

NENA Standard for 9-1-1 Notifications and Coordination with the United States Coast Guard

Abstract: Recommendations and standards for coordination and information sharing between the 9-1-1 public safety community and the United States Coast Guard.



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1 Executive Overview

In addition to marine radio, wireless phones are the predominant tool used by the public when involved in an incident on or related to watercraft. Although there may be jurisdictional issues, as noted in this document, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) is the primary response agency for the navigable waterways of the United States. Currently, the USCG is not a primary answering point for 9-1-1 calls, so those calls from or related to watercraft are answered at established Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs).

PSAPs currently lack universal guidance as to whom they are to notify for incidents involving maritime vessels on navigable waterways in the United States. This has resulted in an inconsistency between awareness and response related to these events. In addition, there is currently no standardized guidance for PSAPs regarding when to notify the USCG about maritime events. PSAPs develop notification protocols with their local USCG units, which may be inconsistent and lead to delays in response. Under United States law, the USCG has responsibility and authority to enable standardized coordination with PSAPs for maritime incident response. Under 14 U.S.C., § 102, 521, 522, and 701, both the USCG and the PSAPs have a responsibility to the citizens, responding agencies, administrative authorities, surrounding PSAPs, and the local, state, and federal partners for which they serve.

This standard is a collaborative effort between the USCG and NENA to identify

- what information is needed,
- when and how the USCG should be notified,
- the regulations and statutes that prompt a notification to the USCG, and
- a basic template for PSAPs to work from when coordinating efforts with USCG units.

While some details (based on resources available in the area, and local or state response protocols) will need to be discussed between the local USCG units and the PSAP, this standard builds on the basic foundations for maritime incident response. With this information at hand, PSAPs can work to create a policy for a quicker, safer, more efficient, and effective response to maritime incidents.

The acronym PSAP is used throughout this document to mean Public Safety Answering Point and non-USCG points of interface for those needing emergency, non-emergency, or urgent assistance. An example would be an Emergency Communication Center.

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2 Document Conventions

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2.1 Document Terminology

This section defines keywords as they should be interpreted in NENA documents. The form of emphasis (UPPER CASE) shall be consistent and exclusive throughout the document. Any of these words used in lower case and not emphasized do not have special significance beyond normal usage.

1. **MUST, SHALL, REQUIRED:** These terms mean that the definition is a normative (absolute) requirement of the specification.
2. **MUST NOT:** This phrase, or the phrase "SHALL NOT", means that the definition is an absolute prohibition of the specification.
3. **SHOULD:** This word, or the adjective "RECOMMENDED", means that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances to ignore a particular item, but the full implications must be understood and carefully weighed before choosing a different course.
4. **SHOULD NOT:** This phrase, or the phrase "NOT RECOMMENDED" means that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances when the particular behavior is acceptable or even useful, but the full implications should be understood and the case carefully weighed before implementing any behavior described with this label.
5. **MAY:** This word, or the adjective "OPTIONAL", means that an item is truly optional. One vendor may choose to include the item because a particular marketplace requires it or because the vendor feels that it enhances the product while another vendor may omit the same item. An implementation which does not include a particular option "must" be prepared to interoperate with another implementation which does include the option, though perhaps with reduced functionality. In the same vein an implementation which does include a particular option "must" be prepared to interoperate with another implementation which does not include the option (except, of course, for the feature the option provides).

These definitions are based on IETF RFC 2119 [2].

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2.3 Reason for Issue/Reissue

NENA reserves the right to modify this document. Upon revision, the reason(s) will be provided in the table below.

Document Number	Approval Date	Reason For Issue/Reissue
NENA-STA-048.1-2026	June 26, 2026	Initial Document

3 United States Coast Guard (USCG) and Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) Interactions

During pilot projects in 2016 and 2020, the USCG Research and Development Center reported that over half of mariners in distress used cell phones to request emergency assistance rather than their VHF Marine radio. If the mariner in distress dialed 9-1-1, civilian PSAPs answered these calls for assistance. During emergency incidents located on or adjacent to waterways, the USCG may have the authority to coordinate or respond or, at least, may provide additional resources and knowledge to assist our first responders. PSAPs SHALL contact the appropriate USCG Sector Command Center (SCC) for incidents falling under any of the six major operational mission functions found in Section 10.1 Appendix A – USCG Operational Levels.

3.1 Determining the Emergency Level of a Maritime (On-water) Incident

This section SHOULD be applied to each notification of a maritime (on-water) incident received by a PSAP.

The National Search and Rescue System adheres to the international definitions of emergency phases as they relate to notifications of an actual or potential distress incident. International guidance in the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manuals defines three emergency phases:

- **Uncertainty Phase:** There is knowledge of a situation that may need to be monitored or that requires more information to be gathered. When there is doubt about the safety of an aircraft, ship, or other craft or persons on board, or it is overdue, the situation should be investigated, and additional information gathered.
- **Alert Phase:** A person, vessel, or craft is experiencing some difficulty and may need assistance but is not in immediate danger or in need of immediate response. Apprehension is usually associated with the alert phase, but there is no known threat requiring immediate action.
- **Distress Phase:** There is reasonable certainty that a person, vessel, or craft is in grave or imminent danger requiring an immediate response. Confirmation of imminent danger is not required to declare this phase and take appropriate action.

Distress, as defined by the USCG in the Maritime SAR Assistance Policy (MSAP) [3], is when grave or imminent danger requiring immediate response to the distress scene threatens a craft or person. Non-distress would be all other incidents that do not fit the definition of distress.

When a call for an on-water emergency is received, the information SHALL be carefully evaluated to determine the initial level or phase of the incident. Factors that should be considered include the following:

- Nature of the situation
- Reported conditions on the vessel (medical, food, fuel, etc.)
- Position accuracy
- Visibility, including daylight
- Tide and current conditions
- Present and forecasted weather
- Special considerations (age, health)
- Degree of apprehension of the persons on board
- Potential for the situation to worsen

3.1.1 Calls Determined Not to be in the Distress Phase

Inherent danger is associated with being disabled on the water. The primary concern is to provide timely and effective assistance. There may still be concern for safety during an incident that originally is not identified as a potential distress situation, then rapidly progresses to a distress incident.

Examples of calls received that may not initially be evaluated as distress include the following:

- Vessel out of fuel
- Vessel with a dead battery
- Vessel with engine or other equipment failure
- Vessel aground
- Vessel sunk (not actively taking on water and no persons in the water)
- Salvage operations (with the safety of persons on board resolved)

In the maritime response environment, there may be commercial Assistance Towing and Salvage companies, who are regulated, licensed, and insured to handle these cases. The marine assistance towing and salvage industry is regulated by the USCG under the authority of the Department of Transportation and the Department of Homeland Security. These professionals actively partner and cooperate with local emergency services, law enforcement, and the USCG. Commercial, federal, state, and local public services and volunteer sources exist that are willing and capable of providing services to boaters.

A response notification standard for calls that do not indicate imminent danger or peril should allow for commercial assistance, or other available assistance, before engaging public services that may be the only resources for a higher level of emergency response.

