



**National Association of  
State Boating Law Administrators**

**Engineering, Reporting & Analysis Committee  
(ERAC)**

**Committee Activity Report for 2022-2023 Cycle**

**v1 Aug. 31, 2023**

## ENGINEERING, REPORTING & ANALYSIS COMMITTEE (ERAC)

### 2022-2023 Committee Activity Report (as of Aug. 31, 2023)

#### ERAC Chairs serving during this committee cycle <sup>1</sup>

Tamara Terry, Ohio, 3/4/2023 thru end of 2023 cycle

Seth Wagner, Florida, tenure 10/2019 thru 3/3/2023

**Board Liaison:** Joe McCullough, Alaska

The full committee roster for 2022-2023 is on page 14 of this report

#### CHARTER IN SUPPORT OF NASBLA'S MISSION AND SERVICE TO THE MEMBERSHIP:

As one of NASBLA's standing policy committees, ERAC identifies, evaluates, and analyzes recreational boating data and other related information that can shed light on factors associated with boating incidents; be used to inform the development of state- and national-level boating safety policies, programs, and campaigns; and, ultimately, be used to measure their effectiveness.

To ensure that the results of the research and analyses are valid and reliable, ERAC also actively seeks ways to advance the quality, relevance, accuracy, consistency, applicability, and completeness of the data and information.

#### IN PRACTICE, ERAC:

- **Takes on targeted research questions.** Reviews and evaluates report data and other boating-related statistics to identify risk factors, patterns, and trends in boating incidents;
- **Partners for data improvement.** Works in partnership with the States, the U.S. Coast Guard, and other key agencies and organizations in the recreational boating community to improve the criteria, processes, and training associated with reporting, collecting, entering, and using incident data;
- **Promotes uniformity.** On behalf of the States, and in the interest of uniformity and shared understanding, collaborates with the U.S. Coast Guard to clarify reporting criteria and procedures;
- **Seeks to mitigate risk factors.** Identifies and examines boating safety programs, equipment design, and related efforts that could mitigate risk factors identified through the committee's analyses;
- **Stays informed.** Monitors the activities of and receives reports from subcommittees and panels of NBSAC, ABYC, and NMMA among others, to identify and inform about issues of mutual interest; and
- **Works across committees.** Also interacts with other NASBLA committees and panels and stays informed about projects of mutual interest—not only to add value to ERAC products, but also to determine how ERAC can effectively serve as a resource to them.

<sup>1</sup> Seth Wagner served as chair until leaving his position with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission effective end of the ERAC full committee meeting day March 3, 2023, in Lexington, Ky.. In mid-March, he joined the U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Division's Program Management & Operations Branch (CG-BSX-21) and continued to participate in ERAC activities as a USCG representative. Vice Chair Tammy Terry, Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Parks & Watercraft, took over as ERAC chair on March 4, 2023, and has since been reappointed by the NASBLA Executive Board to serve as chair for the 2023-2024 committee cycle. Executive Board Vice Chair Joe McCullough was assigned to serve as ERAC's board liaison, also effective March 2023, replacing Brian Bowles who had resigned from the board and his role as liaison to the committee upon appointment to a different position in Nevada state government.

## OVERVIEW

### CHARGES

Per NASBLA Executive Board action on Nov. 8, 2022, ERAC was assigned seven charges, three of which involved follow-up activities associated with the [Recreational Boating Incident Reporting Policy Project](#).

The charge work addressed three areas:

- **Investigation, Reporting & Analysis:** Working to improve the criteria, processes, and training associated with reporting, collecting, entering, and using recreational boating incident data.
- **RBS Statistics & Research:** Identifying and working to improve incident and other recreational boating statistics for the purpose of identifying risk factors, patterns, and trends.
- **Knowledge & Content Management:** Developing, maintaining, and delivering ERAC's products in alignment with NASBLA's knowledge, content, and learning management systems.

In this report and as applicable, each charge is presented with a description of its importance; deliverable(s); status as of Aug. 31, 2023 (and additional discussion on the status as warranted); and a preliminary recommendation for the 2023-2024 committee cycle.

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

In this cycle, ERAC did not have a formal charge associated with **Engineering & Equipment**, another area under its jurisdiction. However, the committee continued to benefit from associate member reports regarding boating industry trends, emerging technologies, standards development, and efforts to identify and recommend changes to outdated federal boats & associated equipment and manufacturing regulations.

Further, ERAC engaged in issue and policy monitoring activities as an ongoing committee function, and its leadership, members and staff served as subject matter experts to other NASBLA policy committees and panels and to task groups of the U.S. Coast Guard's National Boating Safety Advisory Committee (NBSAC).

### IN-PERSON MEETING – March 3, 2023

The spring full committee meeting was held the day after NASBLA's State RBS Workshop (Lexington, KY) concluded. The session was conducted as a hybrid for members who could not travel for various reasons and, as has been the case in recent years, remote participants outnumbered on-site participants. In all, however, it was marked by robust discussions—21 committee members, guests, NASBLA leadership, and staff attended all or a portion of the day. The meeting recap—covering key topics, discussions, and action items, and incorporating links to the meeting's resources and references—can be found in **Appendix A of this report**.

## INVESTIGATION, REPORTING & ANALYSIS CHARGES

Conducting work to improve the criteria, processes, and training associated with reporting, collecting, entering, and using accident data.

### EXTENSION of PRIOR YEARS' CHARGE - PHASE 1 - INCIDENT REPORTING (ERAC-USCG IR&A 2023)

The 2019-2020 Phase One charge—originally considered complete with the August 2020 delivery to the Coast Guard of the NASBLA member-accepted recommendations emerging from the [Recreational Boating Incident Reporting Policy Project](#)—was reinstated during the 2021-2022 cycle to accommodate a delay in receipt of Coast Guard policy responses to those recommendations. With continuing activity in this area, as well as the need for ERAC to advise and accept assignments from the NASBLA board on this project, the charge was carried into the 2022-2023 cycle.

- ✓ **Why it is important:** Updated, consistent, clear, published policy and procedures are critical to the states' ability to capture and report boating incident data to the Coast Guard and to the Coast Guard's ability to fulfill its statutory obligations to collect and report accurate and timely statistics on recreational boating incidents. The regulatory and policy recommendations that emerged from this consensus-based, national project were intended to create more certainties about reporting requirements, improve uniformity and consistency in collecting and processing incident data, and advance the RBS programmatic and policy interests of both the Coast Guard and the states.
- ✓ **Deliverables and key resources associated with this extended charge:** [Consensus Recommendations to the U.S. Coast Guard \(June 2020\)](#); [CG-BSX Policy Letter 23-01 27 Jan 2023 Recreational Boating Incident Reporting](#); [Recreational Boating Incident Reporting Policy Letter Session Presentation](#) to NASBLA's State RBS Workshop, March 3, 2023; [Recreational Boating Incident Reporting Policy Webinars, March 15 and 20, 2023](#) (recordings; handouts of PPT slides; discussion section regarding questions posed during sessions). **Pending as of this report date:** Change 1 to Recreational Boating Incident Reporting Policy (CG-BSX Policy Letter 23-01 update). See discussion of related committee guidance products in **Best Practices Development (Incident Reporting – ERAC IR&A 2023-1)**, page 6 of this report.
- ✓ **Status:** As of this report date, an ERAC charge team, at the request of the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Auxiliary & Boating Safety's Boating Safety Division and in conjunction with similar efforts by the NASBLA Executive Board, was reviewing and offering feedback on a proposed revision of CG-BSX Policy Letter 23-01, which will be issued as Change 1 to Recreational Boating Incident Reporting. The updated policy is expected to be finalized, signed, and released to the states before the end of September 2023. **If that occurs, a v2 of this ERAC committee activity report will be published.** See **Discussion** for more detail on the development of this policy letter and the rationale for its update; see also, **Best Practices Development (Incident Reporting – ERAC IR&A 2023-1)**, page 6 of this report, for the relationship to and impact on guidance product development.

