. When you feel your have completed your AV Training, check with the ADSO-NS in your area with your AV Mentor. In order for an AV to become qualified, the ADSO-NS in your AOR must review your two Check Off lists, must interview the AV to confirm that they have completed all of the requirements and are knowledgeable about private aids to navigation and bridges, and must notify the DSO-NS with their endorsement that the AV is qualified. Participation underway on PATON patrols is highly recommended.

12. The DSO-NS will submit the final endorsement to DIRAUX. DIRAUX will add the "AV" endorsement to the AVs personnel record and notify the AV that they are AV Qualified.

13. Upon receipt of the notification from DIRAUX, the AV can register on the Harbormaster System and notify the DSO-NS by e-mail. The DSO-NS will approve the AV's registration. Upon approval, the AV will be able to log onto the Harbormaster System and start to submit CG7054 PATON Reports on-line.