The key to ensuring timely and effective assistance to mariners after a notification of an incident that is not distress lies in the ability to notify the requested commercial service, marina, or friend when specifically requested, or to ensure that a wide area request for assistance is broadcast.

In an area where the USCG has responsibility, the USCG is specifically and uniquely positioned to provide broadcasts for assistance to the maritime community through its interconnected coastal VHF-FM communication stations.

In an area where the USCG does NOT have responsibility, PSAPs should maintain a list of available commercial, federal, state, or local resources that will provide effective assistance to boaters. The PSAP should work with the USCG to identify the appropriate resources for the area.

3.2 PSAP Contacting USCG Sector Command Centers

PSAPs and USCG SCCs SHOULD establish a pre-determined communications process to ensure information exchange can occur in a timely manner. PSAPs have the capability to notify their agencies of situations that may impact local response or otherwise be of operational interest and may be able to offer access to a variety of other technologies, equipment, and other resources, such as 9-1-1 caller ANI/ALI information, to support as a force multiplier in the response.

- PSAPs SHALL contact the USCG Sector in which the location of the incident is received.
- PSAPs SHALL provide the information gathered through the call intake (see Section 3.4.1 Call Intake).
- PSAPs SHALL use the USCG maps to know which USCG Sector to contact if they receive a maritime distress call over 9-1-1.
- The PSAP is not expected to monitor VHF FM Channel 16 (maritime hailing and distress frequency) or VHF-FM Channel 22A (USCG working frequency). However, they are encouraged to work with their local USCG counterparts to consider an MOU to permit interoperable communications.
- When the PSAP has a radio communications plan with USCG Sector, utilizing a specific direct radio channel, then monthly radio checks and yearly review shall be performed by both parties.
- Normally, the USCG Sector and local resources have working relationships. However, the PSAP SHALL provide the USCG Sector with any federal, state, military, or county resources the PSAP has contacted and are responding.
- PSAPs SHALL review their Maritime SOP, at least annually, to ensure the point of contacts and marine resources are up to date with the USCG Sector.

3.2.1 Maritime Environmental Protection (MEP) Notifications

In the event a PSAP receives a report of oil, chemical, radiological, or biological spills or discharges into waters defined as Federal and Navigable Waters [4], the USCG SHALL be notified.

3.2.2 Waterways Management Notifications

The USCG conducts waterways management through different activities. The USCG enforces navigation rules, directs traffic routing measures, conducts icebreaking, permits marine events, creates limited access areas, manages anchorages, and provides mariners with information about hazards to navigation. Under its waterways mission, the USCG is responsible for marking the nation's Marine Transportation System, including waterways and ports. The USCG is responsible for maintaining 50,000 electronic and visual aids and providing traffic management services to keep mariners and boaters safe.

- If a PSAP receives information relating to any observed defects or discrepancies in aids to navigation, including private aids to navigation, within navigable waters and territorial seas, the USCG SHALL be notified.
- If a PSAP or other reporting entity becomes aware of any observed hazard to navigation to include structures, sunken vessels, or other obstructions within navigable waters and territorial seas, the USCG SHALL be notified.

3.2.3 Bridges over Federal Waterways Notifications

The USCG is authorized to permit and regulate bridges over navigable waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. The USCG Sector in which the bridge is located is the initial point of contact for any bridge incident.

- In the event that a PSAP or other reporting entity becomes aware of any maritime incidents, defects, hazards to navigation, or discrepancies concerning a bridge within navigable waters and territorial waters, the USCG SHALL be notified.

3.2.4 Search and Rescue (SAR) Notifications

The USCG is authorized to perform all acts necessary to rescue and aid individuals and protect and save property on the high seas and on the waters over which the United States has jurisdiction, in accordance with Title 14 of the United States (US) Code, specifically 14 U.S.C. § 521.

In accordance with the National SAR Plan, state authorities may retain SAR responsibilities within their boundaries for incidents primarily local or intrastate in character. In such cases, appropriate agreements are generally made between federal civil SAR coordinator(s) and relevant state authorities.

Normally, the USCG SCC is the initial point of contact for requests for assistance, notification of distress, and potential distress incidents that fall outside state jurisdiction.

- The USCG SHALL be notified of a distress or potential distress incident that is located beyond (seaward) of a state's boundary.
- The USCG SHALL be notified in accordance with local or state agreements.
- The USCG SHALL be notified when assistance is requested by a local or state SAR agency.

3.3 How the PSAP Contacts the USCG Sector

PSAPs SHALL consult a listing of USCG Sectors and contact numbers to determine which USCG SCC serves their jurisdiction. The USCG Sectors and contacts are available in the Enhanced PSAP Registry and Census (EPRC) database [5] as well as in Sections 6.2 and 7.2 of this document. These numbers may change without any notice being provided to the PSAPs. These contact numbers SHALL be verified by the PSAP biannually, at a minimum. When making notification of a maritime (on water) incident, PSAPs are encouraged to develop a communications process with their local USCG Sector.

3.4 Information Needed by the USCG Sector

The ability of the PSAP to add the USCG into 9-1-1 calls will vary; however, obtaining information in a timely manner is paramount. Once it is known there is a boating/marine incident (distress or non-distress), the telecommunicator will need to rapidly obtain the following critical information from the reporting source.

Additional questions and information elements can be found in Appendix G, SAR Checksheets, in the USCG Addendum to the US National Search and Rescue Supplement to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual [6].

3.4.1 Call Intake

3.4.1.1 Questions for All Callers (see extended questions in subsequent paragraphs)

- What is your location/position?
- What is the nature of your distress?
- How many people are on board?
- What is the description of your vessel?
- What is your contact information? (Name and calling party number)

3.4.1.1.1 Obtain/Confirm the Location/Position of the Incident

This can be achieved by asking one or more of the following questions to have a precise understanding of a response location.

- What is the location of the incident?
 - Coordinates (Latitude/Longitude), address, or other location information
 - Coordinates can be located on a smartphone, GPS, USCG App, etc.
- Near _____, Off of _____, Coming up on _____, Just past _____, At _____,
- Can you see the mainland? Distance from mainland? Any point of reference?
- Where did you depart from?
- What time did you depart?
- What location were you headed?

3.4.1.1.2 Obtain/Confirm the Nature of the Distress/Emergency

The PSAP SHOULD follow their standard process for obtaining/confirming the nature of the call. See Section 3.4.1.2 below.

3.4.1.1.3 Number of Person(s) On Board/Overboard

- How many persons are on board?
- Anyone in the water?
- Is everyone wearing (on board and overboard) a life jacket/Personal Floatation Device (PFD)?
 - If no, are there life jackets/PFD on board? If so, advise everyone to put them on.

3.4.1.1.4 Description of the Vessel

- Name of vessel
- Type, length, color, make
- Registration/hull number
- Commercial or recreational
 - If commercial, what is it carrying?
- What are the sea conditions?
- Weather conditions on scene?

3.4.1.1.5 Obtain/Confirm Caller's Contact Information

- What is your name and what number are you calling from?
- Does someone on board have a cellular/satellite phone?
- Is the vessel equipped with an operable Marine VHF Radio?
- Is additional contact information or backup caller contact information available?