**Discussion:** [ERAC's activity report for the 2021-2022 cycle](#) (August 2022) chronicled the series of reviews and revisions to the policy letter first delivered to the NASBLA Executive Board, attendees of the NASBLA State RBS Workshop and ERAC in early March 2022. In October, after the 2021-2022 activity report was published, the Coast Guard delivered another revision to the board for consideration and acceptance in anticipation of release of a final, signed copy to the states before the end of the calendar year. However, in late December 2022, upon request for one final look before release, ERAC

leadership and staff identified—for the board’s consideration and Coast Guard resolution—substantive issues that needed to be addressed in the final version. Ultimately, the reviews, and the Coast Guard’s resolution of the identified concerns, culminated in board approval of CG-BSX Policy Letter 23-01 in mid-January 2023 and the Coast Guard’s [distribution of signed copy](#) to the states’ BLAs on January 26.

Apart from clarifying which recreational boating incidents require a federal report and will be included in the counts for the Coast Guard’s annual boating statistics publication, the policy letter is noteworthy for incorporating incident type terms and definitions first developed through a Coast Guard/ERAC collaborative project that had been accepted by NASBLA membership in 2012 and again in 2020 through the [Consensus Recommendations to the U.S. Coast Guard](#). See a [“mapping” of “old” \(currently used\) to “new” terms that will be applied to the reporting of incidents effective Jan. 1, 2024](#).

The first chance to highlight and discuss the letter’s major policy changes, their significance, and the implications for the states and Coast Guard came during the [NASBLA Spring RBS Workshop, March 2, 2023](#) and ERAC’s March 3 session in Lexington, KY. As follow-up to these introductory presentations, [two national webinars were conducted March 15 and 20](#). While NASBLA co-sponsored the webinars and ERAC assisted Boating Safety Division personnel by reviewing content, the Coast Guard took the lead in delineating the major policy changes to incident report data collection effective Jan. 1, 2024; outlined the Coast Guard’s preliminary implementation plans for BARD, the CG-BAR form, and other internal processes; and responded to feedback and questions from webinar participants.

During the ERAC meeting discussions and the March national webinars, some state participants asked questions and raised issues about the meaning and practical application of certain policy provisions. Participants were advised that questions not fully addressed in the sessions would be forthcoming from the Coast Guard as well as incorporated into guidance products to be developed by ERAC through the committee’s Best Practices charge team. In product development discussions, the Best Practices charge team made additional requests to Coast Guard representatives for policy clarification. CG-BSX-21 personnel subsequently conducted internal deliberations and, in August, formulated and presented recommended actions for CG-BSX leadership to consider. In some cases, their recommendation was for the question or issue to be resolved as the Coast Guard’s preferred interpretation of the policy provision and included in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) product. In other instances, however, CG-BSX leadership concurred that an update to the policy was warranted and should be expedited given the Jan. 1, 2024, effective date and need for timely release of additional guidance products to the states.

- ✓ **Preliminary recommendation for next cycle—extend the activity into 2024.** Given the pending release and necessary follow-up with the states on an updated CG-BSX 23-01, and given that the policy letter addresses just one of the eight sets of recommendations from the [Consensus Recommendations to the U.S. Coast Guard \(June 2020\)](#), there is reason to continue activity in this area through the next committee cycle.

## BEST PRACTICES DEVELOPMENT (INCIDENT REPORTING) (ERAC IR&A 2023-1)

Using the [Recreational Boating Incident Reporting Policy Project](#) consensus recommendations to the Coast Guard, continue developing “best practices” and other reporting guidance for the states. Review [2022 Best Practices list – working document](#) to identify remaining areas needing work, focusing in the short term on the steps used to determine which incidents require states’ reporting to the Coast Guard for inclusion in the annual Recreational Boating Statistics. Work closely with other ERAC charge teams and the NASBLA staff to adopt the best formats for delivering the information to users (e.g., officers/investigators; incident report reviewers; data entry personnel; etc.).

*OF NOTE: The language for this charge was developed and approved in fall 2022, in anticipation of, but before the release of [CG-BSX Policy Letter 23-01](#). With the policy release in January 2023, the charge work pivoted to the development of products that could assist states in interpreting, understanding and effectively implementing the details contained in the policy letter by the effective date of Jan. 1, 2024.*

- ✓ **Why it is important:** The regulatory and policy recommendations that emerged from the [consensus-based, national project](#)—and [CG-BSX Policy Letter 23-01 Recreational Boating Incident Reporting](#) (and anticipated, Change 1) as a formal response to some of those recommendations—established parameters intended to create more certainty about reporting requirements. However, the instructions, guidance and best practices and procedures that accompany published policy will be critical to the accurate and consistent application of those requirements.
  - ✓ **Deliverables:** In progress as of this committee activity report (see **Status** and **Discussion** for detail):
    - **Recreational Boating Incident Report – Which Recreational Boating Incidents Require a Report to the U.S. Coast Guard?** Two complementary products: Decision matrix/graphic (“refreshes” a flow chart originally developed as part of the [Consensus Recommendations to the U.S. Coast Guard \(June 2020\)](#), and intended as a quick reference for use by officers/investigators and report reviewers) and Decision detail (a supplemental resource on the contents of the policy letter for desk review of incident reports);
    - **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** about provisions of the policy letter; and
    - **Checklist of Implementation Tasks for the States.**
  - ✓ **Status:** The products listed above are scheduled for completion and delivery to the states in the fourth quarter of CY 2023. By late July, near-final drafts of the products noted in the first bullet under **Deliverables** had been readied for review and feedback by targeted users beyond the charge team; however, the review was put on hold when it became evident that an update to CG-BSX 23-01 was in the offing and that it, along with the outcomes of internal CG-BSX discussions on the FAQs under development, would impact the content of the product drafts.
- Discussion:** Over the last two cycles, while awaiting a formal Coast Guard response to the [Recreational Boating Incident Reporting Policy Project](#), ERAC maintained the importance of keeping some formulation of this charge on the books to address recommendations calling for a best practice, guidance or instruction that could benefit the states independent of formal Coast Guard actions on the project. However, with the release in this committee cycle of CG-BSX 23-01—which addressed the federal report requirements regarding “reportable” and “non-reportable” incidents, adopted the

revised incident type terms, and included interpretations of the federal thresholds—the charge team needed to immediately shift attention to guidance for the policy letter to ensure that its release would result in the intended standardization of report data collection.

To make the most effective use of time and resources, the team settled on development of a priority set of implementation “tools” for the rollout—products likely to be of more immediate importance and use to the state audiences expected to be most impacted by the policy changes. Notably, the charge team was expanded to include members of the original recreational boating incident reporting project workgroup, other interested ERAC members, and some additional state participants responsible for incident report reviews and/or BARD entry for their states.

As noted in **Deliverables**, the following interrelated, initial products and tools have been in the works this cycle. Now, with the anticipated changes to and interpretations of CG-BSX 23-01 that will result in release of an updated policy letter, the products will need to undergo additional review and final revision:

- A **“refreshed” version of the reporting decision matrix/graphic** originally included in the [Consensus Recommendations to the U.S. Coast Guard \(June 2020\)](#) along with a **more extensive resource supplement translating the detail of the policy letter**. Drafts of both items had been readied for distribution to and solicitation of feedback from the full committee, state personnel having an interest because of their incident report review/BARD entry functions, and targeted officers and investigators. That distribution was delayed pending the team’s ability to make necessary changes to both items based on the update to CG-BSX 23-01.
  - A **“frequently asked questions” (FAQ)** resource based on questions posed to the Coast Guard after release of the policy letter. The internal discussions at CG-BSX resulted in draft responses to those questions and, ultimately, the decision in August to address some of those issues via the update to CG-BSX 23-01.
  - A **“checklist of implementation tasks for the states,”** which was originally tagged as lower priority for completion this cycle, but has since been tackled by a subgroup of state members based on their assessments of changes they already know they will need to make to their forms, systems, and procedures.
- ✓ **Preliminary recommendation for next cycle—extend this activity into 2024.** Given the pending release of an updated CG-BSX 23-01 and complementary changes to the deliverables, there are solid reasons to continue activity in this area through the next committee cycle. Moreover, given the likely need to convey this information through additional products in a variety of formats, there must be close coordination with the activities of the charge team evaluating ERAC-sponsored webpages and other NASBLA-sponsored platforms and outlets for the most effective delivery methods (see **Complete Lighthouse Reevaluation and Develop ERAC Product Placement/Marketing Plan (ERAC K&CM 2023-1)**), **page 13** of this report.



