



***Vessel Identification, Registration & Titling (VIRT)***  
**Summary Report to NASBLA Executive Board**  
**Summer Charge Activity Update,**  
**Next Cycle Recommendations, Other Issues**

**Date: August 2, 2016 Mike England (GA) Chair**

***NASBLA Vessel Identification & Titling Charter***

*The VIRT Committee recognizes that accurate vessel information is the backbone of recreational boating safety data. The VIRT Committee works to advance boating safety by analyzing and advocating for thorough precise vessel identification throughout a vessel's chain of ownership from the hull numbering to registration to titling.*

*These tasks will be addressed through the work of two subcommittees: Vessel Registration & Titling and Vessel Identification System (VIS)*

*VIRT Committee members are assembled into one of the two subcommittees. Subcommittee chairs are assigned to monitor each of the charges that have been assigned to the committee to monitor activity and progress. Remaining committee members are each assigned one to two charges each.*

**VIRT\_N&T\_2016-1**

Encourage adequate resources and support be directed to National Vessel Documentation Center for notification to the states to occur. Increase awareness of the issue to the recreational boating professionals' community.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Letter written and signed by NASBLA President Darren Rider on February 24, 2016 supporting the NVCD and sent to Rear Admiral Paul Thomas. Letter also touched on the efforts of the VIRT Committee to have the NVCD notify states when a vessel is documented for recreational purposes and also the length of time it takes for a recreational vessel to get documented.
- ✓ **Current status:** Work on this charge is completed for this year. As of today's date, no response from the Coast Guard.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year. This charge is one the VIRT Committee has been working on for at least 6 years to get the NVCD to notify states when a vessel is documented. This has been and will continue to be a high priority for VIRT.

## VIRT\_N&T\_2016-2

Assist the states and work with NCCUSL through their Enactment Committee, with promoting and supporting adoption of the Uniform Certificate of Title for Vessels Act. Review resources on the NCCUSL website and suggest updates as needed. Identify new support materials needed and produce as necessary. Increase access and visibility of the NCCUSL website and all available resources for NASBLA members.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Only Connecticut, Virginia and Washington D.C. have adopted the UCOTAV to date. Ron Sarver made a link on the NASBLA Web page for UCOTVA @ <http://www.nasbla.org/ucotva> for reference.
- ✓ **Current status:** Georgia and Tennessee tried to introduce legislation this year, both have been tabled until 2017. SB 266 was introduced in Alabama and as of today's date has not moved forward at all. UCOTAV for Connecticut went into effect 1/1/16 for model year 2017.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year. This charge is one the VIRT Committee has been working on for years with NCCUSL. This has been and will continue to be a high priority for VIRT.

## VIRT\_N&T\_2016-3

*(Reflecting the committee's decision to combine charge VIRT\_N&T\_2016-3 & VIRT\_N&T\_2016-4 into one charge – now referenced as VIRT\_N&T\_2016-3)*

Expand the use and development of educational products to inform states and their agents about HIN Validation. Promote the use of the "HIN Verification & Validation" PowerPoint presentation, developed in 2014 as a "Registration & Titling 101" educational product targeted to frontline registration and titling people.

Develop resources to assist states in setting up a HIN Validation system to prepare for the implementation of the regulatory changes in the Standard Numbering System, Vessel Identification System, and Boating Accident Report Database. Final Rule issued March 28, 2012. Deadline for states to begin HIN Validation is January 1, 2017. (This used to be charge # 4).

- ✓ **Deliverables:** HIN Power Point presentation has been developed along with HIN flow charts in conjunction with the U.S. Coast Guard (Vann Burgess & Phil Cappel) to assist states in setting up a HIN Validation system for the regulatory changes in the Standard Numbering System and the Boating Accident Reporting Database. **VIRT will be doing a general session on the HIN Power Point and what is required of states to implement the 1/1/17 Standard Numbering System Changes at the conference in Seattle. Presentation would be similar to the one in Wichita last year. VIRT will also be hosting a National Webinar on August 23<sup>rd</sup> & August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 regarding the changes that will be effective on 1/1/17.**
- ✓ **Current status:** At the present time VIRT is waiting to hear back from the Coast Guard on the HIN Power Point and the pre 72 HIN Flow Chart. VIRT put together a draft of a HIN Guidance Power Point and sent it to the Coast Guard on 11/24/15. Charge Leader Kem Kirk (OH) emailed Phil Cappel on 1/13/16 to check on the status. Finally received a draft copy back from the Coast Guard on 1/20/16. Committee spent a great deal of time going over the HIN Power Point at the VIRT Committee meeting in Knoxville on March 12, 2016. Revisions were made by Chairman Mike England and sent back to the Coast Guard on 3/16/16. Mike England received a revised copy back of the HIN Power Point on 4/6/16. After reviewing the revised copy from the Coast Guard, Mike England discovered the revisions that were discussed in Knoxville on March 12<sup>th</sup> were not included. Mike England emailed Vann Burgess on 4/7/16 to let him know. Vann Burgess emailed back on 4/7/16 that him and Phil would need to set down and go through it again and to