3.4.1.2 Questions Based on Nature of the Incident

Depending on the nature of the incident, calls will fall into two categories: distress or non-distress.

3.4.1.2.1 Distress

Maritime distress-related calls may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Vessel taking on water/sinking
- Person(s) in the water
- Collision/accident
- Fire/explosion on board
- Medical emergency on board
- Credible report of overdue boater
- Flare/smoke sighting (orange, red or other)

The PSAP should obtain additional information for the specific incidents listed above, if USCG is not available to speak with the caller. The minimum suggested information to collect for each incident is provided in the following sections.

3.4.1.2.1.1 Vessel Taking on Water/Sinking

- Can the boater attempt to run the boat to shore?
- If boat sinks, STAY IN THE AREA OF THE BOAT – DO NOT SWIM FOR SHORE.
- If more than one individual, stay together.
- Where is the water coming into the boat?
 - Can you plug the hole?
- Are there bilge pumps operating, and are they keeping up with the flow of the water?
- Is the vessel carrying any hazardous material?
 - Placard number/material type?

3.4.1.2.1.2 Person(s) in the Water

- Are they wearing a life jacket/PFD?
- Is there a flotation device/rope/line or similar which can be thrown to the victim without harm?
- Have the caller mark the exact spot where they were standing/sitting when they last saw the victim go under water. (Very important)
- How long ago did they last see the victim?
- Is anyone else entering the water to help?
- Is the person(s) still struggling?
- Description of the individual(s)?

3.4.1.2.1.3 Collision or Accident

- Is anyone injured? (Transfer or provide medical assistance)
- What did they hit?
 - If another vessel, obtain a description.

- Was there damage to the vessel?
 - Damage to the other vessel?
 - Is there fuel leaking?
 - Is there anyone in the water? (See Section 3.4.1.2.1.2 Person(s) in the Water above.)
 - Was anyone injured? (See Section 3.4.1.2.1.5 Medical Emergency On Board below.)
- Is the vessel carrying any hazardous material?
 - Placard number/material type?

3.4.1.2.1.4 Fire On Board

- What is on fire?
 - Describe what is on fire, extent, and damage (smoke, flame, etc.).
- Is there a fire extinguisher on board. If yes, then attempt to extinguish the fire.
- Run the boat to shore if possible – obtain location information, how far away it is, how long will it take you to get there?
 - If unable to get the boat to shore, can you anchor the boat?
- If you abandon the boat, stay in the area of the boat – DO NOT SWIM FOR SHORE.
 - If more than one individual, STAY TOGETHER.
- Is the vessel carrying any hazardous material?
 - If yes, placard number/material type?

3.4.1.2.1.5 Medical Emergency On Board

The PSAP should follow their normal medical protocols, unless equal or higher-level medical assistance is available from the USCG.

- Can the vessel be taken to a place to meet medical assistance?
 - How long will it take to do this?
 - Where?
- What is the condition of the vessel and the vessel operator?
 - Is the vessel operational, and is there a capable vessel operator available?
 - Is the vessel anchored?
 - If not, can the vessel be safely anchored?

NOTE: USCG personnel have basic medical training; however, more in-depth coordination/collaboration between local authorities and the USCG will be needed to standardize response protocols.

3.4.1.2.1.6 Overdue Boater

- Is there a Float Plan [7] available for the vessel?
- Where did the vessel launch from?

- Was there a vehicle/trailer left at the location? Obtain description.
- When did it leave (date/time)? Expected time of return (date/time)?
- How many people are on board?
- Does anyone on board have a mobile device, and if so, has anyone tried to make contact with them?
- What's the vessel's description?
 - Type of vessel? Color of vessel? Size of vessel? Vessel name and registration number?
- What was the vessel's Last Port of Call (LPOC)?
 - When did it leave the Last Port of Call (date/time)?
- Vessel Next Port of Call (NPOC) date/time?
- Intended route?
- Number of persons on board?
- Hours overdue?
- Have they taken this trip before?
 - Do they usually stop over anywhere?
 - Do they have a habit of being late?
- Do you have a photo of the boat and individuals on board? If yes, can you share them with responders?
- Is there anyone else that needs to be notified?
- When was the last communication with the vessel operator and/or passengers?
 - Has anyone checked their social media account for recent activity?

3.4.1.2.1.7 Flare/Smoke Sighting

- How many were seen?
- What was the color (orange, red, or other)?
- What was your location when you saw the flare/smoke?
- What direction from your location was the flare/smoke?

3.4.1.2.1.8 Additional Information

Additional information the telecommunicator should attempt to obtain if the situation and time allow includes the following:

- Is everyone accounted for?
- Has anyone fallen overboard?
 - If yes, how many and were they wearing life jackets/PFDs?
- Is there a marine radio available?
 - Portable or fixed?
 - Tune the radio to Channel 16 International Hailing & Distress frequency.
- Is anyone injured?

- Provide Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) and/or Pre-Arrival Instructions (PAI), if appropriate, depending on PSAP.
 - Is vessel equipped with an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB)? If yes, have them activate it.
 - Number of injuries?
 - Cause of injuries?
- Is safety equipment available/in use?
 - Strobes or flares?
 - Life rafts?
- Are there any other vessels in the area?
- Are there any medical concerns applicable for those on board?

3.4.1.2.2 Non-Distress

Maritime non-distress related calls may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Tow request (out of fuel, engine failure, grounding etc.)
- Disturbances/nonviolent domestic calls on a vessel
- Investigation on board (death investigation, drug/agricultural investigation)
- Onboard robbery (piracy) no injury/delayed
- Boater driving recklessly/operating under the influence
- Hazmat that does not apply to the above distress calls
- Suspicious activity/package
- Non-emergency medical assistance

3.4.1.2.2.1 Tow Request

For mariners requesting tow assistance, request the following:

- Is commercial assistance needed?
 - Is there a specific provider you have or would like to contact?
- What is the size/type of vessel?
- Is the vessel a hazard to navigation?

3.4.1.2.2.2 Disturbances – nonviolent

In addition to following your normal call handling procedures, obtain the following:

- Vessel information
- Are there any weapons?
- How many people are involved? Can they separate themselves?

3.4.1.2.2.3 Investigation On Board

In addition to following your normal call handling procedures, obtain the following:

- What is the type of investigation?
 - Does this involve death, injury, property damage, or suspicious activity?
- Where would Law Enforcement Officers (LEO) or USCG meet the vessel?

3.4.1.2.2.4 Robbery or Criminal Violence by Vessel

In addition to following your normal call handling procedures, obtain the following:

- Is this incident in progress, delayed, or attempted?
- Are there any weapons seen? Can you describe them?
- How many perpetrators? Can you describe them?
- Is anyone injured?
 - If so, what type of injuries and how many are injured?
- Is there any damage to the boat?
 - If yes, is the boat sinking? (If yes, refer to Section 3.4.1.2.1.1 Vessel Taking on Water/Sinking in this standard.)
- Are you sheltering in place? If so, where?
- Are any other vessels involved?

3.4.1.2.2.5 Reckless Vessel

- What type of vessel (e.g., jet ski, pontoon boat)?
- What is the description (size, color, registration number or vessel name, etc.)?
- How many occupants?
- What is the vessel doing?
- Are any other vessels involved or in the area?