## REPORTING SYSTEM REDESIGN (INCIDENT REPORTING) (ERAC IR&A 2023-2)

Participate in NASBLA and Coast Guard efforts intended to address the deficiencies in the current online incident reporting system in order to assure that the design and content of the future system(s) and any other resolutions are responsive to the report data consensus recommendations in the [Recreational Boating Incident Reporting Policy Project](#).

- ✓ **Why it is important:** The regulatory and policy recommendations that emerged from the [consensus-based, national project](#)—and [CG-BSX Policy Letter 23-01 Recreational Boating Incident Reporting](#) (and anticipated Change 1) as a formal response to some of those recommendations—set parameters intended to create more certainty about reporting requirements and consistency in data collection. However, while guidance and best practices can be and are being developed with an eye toward implementing those requirements and achieving more consistent and enhanced report data gathering, these data goals will fall short in the absence of related improvements to the systems for entering and processing those data
- ✓ **Deliverables:** None during this cycle. See **Status** for detail.
- ✓ **Status:** This charge has remained on the books for the past few years to assure that ERAC would participate in the overhaul of the Coast Guard’s Boating Accident Report Database (BARD) based on the [consensus recommendations from the Recreational Boating Incident Reporting Policy Project](#) and in this cycle, the data collection changes precipitated by [CG-BSX Policy Letter 23-01 Recreational Boating Incident Reporting](#). In this cycle, there has been no activity on the charge **as written**. However, [ERAC’s activity report for the 2021-2022 cycle](#) (August 2022) chronicled the activities associated with a “State RBS Incident Reporting System Task Force,” an entity convened by the board to address NASBLA member states’ issues with BARD and seek alternative state-based solutions. While this effort has stalled, it remains a worthy goal for the future. In the meantime, for the current BARD and CG-3865 BAR form, the Coast Guard is planning near-term modifications to both tools to accommodate the incident type term and other changes precipitated by CG-BSX 23-01 (and pending update, Change 1) and the looming Jan. 1, 2024 effective date. However, the Coast Guard will still need to publish a Federal Register Notice to formally revise the data collection. ERAC will monitor that effort, develop comments for a NASBLA submission, and advise the states to comment in kind when that occurs.
- ✓ **Preliminary recommendation for next cycle—extend this activity into 2024.** Apart from the need to respond to the Coast Guard’s likely publication of a Federal Register Notice on the near-term data collection revisions, ERAC should participate in any longer-term NASBLA and Coast Guard efforts to address deficiencies in the online incident reporting system—this, to ensure that the design and content of future system(s) are responsive to the term changes already achieved through CG-BSX 23-01 as well as the more comprehensive report data recommendations presented in the [Recreational Boating Incident Reporting Policy Project](#).



## HUMAN FACTORS: REFINE DATA COLLECTION/ANALYSIS (ERAC IR&A 2023-3)

Continue to assess the experiences of a pilot program involving states applying aspects of the [human performance investigation guidance](#) and [supplemental report form](#) (ERAC products v. 2016) to fatal incident investigations in their jurisdictions. Evaluate the collected data, especially as apply to operator distractions; resolve data collection issues; refine the guidance as warranted; issue a report on the findings. Review related tasks expected to be assigned to the National Boating Safety Advisory Committee (NBSAC) by the Coast Guard and determine whether ERAC might contribute by serving as a resource or by modifying this charge to accommodate additional, relevant activities regarding human performance in recreational boating incidents.

- ✓ **Why it is important:** Getting to more conclusive evidence about the role of human performance errors in recreational boating accidents—and developing interventions—calls for consistently-collected data and information identifying the contributors **and** getting at why and how failures occurred. In 2012, ERAC began working to understand the factors that might be associated with performance failures; in 2014, a charge team developed and two years later refined guidance and a supplemental report form for use by officers and investigators in states that want to augment their investigations. As the public health approach to injury prevention has been introduced to recreational boating safety program planning and initiatives at the national and state levels, and since 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic presented extraordinary challenges, the collection and analysis of information that gets at underlying characteristics and distinguishable patterns of boater behavior is increasingly relevant.
- ✓ **Deliverables:** For this cycle, limited to preliminary analysis of operator distraction data collected in Florida. See **Status** and **Discussion** for detail.
- ✓ **Status:** While ERAC has had a long-standing interest in the collection and study of data on human performance in recreational boating incidents, notably with the seminal work of the late Dr. Dan Maxim, the committee's ability to recruit multiple pilot states to take on additional report data collection in recent years has been more limited.

**Discussion:** [ERAC's activity report for the 2021-2022 cycle](#) chronicled some of the more recent activity associated with this charge as Lt. Seth Wagner (ERAC's chair at the time) worked to implement the collection and analysis of human factors data—especially regarding operator inattention and the underlying distractions—for recreational boating fatalities in Florida. However, data query issues had delayed the extraction and assessment of the data at the time of that ERAC activity report.

In the 2022-2023 cycle, Wagner was able to present the committee with [Florida data on distractions covering incidents from 2022](#), cautioning, however, that more states need to be involved to paint an accurate picture of what is going on in the realm of human factors. Wagner described that while investigators initially used the distraction codes for fatalities and serious injuries only, they had more recently begun using it for all incidents as it was not a great impact to ask one or two extra questions. Moreover, he said that a notable by-product of the collection had been a higher success rate regarding citations since the officers'/investigators' recording of distractions further details *why* the operator was being cited for Navigation Rules violations or careless reckless operations.

As part of this piloting effort in Florida and especially given ERAC's prior, extensive human factors work, ERAC leadership and staff were tapped to serve as resources to the Prevention through People

(PTP) Subcommittee of the National Boating Safety Advisory Committee (NBSAC). The PTP was tasked with assembling foundational information and making recommendations to the Coast Guard on actions that can be taken to reduce incidents attributed to human factors (see [task statement \(2022-04-03\) assigned Aug. 30, 2022](#)). As a testament to its continuing relevance, human factors is addressed in an activity in the [National RBS Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#) (Activity 3.2.3 Develop and implement improved methods for studying human factors in recreational boating incidents).

- ✓ **Preliminary recommendation for next cycle—extend this activity into 2024.** At minimum, ERAC should maintain its relationship with NBSAC as it continues to address human factors in recreational boating incidents. However, ERAC can play a larger role in this area by pushing for the national collection of related data—especially as it applies to the implementation of [distraction codes associated with the contributing factor “operator inattention.”](#)

### RBS STATISTICS & RESEARCH

Identifying and working to improve accident and other boating statistics for the purpose of identifying risk factors, patterns, and trends

#### NATIONAL RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY SURVEYS (NRBSS)—2018 FOLLOW-UP AND INPUT TO UPCOMING SURVEYS (ERAC S&R 2023-1)

Using the [national webinars and participant survey results from the ERAC-sponsored May 2022 events](#), along with feedback from other forums (e.g., anticipated presentations/discussions at National Boating Safety Advisory Committee (NBSAC), August 2022) and in coordination with Coast Guard staff, develop relevant follow-up activities regarding the 2018 methods and findings. Solicit additional feedback from the states, and on behalf of the states, make recommendations on the content of instruments that will be used for future surveys and on the potential data uses at the state level.

