

**Accident Reporting Terms and Definitions Project –**  
*Building consensus around standardized terms and definitions in accident report categories*  
*NASBLA’s Engineering, Reporting & Analysis Committee and the U.S. Coast Guard*

In March 2018, the USCG/States/NASBLA ERAC Incident Reporting Policy Project Workgroup reviewed and proposed some modifications to entries in this Accident Types/Events list as it developed recommendations regarding Data Elements/Fields/Definitions for national collection. In March 2019, considering feedback received during the first comment period conducted Feb-March 2019, the workgroup further modified the Fire/ Explosion entries (pp. 2-3). In January 2020, a technical edit was made to “Person Departs Vessel Voluntarily” (p. 2). The workgroup recommends adoption of the full list with modifications as presented.

**~~ACCIDENT TYPES/EVENTS~~ \* (alphabetical<sup>†</sup>) – as approved Sept. 11, 2012**

**Recommended (overall):**

- **Revise report category label from Accident Types/Events to “INCIDENT EVENTS”**
- **Collect/capture Events in the system for both the overall incident and per vessel perspectives**

This list presents the accident types/events work product voted on and approved by the NASBLA membership at its annual Business Meeting conducted Tues., Sept. 11, 2012, Mobile, Alabama. Bracketed information at the end of each definition indicates whether the entry is a new one or will revise an existing term or definition currently used at the national level in BARD. All entries were vetted through the project review process, up to and including the project team’s refinement of two definitions (and recommended deletion of one previously proposed term) as a result of feedback received from NASBLA members during the latest open comment period (conducted July 18-Aug. 7, 2012). See **History**, below, and **Overview of Process** on page 3 of this document.

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**Capsizing:** *Overtaking of a vessel.* [Revises existing definition]

**Carbon Monoxide Exposure:** *Death or injury resulting from an odorless, colorless gas generated from auxiliary vessel equipment (including, but not limited to stoves, heaters, refrigerators, generators, hot water heaters), another vessel's exhaust, or the exhaust of the vessel on which persons were either aboard or in close proximity.* [Revises existing definition]

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\* **History:** All entries were vetted through a review process involving the project team (subgroup of NASBLA Engineering, Reporting & Analysis Committee (ERAC) and since May 2011, additional U.S. Coast Guard subject matter experts); the full ERAC; the NASBLA Executive Board; Coast Guard initial, Office-level review; and broader NASBLA community via comment solicitations in March and July/August 2012. List reflects **all changes**, including project team resolution of feedback received during the March 9-30 and July 18-Aug. 7 open comment periods. Changes resulting from feedback are: 1) a return to label “Carbon Monoxide Exposure” (in lieu of prior recommendation for “Carbon Monoxide Poisoning”); 2) addition of parenthetical information in definition for “Collision with Vessel” to direct users to appropriate entry for the described scenario; 3) revision of label “Person Struck by Propeller/Propulsion Unit” to include “/Water Jet, and definition to specifically include events involving persons injured when struck by high pressure water jet; 4) modification of original proposal for “Swamping” to now delete reference to vessel remaining upright; 5) exclusion of “Medical Condition” entry, which had been proposed to revise term label for “Sudden medical condition” (as appears on current version of USCG BAR form as an accident type) and create associated definition; 6) modification of original proposal for “Natural Phenomena” to now include “lightning” among phenomena covered under definition; and 7) modification of original proposal for “Electrical Shock” to now exclude “lightning” and direct users to “Natural Phenomena” for such events.

<sup>†</sup> Term labels that begin with “Person,” are alphabetized according to the verb in the label.

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**Collision with Fixed Object / Allision:** *The striking of any fixed object, above or below the surface of the water, except the bottom of the body of water. A **Collision with Fixed Object/Allision** includes a vessel striking a vessel moored to a dock, pier, or similar structure; and a vessel striking timber or stumps.* [Revises existing term label (“Collision with Fixed Object”) and definition]

**Collision with Floating Object:** *The striking of a floating object other than a vessel, above or below the surface of the water, that is not fixed or held in place by any means (e.g., barrels, logs, or other debris).* [Revises existing definition]

**Collision with Vessel:** *A striking together of two or more vessels. A **Collision with Vessel** includes colliding with the tow of another vessel, with the exception of a towed watersport participant. A **Collision with Vessel** also includes colliding with an anchored vessel or colliding with a vessel secured to a mooring buoy. A **Collision with Vessel** does not include a vessel striking a vessel moored to a dock, pier, or similar structure (see **Collision with Fixed Object / Allision**). [Revises existing definition]*

**Person Departs Vessel Voluntarily:** *A person, acting of their own free will, ~~leaves the~~ **enters the water from a** vessel, resulting in the person's injury or death. [Revises existing term label (“Person left boat voluntarily”) and creates definition] **Proposed revision to align with language used in description of “Non-Reportable Event: Voluntary departure injuries/fatalities” (recommendation 2.3.1)***

**Person Ejected from Vessel:** *A person is thrown out of a vessel involuntarily by a non-human force such as a wake, wave, collision, or unexpected change in direction of the vessel. [Revises related, existing term labels (“Ejected from Vessel” and “Person ejected from boat”) and creates definition]*