3.4.1.2.2.6 Pollution/Hazmat/Spills/Illegal Dumping/Leaking

Release of hazardous materials that may pose a health or environmental threat, either accidental or intentional.

- Type of pollution/discharge?
- Is there a placard or label visible? If so, what is the number/type?
- Is there a visible sheen?
- What is the estimated amount or quantity of material?
- What type of vessel?
- What is the description (size, color, registration number or vessel name, etc.)?
- Do you have any documentation of the incident (photo, video)?
- Have other agencies been notified?

3.4.1.2.2.7 Suspicious Activity/Package

- Description and type of activity?
- Number and description of person(s) involved?

- What type of vessel?
- What is the description (size, color, registration number or vessel name, etc.)?
- If a package, what is suspicious?
 - Can you describe the package?
- Do you have any documentation of the incident (photo, video)?

3.5 USCG Contacting PSAP

Information sharing is in the best interests of the USCG and local 9-1-1 authorities for maintaining the safety of the public. The following are some examples of situational awareness:

- After the USCG has been advised of a situation by a PSAP, the PSAP should be contacted to explain the outcome so that the PSAP can close the record of the event.
- PSAPs can offer access to a variety of other technologies, equipment, and other resources to support as a force multiplier in the response. Requests for those resources SHALL be made through the PSAP versus directly contacting response services to ensure that the PSAP inventories of available resources are updated.
- USCG SHOULD notify the PSAP in advance of any USCG activities that may generate calls to 9-1-1 to avoid unnecessary dispatch. This permits the PSAP to advise callers that public safety is aware of the activity, so the PSAP can respond appropriately.
- The USCG SHOULD notify the impacted PSAP(s) of changes in the status of USCG resources that may affect the ability to respond to water-related incidents.
- The USCG may want to utilize the public information capabilities of the PSAP where notification to the public is appropriate. USCG and local authorities will include this in any agreements, MOAs, or MOUs.
- USCG SCCs may contact the PSAP through:
 - NENA Enhanced PSAP Registry and Census (EPRC)
 - To use this resource, an Access Request Form [8] will need to be submitted. For the purposes of this request, USCG SCCs are considered a PSAP.
 - USCG-produced contact list of verified PSAP 10-digit numbers
 - Working with local PSAPs, emergency response agencies, or emergency management agencies to obtain the local PSAP contact information
 - The USCG SCCs and PSAP need to work together to establish a “priority” 10-digit number for use by the USCG.

3.6 Waterway Boundaries and Geographic Information System (GIS) Layers

Water boundaries cannot be assumed to be fixed boundaries, the way a PSAP boundary and an Emergency Service Zone (ESZ) are. These waterway boundaries change due to development and weather events and should be used as an initial reference for notification purposes.

Additional resources are outlined in Section 7.2 Technical Impacts Summary.

4 Identifying the Location of an Incident

Coordination responsibility for incidents on US waters is identified by the location of the incident. This section provides background on how to identify the responsible authority for coordination based on the location of the incident within the waterway system of the US.

4.1 Division of Waters

In general, the waters of the US are divided by the governing body that has responsibility for coordinating maritime operations. For determining the governing level of responsible authority for incidents on the waters that PSAPs may receive notifications, there are two levels of governing bodies: state and federal.

4.1.1 State Waters

Each state will have its own definition of what its waters are. In general, state waters are those waters inside a state and out 3 miles from the low-water mark. Some states, like TX and FL, have a larger footprint. Everything outside of the state water is the responsibility of the federal government.

4.1.2 Federal and Navigable Waters

The USCG is the federal government agency that has the responsibility for coordinating responses to maritime incidents in federal and/or navigable waters of the United States.

4.1.2.1 Federal Waters

In general, federal waters begin where state waters end and extend to the 200-mile limit off the coast of the US.

4.1.2.2 Navigable Waters [4]

Navigable waters of the United States are those waters that are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide and/or are presently used, or have been used in the past, or may be susceptible for use to transport interstate or foreign commerce. A determination of navigability, once made, applies laterally over the entire surface of the waterbody, and is not extinguished by later actions or events which impede or destroy navigable capacity.

The Army Corps of Engineers, Environmental Protection Agency, and USCG determine navigability of waterways, and the USCG District Commander maintains copies for waters located within their district's boundaries.

4.2 Areas of Concurrent Jurisdiction

A state has the authority to conduct missions within the state boundaries, which include all waters within a state out to its established boundaries offshore. The USCG has authority to conduct missions in US navigable waterways and offshore, as defined in federal regulations and other international agreements. A state and the USCG have jurisdiction for navigable waterways and areas offshore within a state's boundaries. These are considered areas of concurrent jurisdiction.

Agreements between the State and/or Local 9-1-1 Authority and the USCG define which agencies are responsible for receiving calls and coordinating an appropriate response in areas of concurrent jurisdiction. These agreements between the USCG and the state authorities responsible for incidents on the waters should be available to the PSAP. PSAPs should work with their USCG District Commander or state and/or local emergency managers to identify the local jurisdiction agreements in place to better understand who the responsible authority is in that area and their contact information.

4.3 Identifying an Incident by Latitude and Longitude

For wireline or VoIP emergency calls, public safety agencies often respond to calls from the public based on a civic street address or street intersection. Wireless emergency calls typically include location as latitude and longitude, and sometimes, altitude. Water-related incidents commonly use latitude and longitude. Other reference information, civic address, or a placename may be available.

As background, latitude defines the North and South regions above and below the equator, respectively, whereas longitude defines East and West regions relative to the prime meridian (referenced as Greenwich, England). In systems using decimal degrees, latitude values in the US will have a positive value to represent values north of the equator. Longitude values in the US will be a negative number representing values west of the Prime Meridian. Example: West Palm Beach, Florida could be represented as:

26.709484, -80.059239

Note, the positive sign (+) is assumed, but may not be displayed, for positive values.

There are three common formats used to identify latitude and longitude coordinates:

- Degrees, Minutes, and Seconds (D°MS)
 - For example: 40° 26' 46" N 79° 58' 56" W
- Degrees and Decimal Minutes (DD° MM.mm')

- For example: 40° 26.767' N 79° 58.933' W
- Decimal Degrees (DD)
 - For example: 40.446579 -79.982428

The best practice is to relay coordinates exactly as received and provide the format used. This will ensure accuracy and integrity of the message. For example, when speaking or reporting latitude and longitude, 39° 36.06'N by 76° 51.42'W should be stated as per the following:

“Three nine degrees, three six decimal zero six minutes North by seven six degrees, five one decimal four two minutes West.”

The words “degrees,” “minutes,” and “decimal” MUST be verbalized.

Additionally, identifying the source of the coordinates is helpful (e.g., smartphone map). The party receiving this information will convert, if necessary, to the format that best fits the needs of their mission. It is imperative that the person sending the information on coordinates include the format type (DMS, DD, etc.).

Position parameters, when it is an estimated value (measured), should include, when available, Uncertainty and Confidence values. Confidence, given as a percentage (e.g., 90%) and Uncertainty, provided as a distance in meters (e.g., 50m) are required to accompany 2-dimensional coordinates (i.e., latitude and longitude).