- ✓ **Why it is important:** Beginning with the 2011-2012 NRBSS and carrying on through the last iteration conducted in 2018, ERAC has had an interest not only in the data and findings, but also the methods, scope, and survey instruments used in the national surveys. The primary reason has been to be in a better position to interpret the survey findings for NASBLA’s members, especially as they relate to the generation of state-level exposure hours, and to assist in the states’ application of the findings. Another is to use the knowledge about the surveys’ workings to offer the Coast Guard constructive input both for analyzing the survey data when it is released and toward the administration and design of future surveys, in accordance with the [USCG-NASBLA MOU/Agreement](#).
- ✓ **Deliverables:** None in this cycle.
- ✓ **Status:** [ERAC’s activity report for the 2021-2022 cycle](#) chronicled significant activity on this charge during 2022. It included the committee’s review and comment on the Coast Guard’s draft solicitation for white papers--the first step in its two-stage process to identify the vendor that will conduct the next round of surveys—and the [May 2022 hour-long, national webinars](#) the ERAC charge team presented on the background, methodology and key findings of the 2018 Exposure and participation surveys. The webinars were conducted not only for the states’ benefit, but also for the possibility of

gathering more extensive follow-up information on the surveys' utility and stakeholders' thoughts about future improvements to the survey instruments and the presentation of the surveys' results.

Since then, the 2018 NRBSS has gained some additional traction as to its utility with references in a U.S. Government Accountability Office report and at least one substantial use in a state report on non-motorized boating fatalities. However, due to other higher priority activities in this 2022-2023 cycle, the ERAC charge team could not follow up on the in-webinar polls nor conduct any focus groups.

Nevertheless, in 2023, the Coast Guard was still on the path to seeking U.S. Office of Management and Budget approval for the next iteration of surveys—something that would assure more control over the collection and accessibility of the data than was the case with the 2018 surveys. In that regard, the Coast Guard implemented the second step in its two-stage process to identify a suitable vendor by publishing a Notice of Funding Opportunity to [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) on May 25, with a deadline of July 26 and intent to engage a vendor beginning October 1.

In anticipation of increased activity on this project, recent brainstorming by the charge team centered on state uses of the survey data, what has changed in boating since the 2018 surveys (including the impact of COVID-19 on boating activity), what needs to be included in or calculated from the surveys, and what controversial issues should be avoided to maintain the surveys' integrity. The expectation is that there will be significant activity at the outset of the 2024 committee cycle, including developing recommendations on the contents of the survey instruments for the NRBSS Exposure and Participation surveys and direct solicitation of input on that content from the states and other key stakeholders.

- ✓ **Preliminary recommendation for next cycle—extend this activity into 2024.** Given the anticipated ramp-up of survey-related activity in the fourth quarter of CY 2023, there is good reason to maintain a targeted charge in this area over at least the next committee cycle. Moreover, it would be in fulfillment of provision 4.g. of the [Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement between the Coast Guard and NASBLA](#), which states, in part:

*"...Given the potential for utilizing survey data to evaluate state-to-state program effectiveness, the USCG will openly receive and formally respond to recommendations from NASBLA concerning the design, development and analysis of data collection efforts regarding recreational boating activities, behaviors, priorities, etc."*

#### **INVESTIGATE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH INCIDENTS DURING PANDEMIC YEARS (ERAC S&R 2023-2)**

Conduct a deeper dive into the factors associated with recreational boating incidents, fatalities and injuries reported during the pandemic years. Review the data from the period 2019-2021 and potentially preliminary data from 2022; and review and draft an annotated summary of studies already conducted on recreational boating and boater behaviors, and on statistics and risk factors identified for other recreational activities and transportation modes during the pandemic years. Evaluate findings for potential product(s) or more specific charge ideas for consideration in the [ERAC – Triage – Issues and Trends Monitoring process](#).

- ✓ **Why it is important:** The quantitative data released in the Coast Guard's Recreational Boating Statistics for 2020 seemed to verify what was described in Zoom meetings and other pandemic-induced online forums in 2020 and early 2021—nationwide, there had been an unusually sharp increase in boating

incidents, injuries, and fatalities that year. The release of the statistics prompted an early narrative—but, to date, not a comprehensive analysis—that the increase in incidents was an anomaly and largely the by-product of a similarly sharp increase in boating activity during that period. However, as with other findings and observations about life, health, socio-economics, work, other transportation modes, and recreation in general that are emerging in the wake of the pandemic experience, there may be more to the story about the impacts to recreational boating, boaters, boating behaviors. and the boating industry waiting to be revealed and understood.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** None in this cycle.
- ✓ **Status:** Activity was initiated on this charge with team sessions devoted to the scope of work for the remainder of the current cycle and into the next, as well as the identification of a variety of potential sources and data – beyond incident data and in some cases, more non-traditional in nature – along with possible pathways for gathering and exploring them. The charge team will reconvene in late September.

**Discussion:** [ERAC’s activity report for the 2021-2022 cycle](#) described that at the March 2022 ERAC meeting, the committee identified what seemed a reasonable path toward further discussion and assessments of this topic. In the weeks that followed, however, higher priority committee activities associated with the release of the draft CG-BSX Policy Letter 23-01 intervened and put the charge on hold. Moreover, the 2021 statistics were not released until mid-June 2022, thus not allowing sufficient time for a more meaningful analysis before the closing of the 2021-2022 committee cycle.

At the March 2023 ERAC meeting, the fundamental question was whether there was enough value, time, and ability to do anything at all with the topic. There was concern about the currency of the pandemic’s impact and whether recreational boating may have just returned to the pre-pandemic timeframe. Ultimately, however, there was sufficient interest in moving it forward.

Conversations around this topic have surfaced a variety of ideas about its potential value in the short- and long-term. There has been speculation that if there were to be another pandemic or a similar event in the future, the same trends might come into play; as such, it might be worthwhile to investigate as a means of doing some preventative work and messaging, or it could be a way to model other disruptions, including those of an economic nature. From a boating education standpoint, the pandemic yielded a volume of new boaters that otherwise would have taken years to gather data on in order to draw conclusions about their incidents and *why* they might have gotten into trouble. There could be lessons learned as to why these new boaters got involved in the first place, whether they are staying involved, and whether lapsed boaters returned to the activity. There have been questions about older boats that came back into service and whether maintenance, or lack thereof, might have led to issues on the water. Other questions—and data sources—have revolved around the first-time boat buyers, about boats sold and resold, the types and ages of the boats, ownership issues, and so on.

The discussions thus far have identified multiple topics and data points that could help build a broader context for understanding the impacts of the pandemic on recreational boating and boaters. The challenge for the team is to pick off the most viable sources to begin building that context and, in cases where data of interest is not currently available, determine whether a future survey effort – for example, the upcoming National Recreational Boating Safety Surveys – might offer such an opportunity.

- ✓ **Preliminary recommendation for next cycle—extend this activity into 2024.** The exploration to date has revealed sufficient interest and value to continue, but also a need to settle on a doable scope of work. Of note, ERAC’s activity on this topic will be collaborative and not duplicative of any efforts by the Coast Guard to evaluate factors associated with incidents during the years in question.

## KNOWLEDGE & CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Developing, maintaining, and delivering ERAC's products in alignment with NASBLA's knowledge, content and learning management systems.

### COMPLETE LIGHTHOUSE REEVALUATION AND DEVELOP ERAC PRODUCT PLACEMENT/MARKETING PLAN (ERAC K&CM 2023-1)

Continue evaluating the current reach of the NASBLA Lighthouse compared to other NASBLA knowledge and learning tools and evaluate those tools for sharing existing and near-future ERAC products. Determine the best ways to make products more user-friendly (e.g., cheat sheets, webinars, how-to videos and other means), and based on the charge team's work regarding available NASBLA tools, determine the best channels for sharing and posting products for wider use. Gather feedback from users to refine strategies moving forward. When complete, this activity should be reclassified as an ongoing committee function, possibly with a standing workgroup to facilitate additional marketing, distribution and housing of committee materials going forward.

