



# Up Top In Operations

February 2004

Monthly Newsletter of the National Operations Department

Volume 02

## NOAA'S UNITED STATES COAST PILOT NAUTICAL BOOKS – NOW AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET

*By Jim Duncan, DSO-AN 11 NR*

Acting upon President Bush's "E-Government" initiative to make information easily accessible to the public, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has made the set of United States Electronic Coast Pilot books available on the Internet. Provided by NOAA National Ocean Service's Office of Coast Survey, the set of nine volumes

serves as a supplement to NOAA's Electronic Navigational Charts (ENCs) and paper nautical charts. NOAA is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce.



The series of United States Coast Pilot nautical books cover the entire U. S. coast, including Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Great Lakes, the lower Mississippi River, Hawaii, Alaska and the Pacific Islands that are administered by the federal government. All nine volumes are available on the Internet at: <http://nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/nsd/cpdownload.htm>.

Coast Pilot contains supplemental information that is difficult to portray on nautical charts, such as channel and wharf descriptions, anchorages and bridge clearances.

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## REACHING HIGHER- THE CHALLENGE OF OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

*By Mark Simoni, DVC-OS*



Are you looking for a way to spice up your surface multi-mission patrols? Tired of the same training formula? Do you consider yourself the "best of the best"? Then the Auxiliary Operational Excellence program is for you. As our counterparts in the Coast Guard have done for many years, the Operational Excellence Program gives you a way to hone your skills and achieve a goal that many will not reach. Only excellence in operational performance will earn the Operational Excellence 'E-decal'.



*The program is not easy*, but it is achievable. All of the skills tested are skills once learned in the Boat Crew program. Operational Excellence asks

that you not just do the task, but **DO IT WELL, DO IT EFFICIENTLY and DO IT UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYE OF A JUDGE.**

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## DSO's & ADSO's for ATON

**Please apply** for the upcoming ATON "C" school in YORKTOWN VA to be held May 21-23, 2004. Obtain a training request from national forms site ANSC 7059/CG 5223, fill it in and indicate your position in the **ATON** program within your district. *Preference will be given to DSOs and ADSOs who apply early.* We plan on adding an electronic component and a "how to" session for AUXDATA credit. Please plan on attending and apply NOW!

**NOAA's US COAST PILOT—  
NOW AVAILABLE ON LINE  
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Although designed for professional mariners aboard ships of 1,600 gross tons or greater, Coast Pilot contains a host of information beneficial to recreational boaters as well.

In 2001, NOAA's Coast Pilot Branch began the first phase of gradually reworking the printed edition of the books, including changing the text fonts for clarity and emphasizing section headings to make information easier to find. Posting the nine Coast Pilot books on the Internet for browsing, downloading and printing is the second phase of this project.

NOAA's National Ocean Service is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. It balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.



On the Web:

**NOAA:**

<http://www.noaa.gov>

**NOAA National Ocean Service:**

<http://www.nos.noaa.gov>

**Office of Coast Survey:**

<http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/programs/cs/welcome.html>

**United States Coast Pilots:**

<http://nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/nsd/cpdownload.htm>

**WHILE ON PATROL... a minute with Charles Ford, BC-OES**

ATONs are the key to safe navigation in most inland waters especially those waters where shoals, rocks and other underwater obstructions. As Auxiliarists we can be of great benefit to boating safety by carefully noting the position, color, and condition of every ATON we pass.



ATONs have come a long way since the nineteen twenties and thirties when even the famous ICW along the Atlantic Ocean shores was marked by bush stakes in spots to indicate a bend in the channel or a plain stake indicating the channel course. Without local knowledge, the mariner would have no idea which way the channel turned or which side of the stake was the deep side. Now thanks to the Coast Guard and many states, counties, cities, and even private organization and clubs, ATONs (Coast Guard maintained) and PATONs (private maintained) are everywhere. If you find a need for a new aid contact the agency maintaining nearby aids. Give them a good reason and they may put one in for you.



Auxiliarists should be particularly attentive to ATONs and PATONs. You are in a position to check their position accurately with GPS or bearings. Generally the cognizant CG Station will be pleased to take your report and pass it on to the proper party. In some cases you will find the problem is corrected in 24 hours or less. There is a real feeling of satisfaction when you return from a trip where you have reported a missing range marker or lighted aid dark and you see that it has already been repaired or replaced as needed.

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**Operational Excellence**  
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The Auxiliary Operational Excellence program 'E-Decal' and ribbon will be awarded to a Team (coxswain & crew) after that Team has completed several proctored operational/Search and Rescue tasks.

All certified boat crewmembers are eligible to compete for this award. It must, however, be the same team throughout the entire testing process. The process does not need to be completed in a single session.

**The tasks include:**

- 1 Search Planning
- 2 Search Execution
- 3 Pump
- 4 Communications
- 5 Currency Maintenance Tasks

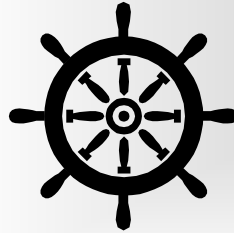
In order to be granted the Operational Excellence designation, the coxswain and crew must achieve a 90 out of a possible 100 points on these activities. Tough...yes! Doable...absolutely! Keep in mind, this is also a great way to start to train to compete at the International Search and Rescue Competition (ISAR) as well.

The COMDTNOTE describing and authorizing the Auxiliary Operational Excellence program can be found at the CHIDIRAUX website [http://www.cgaux.info/g\\_ocx/](http://www.cgaux.info/g_ocx/).

**Are you up for the challenge?**



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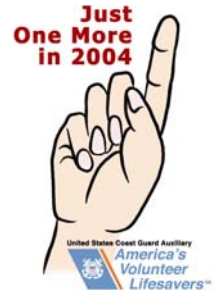
**CCWEB – THE FUTURE OF CHART UPDATING**

***By Jim Duncan, DSO-AN 11 NR***

**NOAA-NOS is working on a CG Auxiliary Cooperative Charting Website (CCWEB) reporting system.** The purpose of this Web site is to provide a seamless mechanism for handling the field data collected by Auxiliary members. This system will replace the current NOAA 77-5 form mailing process. Auxiliary personnel collect data in the field and input it onto a collection of forms using any Web browser. The data is then transmitted to NOAA-NOS. After this data has been validated, the information will be reviewed for quality by the NOAA to determine if it should be forwarded to the cartographers to update the nautical charts. CCWEB will allow participants to view the credits they received for a particular report. They will also be able to view their National ranking, and their Flotilla and District ranking.

NOAA-National Ocean Service doesn't have the budget to keep our charts updated without assistance. The proposal above is one of the ways to both cut costs and improve the collecting system.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary is, and should be, one of NOAA-National Ocean Service 'main players' in the gathering of chart information. Who knows our local waterways better than the U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary? The U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary-National Ocean Service Cooperative Charting Program is invaluable to Homeland Security and the high-level concerns about port security. There is great need for accurate data about our waterways and harbors in light of potential terrorist activity.



**DISTRIBUTION:**