The USCG typically uses coordinates based in Degrees, Minutes, and tenths of minutes (DM.m); whereas coordinates on the 9-1-1 system are listed in the format of Decimal Degrees (DD). When the USCG standard is used, latitude is always read and written first, noting “North” since the US is North of the Equator; whereas, longitude is always read and written last, noting “West” since the US is west of the Prime Meridian.

In addition to the coordinates displayed on the 9-1-1 equipment, a telecommunicator may receive location information in a variety of ways based on what the caller provides, which can include, but are not limited to, Degrees Minutes Seconds (DMS), Degrees Decimal Minutes (DMM), and third party applications that offer a means of identifying location.

5 Training Recommendations

5.1 PSAP Training

It is recommended that the material contained within this NENA standard document be incorporated into Telecommunicator training materials. When developing training materials, consideration should be given to including field personnel.

PSAPs SHALL develop operational policies for managing USCG personnel interactions and incorporate new techniques into the telecommunicator training curriculum. This will likely create new or additional tasks for telecommunicators that will impact a PSAP's current

operations. PSAP management SHOULD identify, review, and address all potential operational interactions with USCG personnel, to provide telecommunicators with the proper tools and processes to effectively interact. These tools SHOULD include training, procedures development, and implementation of the same.

5.2 USCG and Related Responders Training

The USCG and Maritime first responders SHOULD be made aware of this document and material. This material SHOULD be incorporated into the training of personnel associated with water rescue that may interact with PSAP and the USCG.

6 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The following are potential questions concerning the interaction between PSAPs and the USCG Command Centers during a maritime incident.

1. If my local responders can handle a situation, should I still tell the USCG?

Yes, to ensure situational awareness, it is good practice to keep the USCG advised of the activity.

2. As a PSAP, where can I view USCG District and Sector GIS data?

NENA Enhanced PSAP Registry and Census (EPRC) – <https://eprc.nena.org>.

3. Where can I get training on the NENA EPRC?

NENA Education Program, or more specifically, <https://eprc.nena.org>.

4. In what format will the PSAP provide location information?

The location information provided to the USCG SCC SHOULD be provided in one of the latitude and longitude formats identified in this standard. However, the USCG SCC should verify the format and the origin of the position information in case it must be translated to a format that the USCG SCC can plot on information displays or use in Search and Rescue Operations (SAROPS).

5. Does the USCG do Search and Rescue (SAR)?

SAR is one of the USCG's oldest missions. Minimizing the loss of life, injury, property damage, or loss by rendering aid to persons in distress and property in the maritime environment has always been a Coast Guard priority.

SAR mission response involves multi-mission stations, cutters, aircraft, and boats linked by communications networks. The National SAR Plan [3] divides the US area of SAR responsibility into internationally recognized inland and maritime SAR regions. The USCG is the Maritime SAR Coordinator.

6. Does the USCG perform law enforcement duties?

The USCG Maritime Law Enforcement program protects America's maritime borders from encroachment, defends our Nation's maritime sovereignty from illicit activity, facilitates legitimate use of the waterways, and suppresses violations of federal law on, under, and over the high seas and waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. The USCG is the lead federal maritime law enforcement agency, and the only agency with both authority and capability to enforce national and international law on the high seas, outer continental shelf, and inward from the US Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) to inland waters.

USCG responsibilities include detecting and interdicting contraband and illegal drug traffic; at sea enforcement of US immigration laws and policies; enforcing our Nation's fisheries and marine protected resource laws and regulations; ensuring the integrity of the EEZ, monitoring compliance with international living marine resource regimes and international agreements to which the US is party; and through compliance with international agreements, combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing that negatively impacts maritime and economic security in coastal and regional areas worldwide.

7. Will the PSAP be available during the response to an emergency by the USCG?

The USCG SCC and the PSAP SHOULD coordinate and preplan the resource requirements of various incidents and develop complementary SOPs. In most cases, especially those involving medical situations, the PSAP could be required to remain on the line with the caller while USCG resources are en route.

Depending upon the nature of the emergency and the time which could be required, the PSAP may or may not be available throughout the incident.

8. How does the PSAP contact an assistance, towing, and salvage organization?

Have the boater call their towing provider or insurance carrier.

If no towing provider or insurance carrier is identified, there are major towing organizations providing dispatch service for boaters nationwide. (PSAPs SHOULD maintain a list of available commercial, federal, state, or local resources that will provide effective assistance to boaters.)

If the boater is unable to contact a towing provider or insurance carrier, the PSAP should assist the boater in making this contact.

As a last resort, contact the USCG.

9. Is there a charge for towing?

All major marine insurance policies offer towing reimbursement coverage on their policies. There are membership programs designed to alleviate these costs for boaters. Joining one of the organizations or adding the rider to their insurance policy is inexpensive.

If the boater doesn't have insurance, the boater should be responsible for the charges. PSAPs and the USCG are encouraged to consider this situation and develop clear policies for it.

10. What qualifies as a professional assistance, towing, and salvage organization?

These operators are regulated by the US Coast Guard and are USCG-credentialed mariners on navigable and some non-navigable waters.

11. What is the average response time for commercial assistance?

Depending upon the area, distance, and conditions, the goal for commercial assistance to be on-scene is less than an hour.

12. Does a response agency have a responsibility to tow?

No.

13. What services do commercial assistance towing companies provide?

Depending upon the company, services may include vessel towing, fuel drops, jump starts, ungrounding, pump outs, and similar services. These are routine towing and salvage services.

7 Impacts and Considerations

7.1 Operations Impacts Summary

This document provides guidance and relevant information for operational interaction between PSAP, USCG SCCs, USCG personnel in the field, and related water incident responders.

PSAPs SHALL interact with USCG SCCs and other personnel when the PSAP becomes aware of an incident requiring emergency assistance involving a water-related incident that may be in USCG response jurisdictions. A PSAP may receive calls from USCG centers related to emergency incidents or calls for service.

Potential communication challenges can be overcome by having proper communication protocols in place and practiced before an incident occurs.

This Standard is intended to aid PSAPs, USCG communication centers, and USCG personnel in the development and implementation of standard operating procedures for emergency communications protocols.

7.2 Technical Impacts Summary

PSAPs SHOULD obtain web-based services for access to USCG-related information and NENA's EPRC.

At the local level, PSAPs and USCG SHOULD meet to discuss interoperability and integration of communications and geospatial systems. Consideration should be given to the technical areas listed in this chapter.

7.2.1 PSAP 9-1-1 Call Handling System (CHS)

The appropriate USCG SCC phone number(s) SHALL be programmed into the call handling application call directory.

7.2.2 PSAP Radio Communication

PSAPs with common radio communication abilities (e.g., statewide trunking, public safety broadband) are encouraged to work with the appropriate USCG SCC to establish interoperability plans. Monthly radio checks and yearly reviews SHOULD be performed by both parties.

7.2.3 PSAP Mapping and Geospatial Data

PSAPs SHOULD integrate USCG GIS data into their map displays and update regularly. USCG GIS data SHOULD conform to the *NENA Standard for NG9-1-1 GIS Data Model*, NENA-STA-006 [9], and the USCG SHOULD make this data available to NG9-1-1 PSAPs via a mapping data service.

