

In March 2018, the USCG/States/NASBLA ERAC Incident Reporting Policy Project Workgroup reviewed and proposed some modifications to entries in this Operation list as it developed recommendations regarding Data Elements/Fields/Definitions for national collection. The workgroup recommends adoption of the list with modifications to the Propulsion and Speed aspects of Operation (so marked on page 4). [Note: in line with other edits to these lists, the term “incident” would replace “accident” throughout.]

OPERATION OF THE VESSEL AT THE TIME OF THE ACCIDENT*
(Grouped by aspect of operation[†]) – as approved Sept. 3, 2013

This list presents the operation work product voted on and approved by the NASBLA membership in a process authorized under NASBLA’s Bylaw III, Section 8.[‡] The basic framework for this report category—with entries placed into four groups representing different aspects of operation—is presented on page 2. The list of terms and definitions for all entries begins on page 3. Bracketed information at the end of each definition indicates whether the entry is a new one or revises a term label 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 modification of a June 2013 proposal that was released to the States on July 11, 2013; the refinements were in response to requests for clarification received from NASBLA members in the final review and comment period conducted July 11-29, 2013. See **History**, below, and **Overview of Process** on page 5 of this document.

* **History:** All entries were vetted through a multi-stage review process involving the project team (subgroup of NASBLA Engineering, Reporting & Analysis Committee (ERAC), including additional U.S. Coast Guard subject matter experts); the full ERAC; the NASBLA Executive Board; and the broader NASBLA community via two open comment solicitations – the first, Feb. 22-March 24, 2013, and the second, July 11-29, 2013 (following the release of a revised version of the list on July 11). Comments also were received from NASBLA membership during a Feb. 28, 2013 session conducted as part of the NASBLA Spring BLA Workshop (recorded and made available online), and a July 15, 2013 national teleconference/webinar (recorded and made available online). List reflects **all changes**, including the project team’s resolution of feedback received during the July review and issues identified in its final discussions on the entries. Changes resulting from the July feedback were: 1) amendment of the definitions for “Drifting” and “Non-Planing Vessel at Speed” to further clarify their applicability to non-motorized vessels including canoes, kayaks, and whitewater rafts; and 2) for consistency, technical edits to the definitions for “Maintaining Course,” “Changing Speed – Accelerating,” “Changing Speed – Decelerating,” and “Maintaining Speed.”

[†] Operational status, Propulsion, Course, and Speed at the time of the accident.

[‡] **Voting process:** Voting was authorized under NASBLA Bylaw III, Section 8 (Conducting Interim Business). A Request for Vote was initiated in an Aug. 2, 2013 email to all Boating Law Administrators by John Johnson, NASBLA CEO, on behalf of the NASBLA Executive Board. The original 30-day voting period had an Aug. 31, 2013 deadline for receipt of ballots by email, fax, or postal mail; the deadline was extended to Sept. 3, 2013 to accommodate a holiday weekend. By the Sept. 3 deadline, 44 NASBLA member States had cast ballots, with 43 in the affirmative for this product (and two other work products moving through the process simultaneously).

FOUR ASPECTS OF OPERATION OF THE VESSEL AT THE TIME OF THE ACCIDENT:

“Operation at the time of the accident” is described by selecting **ONE** entry **from each** group of entries, in the following order

Operational Status at the Time of Accident (page 3)

- Aground
- Anchored
- Drifting
- Idling
- In Reverse
- Moored to Fixed Object
- Moored to Floating Object
- On Plane
- Non-Planing Vessel at Speed
- Plowing
- Rafted
- Other (specify)
- Unknown

Propulsion of Vessel at Time of Accident (see recommended changes, page 4)

- Under Mechanical Propulsion
- Under Electric Trolling Motor Propulsion
- Under Human Propulsion
- Under Sail
- Not in use
- Unknown

Course at Time of Accident (page 4)

- Altering course
- Maintaining course
- Not underway
- Unknown

Speed at Time of Accident (see recommended changes, page 4)

- Changing Speed – Accelerating
- Changing Speed – Decelerating
- Maintaining Speed
- Not underway
- Unknown

OPERATIONAL STATUS AT TIME OF THE ACCIDENT

Aground: *Vessel was resting on the bottom of the body of water without aid of a buoy or dock, but may have been secured to the shore with cables or lines.* [New term and definition]

Anchored: *Vessel was kept stationary by use of an anchor attaching the hull of the vessel to the bottom of the body of water (does not include a vessel secured to a mooring buoy; see **Moored to a Floating Object**).* [Revises existing term label (“At Anchor”) and definition]

Drifting: *Vessel was under way without use of engine propulsion, paddles, oars or sails; being carried along only by the tide, current, or wind.* [Revises existing definition]