**Electrical Shock:** *Death, injury, or property damage resulting from contact with electrical current. This includes system failure and stray current. It does not include lightning (see **Natural Phenomena**).* [Replaces current term (“Electrocution”) and revises existing definition]

**Person Falls Overboard:** *A person involuntarily falls off of the vessel. [Revises existing term labels (“Falls Overboard” and “Person fell overboard”) and definition]*

**Recommended by project workgroup in March 2018: Revise the following series from four to three terms—one Fire/Explosion (fuel-related) instead of two. Develop a method for optional documentation of the source (propulsion-related? etc.) of fuel-related fires/explosions. Modified recommendation March 2019 to propose more specific revised format based on feedback received during first (external review) comment period (2/19/19 - 3/08/19):**

**Fuel-Related Fire/Explosion (new, combined term, with options)**

~~**Fire/Explosion (fuel and Engine (propulsion)/generator-related):**~~ *Accidental burning or explosion of vessel due to combustion of vessel fuels or their vapors that are used for electrical generation or propulsion. [Further delineates existing terms (“Fire/Explosion (Fuel)” and “Fire/Explosion (Other than Fuel)”]*

~~**Fire/Explosion (fuel-related but Not engine (propulsion)/generator-related):**~~ *Accidental burning or explosion of vessel due to combustion of fuels or their vapors that are not used for electrical generation or propulsion. [Further delineates existing terms (“Fire/Explosion (Fuel)” and “Fire/Explosion (Other than Fuel)”]*

**proposed revision continues next page**

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**Upon selection of the above, additional prompting for source of suspected leak (if known): 1) a propulsion or generator engine; 2) the installed fuel system for such engines; or 3) fuel introduced to the vessel during a refueling event.**

**Fire/Explosion (non-fuel):** *Accidental burning or explosion of any material onboard a vessel except vessel fuels or their vapors. [Revises term label (“Fire/Explosion (Other)”) no changes proposed to term or definition, but addition of examples such as: electrical, cooking, cooking fuel, pyrotechnic, smoking material, shore-tie, with additional fillable field*

**Fire/Explosion (unknown origin):** *Accidental burning or explosion of any material onboard a vessel where the cause of the fire/explosion is unknown. [Formalizes use of term label and creates definition] no changes proposed to term or definition*

**Flooding:** *Filling with water, by means of entry through a fitting, a drain plug, a hole or crack in the hull, or other means that allows ingress of water through the hull, not over the top of the gunwale, transom, or decking of the vessel. Vessel retains sufficient buoyancy to remain on the surface of the water. [Separates existing term (“Flooding/Swamping”) and creates new definition]*

**Grounding:** *Running aground of a vessel; striking or pounding on rocks, reefs, shoals, or the bottom of the body of water; includes stranded vessels. [Revises existing definition]*

**Person Impacts Vessel:** *A person slips, trips, falls, or strikes a surface on or in their vessel. [Revises existing related term label (“Falls in boat”) and definition]*

**Natural Phenomena:** *Death, injury or property damage resulting from an interaction with natural phenomenon including, but not limited to: lightning, being struck by a jumping fish, being stung or bitten by a fish, or being struck by falling debris from a cliff. [Creates term label and definition]*

**Sinking:** *After swamping, flooding, or capsizing, the vessel loses enough buoyancy to settle below the surface of the water. [Revises existing definition]*

**Person Struck by Propeller/Propulsion Unit/Water Jet:** *A person who is located on, inside or outside of a vessel is struck by the propeller or propulsion unit of a vessel or high velocity water leaving the propulsion unit. [Revises existing term label (“Struck by Propeller/Propulsion Unit”) and definition]*

**Person Struck by Vessel:** *A person who is located inside or outside of a vessel is struck by a vessel. [Revises existing term labels (“Struck by Vessel” and “Person struck by boat”) and definition]*

**Swamping:** *Ingress of water over the top of the gunwale, transom, or decking of the vessel. Vessel retains sufficient buoyancy to remain on the surface of the water. [Separates existing term (“Flooding/Swamping”) and creates new definition]*

**Towed Watersport Mishap:** *A watersport accident associated with vessel passenger(s) or person(s) being towed or surfing the wake created by the vessel. A **Towed Watersport Mishap** includes, but is not limited to, the following scenarios: persons falling or ejected during their activity; being struck by or entangled in the activity equipment; or running into a person, object or vessel. [Replaces existing term (“Skier Mishap”) and revises definition]*

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**Other / describe:** *Accidents that do not fit any of the described types. Provide brief description.* [Creates definition]

**Unknown:** *Insufficient information to determine the type of accident.* [Creates definition]

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**Overview of Process:** The review process for this Accident Reporting Terms and Definitions Project was accepted by the NASBLA Executive Board and the USCG Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety in mid-June 2011. For each category of report terms:

- Achieve project team consensus on terms/definitions through series of teleconferences and interim work;
- Share team consensus list with and get feedback from full ERAC committee and NASBLA Executive Board and the U.S. Coast Guard (for initial, Office-level review);
- Share the resulting, refined list with and get feedback from the States/Territories using a structured, open comment period;
- Review responses to assess need for additional team refinements to the entries;
- Submit final consensus list to the NASBLA Executive Board for delivery to and vote by the NASBLA membership;
- Transmit to the U.S. Coast Guard for final review and clearance through its appropriate internal channels.