Maps at the PSAPs SHOULD include the jurisdictional boundaries of all bodies of water and specific USCG SCC jurisdictions. This is especially important for inland bodies of water and rivers with concurrent jurisdiction between local and federal authorities. The new maps would need to be included as requirements for the CHS or Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD).

It is recommended that the latest aerial imagery be used as a reference in the development and maintenance of the geospatial data.

The NENA EPRC contains geospatial data that includes the USCG Sectors and PSAP boundaries.

7.2.4 Wireless E9-1-1/NG9-1-1 Call Delivery

With the growing frequency of maritime emergency calls made from wireless cell phones, 9-1-1 authorities must ensure that Wireless Service Providers route these calls to the appropriate PSAP, including those near coastlines and over bodies of water. For Enhanced 9-1-1 using selective routing, the PSAP will need to be capable of receiving 9-1-1 calls and ensure the CHS can accept a 10-digit Emergency Service Routing Key (ESRK) or an Emergency Service Query Key (ESQK) along with the capability to rebid both automatically and manually for the caller's location. For NG9-1-1 using Policy Routing Function (PRF), advanced mapping layers can route to the appropriate primary PSAP and potentially pre-notify, such as using an Emergency Information Data Object (EIDO) document, USCG SCC of the wireless caller's location. Note that handset locations require the use of data from a Wireless Service Provider or other IP connection, and if the signal strength from the telecom tower or satellite is too weak over the body of water or is not able to provide a reliable data link bandwidth and speed, then the hybrid handset location may not be available or reliable.

7.2.5 PSAP Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD)

The PSAP's CAD SHOULD plot the location of wireless calls and any updated location. PSAPs with additional CAD features may potentially allow the USCG to view their caller information. Sharing of incident data between PSAPs is envisioned to be enabled by EIDO. If the PSAP CHS can incorporate the USCG Initial SAR Check Sheet [6] into the 9-1-1 call screen, this could improve call efficiency and response times.

7.3 Security Impacts Summary

All information shared between the PSAP and USCG personnel SHALL be considered private and for official business purposes only and SHALL be treated as such.

If there are any questions regarding a caller being a PSAP employee or a USCG employee, the agency SHALL follow their established procedures for verifying the identity of a caller.

7.4 Recommendation for Additional Development Work

This document is intended to provide guidance to public safety and USCG personnel for incidents on or near waterways. There may be a need for the development of additional operations or technical standards because of this document. Evolving technology may require this document to be reviewed to determine if additional information needs to be added or if obsolete information should be removed from this standard.

7.4.1 NENA EPRC Education and Training

NENA EPRC Education and Training should provide training and outreach, especially to local authorities and local PSAPs, on the specific use of the USCG data layers.

7.4.2 NENA GIS Working Groups

NENA GIS Working Groups should consider provisions for real-time coordination of USCG data sets with 9-1-1 operations.

Term or Abbreviation (Expansion)	Definition / Description
ALI (Automatic Location Identification)	The automatic display at the PSAP of the caller's telephone number, the address/location of the telephone, and supplementary emergency services information of the location from which a call originates.
ANI (Automatic Number Identification)	The telephone number associated with the call origination, originally associated with the access line of the caller.
AOR (Area of Responsibility)	The USCG Sector's jurisdictional boundary.
ATON (Aids to Navigation)	Buoys, day beacons, lights, lightships, radio beacons, fog signals, marks, and other devices used to provide what amounts to "street signs" on the water.
C4ISM	Command, Control, Coordination, Communications, Intelligence, Sensor analysis, and data Mining.
CAD (Computer-Aided Dispatch)	A computer-based system that aids PSAP Telecommunicators by automating selected dispatching and record keeping activities.
CHS (Call Handling System)	A communications software system and equipment used to receive and process calls.
CIP (Common Intelligence Picture)	A shared, comprehensive view of relevant intelligence data, typically used in military and intelligence contexts.
COP (Common Operating Picture)	A shared display of information, typically a map or other visual representation, that provides a single point of reference for all involved in an operation or incident.
DoD (Department of Defense)	An executive branch department of the federal government of the United States charged with coordinating and supervising the five US armed services: the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Space Force. DoD also includes other defense-related agencies.
EIDO (Emergency Incident Data Object)	A JSON-based (JavaScript Object Notation) object that is used to share emergency incident information between and among authorized entities and systems. NENA has adopted

Term or Abbreviation (Expansion)	Definition / Description
	the JSON-based EIDO for sharing incident information among authorized NG9-1-1 entities and systems.
ESZ (Emergency Service Zone)	A geographical area that represents a unique combination of emergency service agencies (e.g., Law Enforcement, Fire, and Emergency Medical Service) that is within a specified 9-1-1 governing authority's jurisdiction. An ESZ can be represented by an Emergency Service Number (ESN) to identify the ESZ.
EMD (Emergency Medical Dispatch)	A system and a role where trained Telecommunicators gather information about medical emergencies, assess the situation, and provide pre-arrival instructions to the caller until professional help arrives.
EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon)	A safety device used in maritime settings to alert search and rescue authorities when a vessel is in distress. It works by transmitting a coded distress signal via satellite, which is then relayed to the nearest Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) for immediate action.
EPRC (Enhanced PSAP Registry and Census)	A database that helps PSAP and 9-1-1 Authority personnel to locate and contact other PSAPs during critical transfer situations, and helps private-sector entities, such as corporations and nonprofits, quickly locate and contact out-of-area 9-1-1 PSAPs during emergencies and other critical outreach situations.
ESRK (Emergency Service Routing Key)	A 10-digit North American Numbering Plan number that uniquely identifies a wireless emergency call, is used to route the call through the network, and used to retrieve the associated ALI data.
ESQK (Emergency Service Query Key)	Identifies a call instance at a VPC and is associated with a particular SR/ESN combination. The ESQK is delivered to the E9-1-1 SR as the calling number/ANI for the call to the PSAP. The ESQK is used by the SR as the key to the Selective Routing data associated with the call. The ESQK is delivered by the SR to the PSAP as the calling number/ANI for the call and is subsequently used by the PSAP to request ALI information for the call. The ALI database includes the ESQK in location requests sent to the

Term or Abbreviation (Expansion)	Definition / Description
	VPC. The ESQK is used by the VPC as a key to look up the location object and other call information associated with an emergency call instance. The ESQK is a non-dialable North American Numbering Plan (NANP) number in the format of NPA-NXX-XXXX. They are currently being allocated from NPA-211-XXXX and NPA-511-XXXX number sets.
Float Plan	A written or verbal summary of boat trip details, like the vessel description, planned route, and expected return time, all of which is left with a trusted contact.
GIS (Geographic Information System)	A system for capturing, storing, displaying, analyzing, and managing data and associated attributes which are spatially referenced.
LEO (Law Enforcement Officer)	An individual employed by a public or private agency to enforce laws, protect life and property, maintain order, and ensure public safety. This is also known as a police officer, Deputy Sheriff or Sheriff's Deputy, or peace officer.
LPOC (Last Port of Call)	A place where a ship stops during a journey to load or unload cargo and passengers, or to take on supplies. In this context, the "last port of call" refers to the most recent stop or destination in a journey or itinerary.
MEP (Maritime Environmental Protection)	Measures taken to safeguard marine ecosystems from pollution and other harmful activities. This includes regulations, enforcement, and research aimed at minimizing the impact of shipping, industry, and other human activities on the marine environment.
MOA (Memorandum of Agreement)	A document written between parties to cooperatively work together on an agreed-upon project or meet an agreed-upon objective. An MOA describes in detail the specific responsibilities of, and actions to be taken by, each Party so that their goals may be accomplished.
MOU (Memorandum of Understanding)	A document written between parties to cooperatively work together on an agreed-upon project or meet an agreed-upon objective. An MOU describes very broad concepts of mutual understanding, goals, and plans shared by the Parties.