- ✓ **Why it is important:** [The Lighthouse](#) was imagined by a 2010 charge team as an accessible, online forum where recreational boating data users and producers could share data and successful practices, forego “reinventing the wheel,” and locate viable resources applicable to their work. It was built as a series of rudimentary portals, largely showcasing ERAC products, at a time when NASBLA had neither the platforms nor capacity to accommodate the sort of interactive, interrelated site envisioned by the team. That changed over time as NASBLA increased its capacity and variety of information tools. Now, the question is how ERAC will take advantage of NASBLA's array of knowledge and learning tools to enhance or transform its online presence because the need for timely sharing of information, contextual narrative, and collaboration has not waned.
- ✓ **Deliverables:** Continuous updates to <https://www.nasbla.org/lighthouse/nasbla-lighthouse>.
- ✓ **Status:** The charge team is juggling multiple tasks—consideration of the current structure of the Lighthouse; evaluation of its current content and “draw”; its placement within the larger NASBLA website and knowledge management scheme; the prospects of using other NASBLA information delivery tools to promote ERAC products; and now, with multiple guidance products on CG-BSX Policy Letter 23-01 set to release before the end of this calendar year, the question of where and how best to house those items so that they are promoted and easily accessible to the state users. To make headway on what would appear to be an overwhelming combination of tasks, the team has identified and will implement some immediate tweaks to the existing Lighthouse (modifying certain portal names, redirecting some content, continuing updates as needed so NASBLA visitors do not land on outdated pages); coordinating with the **Best Practices team work** on the guidance products outlined on **pages 6-7** of this report to ensure appropriate placement in the near-term; and thinking strategically about the Lighthouse and promotion of ERAC products in the future.
- ✓ **Preliminary recommendation for next cycle—extend this activity into 2024.** Particularly critical given that decisions need to be made about the placement, promotion, and multiple delivery channels for the CG-BSX Policy Letter 23-01 guidance products in progress. Upon successful completion of the major tasks, consideration should be given to reclassifying this as an ongoing committee function.

## 2022-2023 ENGINEERING, REPORTING & ANALYSIS COMMITTEE (ERAC) MEMBERSHIP ROSTER (at end of committee cycle)

### COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

Chair: Tammy Terry, Ohio, 614.265.6408, [tamara.terry@dnr.ohio.gov](mailto:tamara.terry@dnr.ohio.gov)

Board Liaison: Joe McCullough, Alaska, 907.269.8704, [joseph.mccullough@alaska.gov](mailto:joseph.mccullough@alaska.gov)

### COMMITTEE STAFF

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**APPENDIX A**  
**NASBLA ENGINEERING, REPORTING AND ANALYSIS COMMITTEE**  
**(ERAC) FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 2023 — MEETING of the FULL COMMITTEE**  
**Lexington Marriott City Center – Lexington A – 8:15a-2:33p**  
**121 West Vine Street, Lexington, KY**

**Meeting Materials:** <https://www.nasbla.org/advocacy/erac/meetingmaterials>

**Session Recordings:**

**GoToMeeting Links (video, .mp4) –**

Morning –

<https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#/s/abd38d7a97b2482e38a6bea1b7a69c76d131747a6f8ad8c94f1fcd2d678dc649>

Afternoon –

<https://transcripts.gotomeeting.com/#/s/1f2b15dc6b49947b57bc1c9d0b694f38e17b7a3d3ebb0cba1a29aa122ae9d04d>

**Three audio-only files (.mp3) --**

Two covering the morning session and one from the afternoon -- uploaded to Basecamp Tues., March 7 at:

<https://nasbla.basecampHQ.com/projects/5486330-erac-2022-2023-overall-activity/files>

**Attendance:** (attended all or a portion of meeting; \* = remote)

**Members:** Seth Wagner, FL (Chair, presiding); Tammy Terry, OH\* (Vice Chair); Joanna Andrade, CA; Bryan Baronet, TX\*; Deb Green, OH\*; Paul Littman, NY; Matt Majors, TN (and NASBLA BII training); Samm Teixeira, CA\*; Susan Weber, USCG\*; Jonathan Hsieh, USCG\*; Pete Chisholm, Mercury Marine\*; Brian Goodwin, ABYC\*; Ron Sarver, NASBLA (honorary ERAC member)

**Guests:** Zach Mundy (CA)\*; Andrew Iraola, USCG\*; Rachel Warner, USCG\*; Mark Chanski, NASBLA

**NASBLA Leadership:** Susan Stocker, IA (NASBLA Chair); Joe McCullough, AK (NASBLA Vice Chair and newly-assigned board liaison to ERAC); John Johnson, NASBLA CEO

**ERAC staff:** Deborah Gona

**MEETING RECAP – KEY TOPICS, DISCUSSIONS AND ACTION ITEMS**

See the end of this recap for copies of the Charge Team lists,  
and an excerpt of Contributing Factors' Distractions referenced during the meeting.

Other items referenced are available via live links throughout this recap—to webpages,  
Basecamp project areas or directly to documents for viewing/downloading.

**Leadership Updates**

- This marked Seth Wagner's last meeting as ERAC Chair. Effective end of day, he was set to retire from his position with Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission; in mid-March, he will be joining the Coast Guard Boating Safety Division (CG-BSX-21) in the State Program Coordinator slot previously held by Joe Carro. Seth did not know if he would be assigned to join current BSX personnel as a representative to ERAC.
- Vice Chair Tammy Terry will take over as ERAC Chair beyond this meeting. A Vice Chair will be identified.
- Executive Board Vice Chair (and former ERAC member) Joe McCullough has been assigned to serve as ERAC's board liaison; he replaces Brian Bowles who recently moved to a different role in Nevada state government.

**Committee Operations**

- Recommendations for substantial changes to the charges assigned to ERAC will go to the Executive Board for review and approval. Examples include recommendations to delete (or add) a charge for the current cycle or to significantly narrow a charge's focus and scope of work.
- See the [Committee Calendar](#) (posted to the [Meeting Materials](#) page) for important tasks and due dates.



## News from the State RBS Workshop on ERAC-related Topics

- **Presentations on the [policy letter](#) and [committee](#):** Deb Gona and Seth presented on CG-BSX 23-01 and the ERAC briefing, respectively. Neither presentation generated feedback or questions. These were not the only workshop sessions with a low level of attendee engagement. Overall, at the workshop, the audience was quieter and, as has been the trend, many attendees also were relatively new to their positions. Per Ron Sarver, 31 of the attending BLAs came into their roles less than four years ago. That said, **the workshop experience just highlighted the need to be aware of and responsive to the diverse audiences who will be most affected by the policy changes and to get the information out multiple times, in multiple ways and formats in which they are most likely to pay attention.**
- **Interactive survey on reporting system:** Executive Board member Curt Lewis, BLA IL (and now lead on the task force originally headed by Brian Bowles) conducted a survey of attendees on-site to help inform the task force's current efforts toward determining whether a state-based recreational boating incident reporting system is of sufficient interest, could realistically be developed, and would actually be used by the states. *[Post-meeting notes from D Gona: During the ERAC meeting, I relayed my notes on the results, but later pulled the survey screen shots (thanks to Hannah Helsby) and assembled them into a [PDF](#) now posted on Basecamp at the [ERAC Overall Activity Files](#) tab.]*
- **[Investigative Training for Boating Incidents](#) – Standard:** Matt Majors updated attendees on what was originally released last fall as a NASBLA Standard (developed through a USCG non-profit grant) and is currently undergoing review by (NASBLA's) National Standards Panel for possible acceptance as an ANSI National Standard. Deb submitted comments prior to the 2/23/23 deadline to incorporate aspects of CG-BSX 23-01 re certain terms' references and update fire/explosion situations. The panel will vet the comments and, if accepted and incorporated, the affected sections will go back out for a 90-day public comment period.