see what happened. Rick Barrera sent emails to Vann Burgess on 4/12, 4/18 and 4/26 inquiring as to the status. Vann Burgess finally responded back by email on 4/27/16 and indicated that he had been out of the office and would work on the HIN Power Point as opportunity presented itself. Rick Barrera at this time indicated that VIRT would like to have a final copy for the Leadership Academy in June. On 5/20/16 Rick Barrera sent Vann another email inquiring about the HIN Power Point and the HIN Flowchart. On 5/31/16 Mike England sent Vann another email inquiring about the HIN Power Point and the HIN Flowchart and indicated these were a couple of items that VIRT needed to have wrapped up for the Executive Board Meeting in June and the Leadership Academy in June. Vann responded back on 6/1/16 that Phil Cappel and he would get on it and it should not be a problem. On 6/2/16 Vann set a revised copy of the HIN Power Point that Phil and he had worked on. On 6/2/16 Rick Barrera sent up a conference call for 6/8/16 to review the HIN Power Point. Rick invited Vann and Phil to join. Mike England is on vacation but will be calling in. Ron Sarver also sent a copy to Deb Gona for her to review. Conference call held on 6/8/16 with Vann Burgess, Mike England, Madelyn Fenske, April Hughes and Rick Barrera. Phil Cappel was on and had to leave about halfway through the call. Group went over each slide. Some minor changes being made by Mike England. Madelyn Fenske will make some change to the HIN Flow Chat based on the comments from the call on 6/8 15. Mike England and Rick Barrera will met with Vann Burgess in Lexington the week of June 12<sup>th</sup> to go over the changes one last time before it goes out in mass production. Rick, Mike and Vann set down during the Executive Board's June meeting. Rick sent a draft copy to Executive Board on 6/13/16. Executive Board has some concerns and comments after meeting with Vann and Rick on 6/13/16. Mike England and Rick Barrera worked on the Executive Board's recommendations and Mike England sent a revised file to Vann Burgess on 6/13/16. Vann needs to check on one slide with Phil Cappel. Once the file comes back from Vann, Rick Barrera will post another draft on Basecamp for Executive Board to review for final approval. Rick Barrera, Mike England and Vann Burgess met with Executive Board in Lexington the week of June 12, 2016. Executive Board has some minor changes they would like to see incorporated. Revised file was sent back to Coast Guard for review on 6/13/16. Received Coast Guard's approval back on 6/27/16 with the offer to add a new email address to contact the Coast Guard on slide #32. Executive Board approved on 7/8/16. Rick Barrera sent the approval to the Coast Guard on 7/8/16 to proceed with new email address for slide #32. Rick Barrera sent an email for the second time on 7/29/16 to inquire about the status of the email address. HIN Power Point was received from Phil Cappel on 8/3/16 with the new email address to contact the Coast Guard. Rick Barrera, Madelyn Fenske and Mike England reviewed it again and found no further changes. Rick Barrera will work to get it posted on NASBLA Connect and to get it distributed to state BLA's and Registration & titling state personnel ASAP.

- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year. This charge is one the VIRT Committee has also been working on for a number of years. This has been and will continue to be a high priority for VIRT especially with the Federal changes that are effective 1/1/17.