Idling: *Vessel, with engine in gear, was making way while off plane and at slow speed, making little or no wake.* [Creates definition]

In Reverse: *Vessel was being operated in reverse gear.* [New term and definition]

Moored to Fixed Object: *Vessel was secured to a fixed structure, such as a dock, pier, or wharf.* [Revises existing term label (“Tied to Dock/Moored”) and creates definition]

Moored to Floating Object: *Vessel was secured to a buoy or other floating object (excludes another vessel or a floating dock).* [Revises existing term label (“Tied to Dock/Moored”) and creates definition]

On Plane: *Vessel speed was sufficient to maintain a relatively level attitude and the vessel was higher in the water than when drifting, idling, or plowing.* [New term and definition]

Non-Planing Vessel at Speed: *Vessel was under way using engine propulsion, paddles, oars or sails while maintaining a relatively level attitude, and vessel speed was greater than drifting or idling. This status may be applied to non-motorized vessels, including but not limited to, canoes, kayaks, and whitewater rafts, as well as non-planing motorized vessels.* [New term and definition]

Plowing: *Vessel speed was greater than idling, but the vessel was not on plane. The bow of the vessel was relatively elevated and the vessel was creating a larger wake than at other speeds. This may have been due to changing speed or may be intentional and prolonged, such as while conducting a towed watersport activity.* [New term and definition]

Rafted: *Vessel was secured to one or more vessels.* [New term and definition]

Other (specify): *Vessel operation(s) that are not described. Provide brief description _____.* [Creates definition]

Unknown: *Insufficient information to determine vessel’s operational status.* [Creates definition specific to operational status]

PROPULSION OF VESSEL AT TIME OF THE ACCIDENT

Recommendations:

- Capture both the type of available propulsion and what was actually in use at the time of the incident
- To the list of original terms below, add options for water jet and air thrust (with their CFR definitions) in order to incorporate all of the available propulsion terms already authorized in CFR
- For implementation, consider formatting as a drop-down menu for Available and Used.

Under mechanical propulsion: *Vessel was propelled through the water using mechanical propulsion other than an electric trolling motor.* [New term and definition]

Under electric trolling motor propulsion: *Vessel was propelled through the water with the use of an electric trolling motor (a self-contained unit that includes an electric motor, propeller, and controls).* [Revises existing term label (“Trolling”) and creates definition]

Under human propulsion: *Vessel was propelled through the water by paddling, pedaling, polling, or rowing.* [Revises existing term label (“Rowing/Paddling”) and creates new definition]

Under sail: *Vessel was propelled through the water solely by sail.* [Revises existing term label (“Sailing”) and creates new definition]

Not in use: *Vessel was not being propelled by any means at the time of the accident.* [New term and definition]

Unknown: *Insufficient information to determine vessel’s propulsion.* [Creates definition specific to propulsion]

COURSE AT TIME OF THE ACCIDENT

Altering Course: *The vessel’s direction was changing.* [Revises existing term label (“Changing Direction”) and creates new definition]

Maintaining Course: *The vessel’s direction was not changing.* [Revises existing term (“Cruising”) and creates new definition]

Not Underway: *Vessel was anchored, moored, or aground at the time of the accident.* [New term and definition]

Unknown: *Insufficient information to determine vessel’s course.* [Creates definition specific to course]

SPEED AT TIME OF THE ACCIDENT

Recommendations:

- Add a “Not making way” selection and definition to this aspect of Operation to reflect a vessel that was drifting (i.e., underway, but not making way)
- Create a field for voluntary recording of estimated speed in mph

Changing Speed – Accelerating: *The vessel’s speed was increasing.* [Revises existing term label (“Changing Speed”) and creates new definition]

Changing Speed – Decelerating: *The vessel’s speed was decreasing.* [Revises existing term label (“Changing Speed”) and creates new definition]

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

Maintaining Speed: *The vessel’s speed was not changing.* [Revises existing term (“Cruising”) and creates new definition]

Not Underway: *Vessel was anchored, moored, or aground at the time of the accident.* [New term and definition]

Unknown: Insufficient information to determine vessel’s speed. [Creates definition specific to speed]

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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.

On September 11, 2012, NASBLA membership approved Resolution 2012-3 (In support of the Accident Reporting Terms and Definitions Project, the adoption of standardized terms and definitions by the U.S. Coast Guard, and actions to facilitate their application), and under its provisions, the first two work products in the series – Accident Types/Events and Accident Contributing Factors/Causes.

On September 3, 2013, NASBLA membership approved the final three work products in the series – Operation, Activity, and Vessel Sub-Types (for optional use with authorized Vessel Types).