### Key Points about the Current Charges—see end of this recap for charge team lists

*(Follow-up from D Gona: there are excellent discussions interwoven in the charge coverage during the morning session –strongly encourage a listen from 0:22:04 – 2:00:48)*

- **[IR&A 2023 cycle -Extension - Phase 1-Incident Reporting](#)**
  - This remains a standing charge—primarily kept on the books to account for any follow-up on policy and regulatory activities associated with the Recreational Boating Incident Reporting Policy Project recommendations (2020). Committee members will weigh in as-needed.
- **[IR&A 2023-1 Best Practices Development \(Incident Reporting\)](#)**
  - This charge had been led by John Girvalakis (BLA MA), who had to step away from ERAC this cycle due to in-state workload. Some progress had been made “around the edges” while awaiting formal response from the Coast Guard on the project recommendations. See the [Meeting Materials](#) page for a copy of the [working document](#) from the last cycle.
  - With release of the policy letter, Seth emphasized that team work should be directed toward developing targeted tools (instructions, guidance) for the states and especially for use by the officers/investigators in the field.
- **[IR&A 2023-2 Reporting System Redesign \(Incident Reporting\)](#)**
  - This charge will be more “monitoring” for time being as the Coast Guard works through the process of revamping BARD (and as the abovementioned task force continues investigating the possible development of a state-based system). *[Post-meeting notes from D Gona: implementation of CG-BSX 23-01 will require changes to the CG BAR form and BARD. For the former, the data collection and form changes must be announced through a Federal Register Notice and receive OMB approval; ERAC will monitor that effort and NASBLA will submit comments – and advise the states to comment in kind – when that occurs.]*

- **IR&A 2023-3 Human Factors: Refine Data Collection/Analysis** *(Follow-up from D Gona: strongly encourage a listen to this segment of the morning session 0:29:30 to 1:11:34)*
  - Seth, who had been spearheading this charge and collection of distraction-related information on Florida incidents, strongly encouraged ERAC to **get more states beyond Florida involved** in collecting this data that can help to better define contributors (notably, inattention). Having more (and more diverse) states engaged would paint a bigger and perhaps increasingly accurate or valid picture of what is going on in the realm of human factors.
  - As an aside, the study of human factors has gained more attention from NBSAC (evidenced by a [task statement assigned to its Prevention through People subcommittee](#)) and is an activity in the [National RBS Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#) (Activity 3.2.3 Develop and implement improved methods for studying human factors in recreational boating incidents).
  - Seth shared a spreadsheet (see [visibility/distractions](#) document on the [Meeting Materials](#) page) covering incidents from 2022. He noted that while investigators initially used the distraction codes for fatalities and serious injuries only, they had recently begun using it for all incidents as it was not a great impact to ask one or two extra questions (in Florida, the data is collected in the operator section via drop-down menu). He noted a by-product of the collection has been a higher success rate regarding citations since the recording of distractions breaks down further why the operator is being cited for NavRule violations or careless reckless operations.
  - The previously-mentioned standard -- [Investigative Training for Boating Incidents](#) -- includes a list of distractions [pages 12-13] in the Human Factors section. For it, the BII coursework, and further data collections, ERAC should work to ensure that everyone is on the same page, with clear descriptions as to what falls into each category. *[Follow-up from D Gona—at the end of this recap, see the full list of distraction codes and descriptions associated with the proposed revision to the contributing factor Improper Lookout/Inattention.]*
  - The original human factors supplemental forms—the lengthy versions with guidance—can be found on the [Human Performance page](#) in the Lighthouse Get Equipped section.
  - Representatives from two states at the meeting indicated interest in exploring the collection of distraction data: Joanna Andrade will review California’s regulations to determine if additional items could be incorporated onto the LE form; and Tammy Terry and Deb Green will float the idea with investigators to see if there is a possibility of piloting the collection in Ohio. The Florida collection is expected to continue with Nick Korade ([nicholas.korade@myFWC.com](mailto:nicholas.korade@myFWC.com)).
- **K&CM 2023-1 Lighthouse Reevaluation - Develop ERAC Product Placement/ Marketing Plan**
  - Joanna Andrade will be taking the lead on this charge, which had been set aside last cycle in favor of other priority activities. She will consult with Ron Sarver for updates on how the website is being used and on NASBLA’s additional capabilities, and then pull the team back together to restart work and determine how the charge description might need to be adjusted.
  - This cycle, the charge team will need to weigh in on the formats/presentations and placement of the products developed in association with the rollout of CG-BSX 23-01 policy letter.
  - Ron highlighted a few of the other information outlets besides the website that ERAC might consider for targeting different audiences—for example, consider NASBLA Weekly or even a newsletter (e.g., NASBLA’s Vessel Identification, Registration and Titling Committee (VIRT) has a quarterly newsletter that goes to all registering/titling personnel in the states).
  - For past documentation, including past call notes and the product inventory compiled in 2020, see Basecamp <https://nasbla.basecamphq.com/projects/6173290-erac-k-cm-2023-1-complete-lighthouse-reevaluation-develop-erac-product-marketing-plan/log>
- **S&R 2023-1 NRBSS —2018 Follow-Up and Input to Upcoming Surveys**
  - Jonathan Hsieh noted that apart from the [two webinars](#) conducted by the charge team in May 2022, the 2018 NRBSS gained some additional traction as to its utility with references in a GAO report

([GAO-23-105729, Recreational Boating: How Vessel Users Contribute to and Benefit from a Federal Trust Fund](#)) and a Washington State report ([Study on Non-Motorized Boating Fatalities in Washington State \(Evans Policy Innovation Collaborative\), released Dec 2022](#)).

- There has been no additional (unsolicited) feedback from the webinars; due to other priority activities, the team did not follow up on the in-webinar polls and no focus groups were conducted.
  - As to status of the next round, CG-BSX is still on the path of seeking OMB approval for the next iteration, and intends to open the vendor competition through a NOFO (issuance of the broader non-profit grant NOFO, which had been delayed pending release of the National RBS Strategic Plan, is taking priority right now). There will be an opportunity for the team and ERAC at-large to offer suggestions for questions to be contained in the survey instruments (including COVID and post-COVID questions tied to behaviors and exposure).
  - Tammy Terry noted that Ohio just did a boater survey (which included exposure); she will share information with the group on the results and a live webinar scheduled for March 21.
  - The charge language *may* need to be adjusted to accommodate the remainder of this cycle; but more significant modifications will likely be needed later (and in the version that will carry into the 2024 committee cycle) as more plans fall into place for the next iteration of surveys).
- **S&R 2023-2 Investigate Factors Associated with Incidents During Pandemic Years** (*Post-meeting note from D Gona: this agenda item stimulated an interesting discussion that included not only the charge topic, but also reactions to the content of a State RBS Workshop session; listen to the morning session: 1:27:40 to 2:00:40*)
    - The primary questions posed about this charge, which had not gotten off the ground in the last cycle due to other priorities, were “is there time and ability to do anything with it or should it be tabled?” and “what is the value?” There was also concern about the currency of the impact and whether things may have just returned to the pre-pandemic timeframe.
    - Ultimately, following the morning discussions, the decision was made to move forward and further define a scope of work. Paul Littman agreed to take the lead on this charge.
    - The conversations around this topic yielded several considerations and surfaced a variety of ideas about its potential value. Andrew Iraola, who had conducted a rental vessel analysis last year (see 2022 State RBS Workshop [video](#) in [Basecamp](#)), suggested that if there is another pandemic (or similar event), the same trends might come into play; as such, it might be worthwhile to investigate as a means of doing some preventative work and identifying messaging that could be employed. Paul also suggested it could be a way to model other disruptions, including those of an economic nature; moreover, it might offer a baseline. Mark Chanski, from an education standpoint, said that with the explosion of new boaters, he would be interested in knowing why they got into trouble and what was causing those incidents; he noted it would otherwise have taken years to gather data on enough new boaters for a sufficient sample to draw any conclusions. Tammy noted that beyond the accident angle, there are likely some lessons learned as to why these new boaters got involved and whether they are staying involved. Deb Green added that it is not just new boaters, but also boaters that returned during the pandemic. Brian Goodwin expressed interest in any contributors associated with the older boats that came into service during the pandemic and which might have led to incidents.