Term or Abbreviation (Expansion)	Definition / Description
MSAP (Maritime SAR Assistance Policy)	Enacted by Congress in 1982, it directs the Commandant to "review Coast Guard policies and procedures for towing and salvage of disabled vessels in order to further minimize the possibility of Coast Guard competition or interference with...commercial enterprise."
NENA (National Emergency Number Association)	Referred to as The 9-1-1 Association, NENA is fully dedicated to the continued improvement and modernization of the 9-1-1 emergency communication system. NENA's approach includes research, standards development, training, education, certification, outreach, and advocacy through communication with stakeholders. As an ANSI-accredited Standards Developer, NENA works with 9-1-1 professionals, public policy leaders, emergency services and telecommunications industry partners, like-minded public safety associations, and more. Current NENA activities center on awareness, documentation, and implementation for Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) and international three-digit emergency communication systems. NENA's worldwide members join with the emergency response community in striving to protect human life, preserve property, and maintain the security of all communities.
NPOC (Next Port of Call)	A place where a ship stops during a journey to load or unload cargo and passengers, or to take on supplies. In this context, the "next port of call" refers to the next scheduled stop or destination in a journey or itinerary.
PAI (Pre-Arrival Instructions)	Guidance and instructions provided to individuals making an emergency call by public safety telecommunicators.
PFD (Personal Floatation Device)	A device approved by the US Coast Guard to help people stay afloat in the water. These devices are categorized as wearable or throwable. They are also known as a life jacket or buoyancy aid.
Private Aid to Navigation	A buoy, light, or day beacon owned and maintained by any individual or organization other than the United States Coast Guard.

Term or Abbreviation (Expansion)	Definition / Description
PRF (Policy Routing Function)	A functional component of an Emergency Service Routing Proxy that determines the next hop in the SIP signaling path using a Policy Routing Rule.
PSAP (Public Safety Answering Point)	A physical or virtual entity where 9-1-1 calls are delivered by the 9-1-1 Service Provider.
SAR (Search and Rescue)	One of the primary USCG missions to minimize the loss of life, injury, property damage or other loss, by rendering aid to persons in distress and property in the maritime environment.
SCC (Sector Command Center)	The hub for sector operations, providing 24/7 command, control, coordination, communications, intelligence, sensor analysis, and data mining.
US (United States)	A sovereign country located mostly in North America, divided into 50 states, the District of Columbia, plus five outlying territories
USCG (United States Coast Guard)	A uniformed service within the US Department of Homeland Security, responsible for maritime safety, security, and environmental stewardship in US ports and inland waterways.

7.4.3 USCG SAR Review

When the USCG reviews the SAR checklist, they may consider adding the use of third-party supplemental emergency data provider information (such as mapping, NG 9-1-1 solutions, social media, medical data information, etc.).

7.5 Anticipated Timeline

Not applicable

7.6 Cost Factors

The cost of implementing this standard should fall within the normal operational costs for both 9-1-1 entities and the USCG. There may be additional costs associated with increased coordination between the parties and activities, such as conducting exercises related to this standard. Improved rescue coordination may produce reduced rescue costs for responding agencies.

7.7 Cost Recovery Considerations

Normal business practices applicable to the local PSAP, 9-1-1 agencies, and the USCG are the assumed cost recovery mechanism.

7.8 Additional Impacts (non-cost related)

The information and requirements contained in this document may have PSAP and USCG operational impacts; however, the impacts are expected to improve coordination and the ability to more rapidly and efficiently respond to incidents.

8 Abbreviations, Terms, and Definitions

See the NENA Knowledge Base (NENAb) [1] for a Glossary of terms and abbreviations used in NENA documents. Abbreviations and terms used in this document are listed below with their definitions.

9 References

- [1] National Emergency Number Association. "NENA Knowledge Base Glossary." Updated August 5, 2025. <https://kb.nena.org/wiki/Category:Glossary>.
- [2] Internet Engineering Task Force. *Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels*. S. Bradner. [RFC 2119](#), March 1997.
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- [4] Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense. *Definition of Navigable Waters of the United States*. [33 C.F.R. Part 329](#). Last amended January 3, 2017.
- [5] National Emergency Number Association. "NENA Enhanced PSAP Registry and Census (EPRC) 2.0." Accessed July 31, 2025. <https://eprc-nena.hub.arcgis.com/pages/nena-eprc>
- [6] United States Coast Guard. "Appendix G, Initial SAR Check Sheet." In *U.S. Coast Guard Addendum to the United States National Search and Rescue Supplement (NSS) to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual (IAMSAR)*. [COMDTINST M16130.2F](#), January 07, 2013.
- [7] United States Coast Guard Boating Safety Division. "Float Plan." Accessed July 31, 2025. <https://www.uscgboating.org/recreational-boaters/floating-plan.php>.
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- [10] United States Coast Guard. "About USCG." Accessed July 31, 2025. <https://www.uscg.mil/About/Missions/>.
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10 Appendices

10.1 Appendix A – USCG Operational Levels

The USCG is divided into two area commands, the Atlantic Area and Pacific Area. The areas are further divided into nine district commands. The Atlantic Area currently includes five district commands covering the Eastern United States, the Atlantic Ocean, the Great Lakes, and the Gulf of Mexico. The Pacific Area currently includes four district commands covering the Western United States and the Pacific Ocean. The most current information and graphics will be found at the referenced web link for Area Commands [10], Districts [11] [12], and Sectors [13].

Area Commands

The Coast Guard's shore establishment in the continental United States and its territories is divided into two area commands.

Districts

The Area Commands are divided into districts, which conduct operations focused on maritime search and rescue, law enforcement, port security operations, and maritime border security.

Sectors

Each district command is further divided into sectors. A Sector is a shore-based operational unit. Each Sector is responsible for the execution of all USCG missions within its Area of Responsibility (AOR), with operational support from USCG Cutters and Air Stations. Subordinate commands within a Sector typically include Stations and Aids-to-Navigation (ATON) Teams. Some Sector commands also have subordinate units such as Sector Field Offices and Marine Safety Units that are responsible for mission execution in parts of the Sector's AOR. There are currently 37 sectors within the USCG.