**Rollout of CG-BSX Policy Letter 23-01 Recreational Boating Incident Reporting: Overview of key policy changes; preview of topics to be covered by Susan Weber in March 15 and 20 webinars** (*Post-meeting note from D Gona: For detail, review morning session 2:01:58 to end of recording; reference [slides used by Susan in discussion](#).*)

- Susan used this preview and draft presentation to seek feedback from meeting attendees on the content of policy information contained on the slides and on how the policy changes and their implementation would likely affect them and their states. She asked everyone to think about the impacts on their daily work, the data collection tools they use, their reporting systems, other products they create from their statistics, and educational efforts they will need to rollout.

- **Member questions and comments:** *Post-meeting note from D Gona: The following list is not exhaustive; it does cover significant questions that arose about the meaning or practical application of the policy and particular terms and does hint at the sorts of questions that may arise during the webinar sessions. In some cases, that may mean modifying or clarifying content for the webinars. Other items will likely require additional CG-BSX internal discussions (e.g., about how best to code certain report fields to ensure consistency); several will need best practices developed. For all detail, listen to morning session 2:01:58 to end of recording. Reference to slide numbers is to the PDF of the PPT slides that Susan used. In the notes below, D Gona inserted labels or paragraph numbers from the policy letter for easy reference.*
  - **Regarding the damage threshold (slide 6):** The description of “Damage to the vessel or other property” (paragraph 4h in the policy) sets the framework for what should be included or excluded; however, best practices will need more detail/examples (*D Gona note: some of this has already been detailed from prior work and will need to be pulled forward and reviewed/updated as needed*). For example, from responses to questions posed during the meeting: items like fishing poles, phones or jewelry would be considered personal property and not included, but “personal” property permanently affixed to the boat would likely be. Further, the cost of labor should not be included; however, some state members noted that the labor costs may not necessarily be separated out from the damages total they collect and receive; reality is that some of the data may need to be caveated.
  - **Regarding complete loss (slide 7):** (per paragraph 4h in the policy): Question was if the vessel is worth less than the \$2K threshold and is a “complete loss” is it still reportable? Yes.
  - **Vessel definition (slide 8):** (paragraph 5b(14) in the policy): Question arose with example of a child (toy) version of a PWC, and what its status would be. Suggestion was that there may need to be additional guidance on handling watercraft not on the list and more information in best practices. For the webinar itself, suggestion was to add a qualifier for craft that “haven’t necessarily had a determination done on them yet” and perhaps information on how to get a vessel determination.
  - **Some of the scenarios** and other policy changes that were discussed in some detail:
    - **Collision with fixed object (slide 10):** There were questions about the coding for certain incidents falling in this category and the capture of non-vessel damages (other property). Suggestion was that best practices would need to include instruction / emphasize that a docked vessel is considered part of the infrastructure.
    - **Collision with vessel (slide 11):** This term merges the CG-BAR form “collisions with vessel” fields that currently separate out recreational, commercial, etc. Some attendees noted potential confusion regarding mooring and docking. Suggestion was to consider the use of visuals to help illustrate some of the changes that will need to be made in data recording practices. Also, as noted above, will need to emphasize that when a vessel is tied to a dock, it is an extension of the dock.
    - **Fire/explosion series (slides 12-15):** Coverage of this series led to a lengthy discussion about the increasing use of batteries and related issues, and questions as to how battery-related fires should be coded. Susan indicated she would check with the BSX product assurance branch to get insights as to how the incidents should be coded for the sake of consistency. Suggestion was made that down the road it might be worthwhile to consider batteries as its own category (or drop-down) or at minimum, to capture type or cause in the incident narrative.
    - **Flooding and Swamping (slides 16 and 17):** Currently coded as Flooding/Swamping, but now separated out to get more granularity as to how water is entering the vessel, which has implications for safety and manufacturing.
    - **Natural phenomena (slide 18) –** Question was posed as to whether it includes an injury from the interaction (if it meets the injury threshold). No, unless the incident also meets the other conditions -- vessel underway and another event occurred.
    - **Medical emergencies (slide 22):** The primary change in policy is that another vessel must have been involved (besides the one in which the occupant suffered the emergency) for the

incident to be reportable. The logic is – and as NavRules apply – that the other vessel could have / should have taken action (e.g., to avoid collision). “Sudden medical condition,” a term on the current CG-BAR form does not have a definition in the policy letter and would not be used; however, another term might need to be used to better describe the incident. Bottom line is that there will need to be guidance in best practices for consistent coding.

- **Sole state waters (slide 24):** These waters are not mentioned in the regulatory provisions on jurisdiction. However, they are covered (and subject to the reporting of incidents on them), as a result of a state’s compliance with its USCG RBS agreement for funding.
  - **Re policy letter paragraph 5b(2) on Self Inflicted Injuries:** Concern was raised about the language describing this non-reportable occurrence that could potentially be misleading—notably, regarding the “ingestion of controlled substances” which could include prescription drugs, etc. Best practices will need to clarify this non-reportable and the intent of self-harm.
- In closing the presentation preview, Susan said that the CG-BAR form, the BARD entry screens, query wizards, and so on, will need to change. She asked members to think about the changes their states would need to make and what level of effort would be needed to make the policy changes. Is the 2024 effective date realistic? The discussion picked up in the afternoon.
    - Susan described what must happen with the CG-BAR form at the national level—routing through the CG forms office, privacy office, DHS, Federal Register notices for two public comment periods to solicit feedback and finally routing through OMB for approval. Typically, this would take a year, but experience with the current BAR form approval indicates it could exceed that timeframe.
    - Also at the national level, regarding the BARD system, Susan said they will need to engage other CG offices to get funding aligned, get the current vendor to agree to this ‘optional’ task, and then test and implement. That process could take 3+ months.
    - With NASBLA and the boating incident investigation courses, there would need to be changes to get the course instruction aligned with the policy and revised terms.
    - At the state level, members cited some of the following:
      - In California, primarily getting the instructors up to speed. Getting updates to the form and database might be a concern, but a bigger one would be if there are references that might require regulatory change at the state level. Joanna will be checking.
      - Ohio, as Tammy noted, might be ahead of the curve as they have already been making changes to their systems based on the recommendations.
      - Seth said there would need to be database changes in Florida, and some to the form; they have recently renewed the agreement with their vendor for ongoing maintenance so updates could be accommodated; instruction to the officers/investigators will need to align.
      - Paul said this might be a good thing for NY, which otherwise has been slow to update its methods. Now there will be an actual set of changes that they can design forms and systems to accommodate.
      - Board Chair Susan Stocker, who joined the meeting in the afternoon, said she thought Iowa would be able to accommodate the changes for 2024.

## Other Topics / Updates / Wrap-Up and Thanks to All

- Based on what he heard during the committee briefings at the State RBS Workshop, Seth speculated that as in past years, there would likely be crossover/cooperation between ERAC and other committees on specific activities. Mark Chanski raised the Education & Outreach Committee’s continuing work on the boating education assessment questions and alignment of testing weights with incident report data as one area where he wants to enlist ERAC’s input again.
- Over the last few years, NASBLA (including some ERAC members on the project steering group) has collaborated with the [Safe States Alliance](#) (of state public health agencies) on an “injury surveillance project” funded through a USCG non-profit grant. The second-year report, [Boat Occupant Injury Surveillance](#)



[Roundtable Report – Tier 2](#), was released December 2022; building on the first year’s recommendations, it provides a basis for a state interested in the prevention of passenger injuries through enhanced surveillance to implement suggestions for engaging with the state’s public health network. Ron Sarver said that with the latest grant for a third phase, they are beginning to pilot test those recommendations in Washington State where there has been a strong buy-in from the public health and boating communities.

- **Post-meeting note from D Gona:** *For information beyond the written reports, review the recording of the 2022 NASBLA Annual Conference session on [“Improving Surveillance of Non-Fatal Recreational Boating Occupant Injuries: Bringing Boating and Public Health Together,”](#) by project facilitator Amy Schlotthauer.*
- Jonathan Hsieh, grant technical manager for the project, added that as part of the tier 2 work, they reached out to the CDC’s National Syndromic Surveillance Program, which has accepted the national definition of a “boating injury” (a computer code used to pull the data and report). He explained that the states’ public health agencies report emergency room visits to the Surveillance Program (for the purpose of tracking outbreaks like Ebola and COVID) and as Ron noted, the national boating injury definition theoretically should allow the real-time injury surveillance data pulls from each state to be more easily compared. The CDC now has a request process for such data pulls; if any state member is interested, Jonathan can connect them with the Center. Ron added that via the Safe States Alliance, he can provide contact information for members interested in being in touch with their state’s public health agency personnel for injury prevention.
- Brian Goodwin updated attendees on recent ABYC activities, especially Standards Week, which took place in January. He cited some standards currently up for review (A-33 Emergency Engine/Propulsion Cutoff and A-04 Fire Fighting Equipment); pointed to emerging topics and activities that arose during the week, including an autonomous vessel systems task force meeting, as well as work to identify gaps in the regulations and the standards as apply to electrification. He promoted a related, [upcoming, free webinar in the ABYC – USCG Risk Management Series, this one on “Staying Current with Electrification,” scheduled for May 3 \(2-4pm ET\)](#). In response to a question as to whether there is any work toward standardizing battery types and nomenclature given the implications for data collection in the future, Brian said that in terms of ratings systems, SAE is in the process of updating the standards they already use to rate gasoline propulsion engine so that way they will get a consistent rating across electric propulsion systems. In terms of battery technology, he is seeing a push toward lithium-ion phosphate technology, with several drop-in solutions, and will likely see it in a lot of applications in the smaller horsepower segment. Seth said those horsepower ratings will have implications for education and how those ratings relate to current statutory requirements.
- Pete Chisholm, chair of the NBSAC Boats & Associated Equipment (BAE) subcommittee, said the group has been having discussions in preparation for NBSAC’s May meeting, with a [focus on outdated regulations and gaps in same](#). Jeff Ludwig’s CG-BSX branch (Product Assurance) is looking at what they can do to address gaps and effect changes and updates to BAE-related regulations, many of which have been on the books unchanged since 1972. As an example, Pete noted that outboard powered boats with installed fuel systems have no federal requirements; there was an exception for outboard powered boats because most were inboard at that time.
- The final segment turned to a discussion around issues of member recruitment to the committee and included expressions of special appreciation to the newest committee members. While recruitment of volunteers is getting tougher, and there often is a learning curve – especially in ERAC where charges might not mesh seamlessly with a volunteer’s daily work – Seth stressed the value of gaining new perspectives. Deb said having charges that result in something tangible is also key because there is only so long that folks can grind through projects and not see results; she hopes that with the release of the CG-BSX policy letter and rollout, ERAC will attract interest and additional members to the fold.
- A round of thanks closed out the final minutes of the meeting, with well wishes to Seth in his new role at CG-BSX and to Tammy as she steps back into the role of ERAC chair. The meeting adjourned at 2:33p ET on a motion by Paul Littman, seconded by Pete Chisholm (and seconded x 2 by Jonathan Hsieh) 😊

## **CHARGE GROUPS (will be updated as needed)**

### **INVESTIGATION, REPORTING & ANALYSIS**

**ERAC-USCG IR&A 2023 cycle -Extension - Phase 1-Incident Reporting – No assigned team -- committee members will be called upon to participate in different aspects of the charge on an as-needed basis and as part of related charge work.**

**ERAC IR&A 2023-1 Best Practices Development (Incident Reporting) – Leads will be assigned to specific tasks identified during further discussions on CG-BSX Policy Letter rollout products:** Tammy Terry, Deb Green, Bryan Baronet, Jonathan Hsieh, Jeff Decker, Susan Weber (Joanna Andrade, lead on the Lighthouse, and Ron Sarver (NASBLA) will need to be informed and involved re placement/formatting on the website)

**ERAC IR&A 2023-2 Reporting System Redesign (Incident Reporting) – Charge team will monitor/participate in providing feedback to the revised CG-BAR form (from CG-BSX policy letter changes and pending Federal Register Notices for public comment on the data collection) and BARD-related modifications resulting from implementation of CG-BSX policy letter 23-01:-**Tammy Terry, Deb Green, Paul Littman, George Birdwell, Susan Weber, Jonathan Hsieh, Caroline Mantel, Pete Chisholm

**ERAC IR&A 2023-3 Human Factors: Refine Data Collection/Analysis:** Eric Lundin, Jonathan Hsieh, Jeff Decker, Pete Chisholm, Gene Molteni, Ted Sensenbrenner, Caroline Mantel, Karen Steely. Note: Joanna Andrade (CA) and Tammy Terry/Deb Green (OH) will be exploring potential for incorporating distraction coding on their respective states report forms.

### **KNOWLEDGE & CONTENT MANAGEMENT**

**ERAC K&CM 2023-1 Complete Lighthouse Reevaluation and Develop ERAC Product Placement/Marketing Plan --** Joanna Andrade (lead), Tammy Terry, Samm Teixeira, Jonathan Hsieh, Ron Sarver (NASBLA K&LM)

### **RBS STATISTICS & RESEARCH**

**ERAC S&R 2023-1 National Recreational Boating Safety Surveys (NRBSS)—2018 Follow-Up and Input to Upcoming Surveys:** Jonathan Hsieh and Tammy Terry (co-leads on specific aspects of charge), Joanna Andrade, Paul Littman

**ERAC S&R 2023-2 Investigate Factors Associated with Incidents During Pandemic Years –**Paul Littman (lead), Tammy Terry, Deb Green, George Birdwell, Eric Lundin, Jeff Decker, Jonathan Hsieh, Susan Weber, Gene Molteni, Ted Sensenbrenner, Karen Steely



Referenced on page 3 of meeting recap in discussions on Human Factors charge

Excerpt from [CONTRIBUTING FACTORS/CAUSES list](#)

Approved by NASBLA membership, Sept. 11, 2012; approved with recommended revisions, July 31, 2020, as part of the Recreational Boating Incident Reporting Policy Project work (**red indicates project-recommended updates from the 2012 version**)

## Proposed

**Improper Lookout/Inattention:** *The operator failed to perceive danger, resulting in the **incident**. This could have been with respect to failure(s) to perceive dangers outside or inside the vessel. May apply to violations of the requirement to maintain a proper lookout.* [Combines existing terms (“Improper Lookout” or “No proper watch” and “Operator Inattention”), creates new primary definition, and creates “distraction codes.”]

### **Distraction codes for Improper Lookout/Inattention (mandatory selection)**

- **Onboard lighting** – Glare from lighted the objects onboard the vessel, such as improperly shielded navigation lights, onboard electronics, and other similar devices. Specify.
- **Background lighting** – Lights on docks, shorelines, or other vessels. Specify.
- **Onboard electronics or equipment** – Using, attempting to use, viewing or operating onboard electronics or equipment, such as a navigation device, VHF radio, audio device, radar, autopilot, spotlight. Specify.
- **Wireless communication devices**—Using, attempting to use, viewing or operating mobile phones, tablets and other handheld devices. Specify.
- **Operator or occupant activity**—Activity such as sightseeing, moving objects, eating, drinking, smoking, interacting with passengers, fixated on other vessels or persons being towed, or otherwise distracted by other persons, **pets**, or objects in or outside the vessel. Specify.
- **Other distraction** – Details regarding the distraction are known, but none of the specified codes is applicable. Specify.
- **Unknown** – Insufficient facts to make any specific distraction determination.