USCG Sector Command Centers (SCC)

The USCG SCC is the center of Sector Operations and likely will be the primary point of contact for the local PSAPs. It provides 24-hour command, control, coordination,

communications, intelligence, sensor analysis, and data mining (C4ISM). The SCC coordinates with other federal, state, and local operations centers, and issues Notices to Mariners, Situation Reports, and maritime security alerts. The SCC displays the current Common Operating Picture (COP) and Common Intelligence Picture (CIP), including a presentation of all vessels, aircraft, communications equipment, and personnel belonging to the USCG and supporting agencies.

10.1.1 USCG Mission Essential Functions

The USCG manages six major operational mission programs: maritime law enforcement, maritime response, maritime prevention, marine transportation system management, maritime security operations, and defense operations [10].

10.1.1.1 Maritime Law Enforcement

The Maritime Law Enforcement mission program protects America's maritime borders, defends the Nation's maritime sovereignty, facilitates legitimate use of the waterways, and suppresses violations of US federal law on, under, and over the seas to include illegal migration and Transnational Organized Crime.

10.1.1.2 Maritime Response

The Maritime Response mission program seeks to mitigate the consequences of marine casualties and disastrous events. The USCG is the Nation's premier maritime first responder, minimizing loss of life and property by searching for and rescuing persons in distress. The USCG is capable of rapidly mobilizing resources to provide an immediate and reliable response to maritime incidents in coordination with, and in support of, federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal agencies, and private sector partners.

10.1.1.3 Maritime Prevention

The Maritime Prevention mission program seeks to prevent marine casualties and property losses, minimize security risks, and protect the marine environment. The USCG does so by developing and enforcing federal regulations, conducting safety and security inspections, and analyzing port security risk assessments.

10.1.1.4 Maritime Transportation System Management

The Marine Transportation System Management mission program seeks to ensure a safe, secure, and environmentally sound waterways system. The USCG works in concert with other federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial agencies, the marine industry, maritime associations, and the international community to safeguard the efficient and economical movement of overall economic activity flowing through the Nation's ports and waterways.

10.1.1.5 Maritime Security Operations

The Maritime Security Operations mission program encompasses activities to detect, deter, prevent, and disrupt terrorist attacks and other criminal acts in the US maritime domain. It includes the execution of antiterrorism, response, and select recovery operations. This mission performs the operational element of the USCG's Ports, Waterways, and Coastal Security mission and complements our Maritime Response and Prevention efforts.

The USCG employs a three-tiered system of Maritime Security (MARSEC) Levels designed to easily communicate with the USCG and our maritime industry partners' pre-planned, scalable responses for credible threats. MARSEC Levels are set to reflect the prevailing threat environment to the marine elements of the national transportation system, including ports, vessels, facilities, and critical assets and infrastructure located on or adjacent to waters subject to the jurisdiction of the US. MARSEC Levels apply to vessels, USCG-regulated facilities inside the US, and to the USCG.

10.1.1.6 Defense Operations

The Defense Operations mission program exercises the USCG's unique authorities and capabilities to support the National Defense Strategy. Every day, the USCG is deployed around the globe in support of Combatant Commanders to protect the security of our Nation far from US soil.

10.1.2 USCG Command Level Responsibilities

Table 10-1 provides a general summary of responsibilities for each level of shore commands of the USCG.

Table 10-1 USCG Shore Command Level Responsibilities

Shore Command Level	Responsibility
Headquarters	Headquarters offices provide mission and operational support. Mission support includes the acquisition of resources, engineering, logistics, and readiness. Operational support includes the development and promulgation of operational standards, doctrine, and policies.
Area Command	The Area Commands are responsible for coordinating and deploying cutters, aircraft, pollution response equipment, and thousands of personnel between districts. The Area Command assists districts by ensuring resources, equipment, and personnel are surged to impacted areas for rescue and recovery efforts, while also ensuring other USCG operations throughout the region continue.

Shore Command Level	Responsibility
District Command	The District Command ensures the administration of the safety and security of the oceans, coastal areas, and the marine transportation system in the area of operations. District Command hosts the international regional command centers for the US maritime search and rescue system.
Sector Command	Sector Commands are the primary organizational unit for many of the duties the public most closely identifies with the USCG, such as coordinating search and rescue missions and conducting law enforcement operations. Sector Commands include a command center that is responsible for communications, command, and control of USCG missions in the area of responsibility.
Station Command	Individual operational units report to various levels in this organizational structure. For example, small boat stations are subordinate to Sector Commanders while air stations report to District Commanders. Station Commands are responsible for the maintenance, training, and readiness of the operational resources for the USCG. Station Commands provide resources for Sector response operations.

10.2 Appendix B – PSAP Operational Levels

A primary PSAP is a physical or virtual entity where 9-1-1 calls are delivered by the 9-1-1 Service Provider. Typically, these centers operate 24x7x365 and can vary in terms of their governance (federal, state, tribal, county, municipal, or multi-agency specific). The jurisdiction and services provided can also vary from center to center, to include police, fire, medical, or a combination of multiple disciplines. Personnel at a PSAP must be trained on equipment, protocols, procedures, or policies that allow them to perform their duties as a telecommunicator. Such equipment can include, but is not limited to, 9-1-1 CHS, CAD, radios, administrative phones, internal alarm systems, national and state criminal information computer systems, and other technologies required by the center.

The typical flow of handling an incident at a PSAP is as follows:

1. **Call Receipt:** The telecommunicator receives information via 9-1-1 or other communication path such as administrative phone, radio, walk-in complaint, teletype system, in-house alarm, or other means of communication not listed.

2. **Call Processing:** The telecommunicator collects information about the incident being reported (e.g., incident type, location information, coordinates, caller and callback information, supplemental information). Training allows the telecommunicator to appropriately collect information in a prescriptive order for their department or require customer service techniques to elicit information, depending on the situation. The telecommunicator may pass on the information to the appropriate agency or process a call for service to dispatch. They may also remain on the communication line to provide pre-arrival instructions to the caller.
3. **Dispatch and Resource Assignment:** This is achieved by relaying information to an appropriate authority, such as dispatching field units to a scene or directing the caller to the appropriate agency. This information is relayed via radio, CAD, or other means. Not all incidents require a response; some instances can be solved by referring the individual to another department or providing an alternate resource (such as 2-1-1 or 9-8-8). Dispatch services include assigning responders to the incident and continue throughout the response, supporting first responder requests until the conclusion of the event.

Cooperation, coordination, and communication are vital to a PSAP as personnel must work with the public, field responders, co-workers, and outside agencies on a daily basis to process calls that come in for service.

10.3 Appendix C – Navigable Waterway Determinations

The USCG makes navigability determinations regarding specific waterways or portions of waterways in order to determine its jurisdiction on those waterways. These navigability determinations are made for USCG use at the request of USCG officials and are subject to change or modification. In accordance with Title 33 of the Code of Federal Regulations, specifically 33 C.F.R. § 2.40, the USCG District Commander maintains copies of USCG navigability determinations for waters located within the District's boundaries. Navigability may also be determined by Congress, the federal courts, and the US Army Corps of Engineers. Likewise, the absence of determination does not mean a specific body of water is not navigable. Absence of determination means only that the USCG has not made a navigability determination.

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