#### **VIRT\_N&T\_2016-4** (Previously Charge VIRT\_N&T\_2016-5)

Develop online community through NASBLA Connect to expand and facilitate discussions about recreational boating numbering and titling issues and resolutions with agencies and personnel involved in this field of work. Annually appoint from VIRT a member who will coordinate with NASBLA staff details associated with and management of the community.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** NASBLA Connect is now officially opened on NASBLA'S website. Some topics have been added, but more will be added as soon as some of the topics are finalized. As soon as the HIN Power Point and HIN Flow Charts are finalized, they will be posted to NASBLA Connect. VIRT Webinar will be posted after the webinar presentation in August.
- ✓ **Current status:** Currently the VIRT Committee is learning how to navigate through the site and making recommendations to Ron Sarver. Once the Committee feels the site is ready, the public will be able to access it for general resources, discussion topics, etc. that pertain to VIRT issues. Once the HIN Power Point is finalized it will be posted along with the HIN Flowchart. Once the online reference manual for

registration & titling fees is finalized, it will also be posted on NASBLA Connect.

- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year. Committee feels that Connect can be a very valuable resource for States to get information and for topics of discussions in the future. Should be an ongoing charge in the future as updates will need to be completed and posted as necessary.

### **VIRT\_N&T\_2016-5** (Previously Charge VIRT\_N&T\_2016-6)

Develop an online reference where states can go to find current registration fees, including titling fees. This should also include documented vessel fees for each state.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Survey has been developed and was sent out to all BLA's and Registration & Tilting personnel. Ron Sarver to send out the week after Memorial Day and it will be via Survey Monkey. Will allow two weeks to respond, but Committee figures we will have to do some follow up contacts to get states to respond. As of today's date (8/2/16), 43 states responded. Committee is currently comparing the non-responsive states with the non-responsive states from the VIS Surveys to see if the same state are not responding. Committee will continue to try to contact the non-responsive states. Once finalized, this will be posted on NASBLA Connect.
- ✓ **Current status:** Once survey results are finalized, this will be posted to NASBLA Connect so states or the public can access it. This has been a very time consuming charge to gather all the survey questions and addresses of state contacts. April Hughes (AZ) and Caroline Mantel (Boat History Report) have done a great job!
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year. This should be an ongoing charge for the VIRT Committee. Updates to the state contacts as well as any updates to the information will need to be completed each year for sure. Committee has discussed that a survey should be sent out each year on this to collect any updates or additional information.

### **VIRT\_VIS\_2016-1**

Provide support for states participating in VIS. Identify and address barriers to participation for non-participating states. Identify a most wanted list of states the committee would like to focus on getting enrolled in VIS.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** George Birdwell (TN) has developed an ACCESS Program to view VIS and to assist states. If any state(s) come on board with VIS, Committee would like to have a signing ceremony at the conference in Seattle during the business meeting to help in the effort. Possible VIS presentation at Seattle Conference. Ron Sarver made a link on the NASBLA Web page for VIS @ <http://www.nasbla.org/vis> that contains a VIS map, FAQ'S from the USCG, May 2015 VIS Power Point, etc. Pennsylvania has received notification they have been approved after a year-long wait. Plans are to have PA recognized at the Seattle conference.
- ✓ **Current status:** Ten states have been identified to be contacted. These are states where the committee feels that the BLA can help assist in getting VIS approved in their states. The ten states are: Colorado, Louisiana, Maine, Nebraska, South Carolina, Idaho, Connecticut, Iowa, New Hampshire and North Dakota. Pennsylvania has been waiting on the Coast Guard since the summer of 2015 to sign. In July 2016, Pa received notification they have been approved. Maine and SC have indicated they expect to sign this summer. As of today's date, no word on Maine or SC.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year. This should be another ongoing charge for VIRT. This is another area where VIRT will be needed for the foreseeable future.

## VIRT\_VIS\_2016-2

Working with the Numbering & Titling Subcommittee, identify a minimum of two performance metrics states can use to evaluate registration and titling programs. Assess individual state performance based on these metrics. Work with states not using “best practices” to increase their performance measurement on these metrics by implementing the identified best practices.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Survey sent out to all states on 1/25/16 with a deadline date of 2/8/16. Deadline has been extended numerous times in order to try and get responses from all states.
- ✓ **Current status:** Brenda Verner (PA) reported that only 25 states responded as of 3/12/16 (Committee meeting in Knoxville). At the committee meeting it was decided to contact the states again that had not responded. As of the 5/4/16 VIRT conference call, there were still 16 states that have not responded. This is even after being contacted a second time. The 16 states are: Alaska, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah and West Virginia. These 16 states will be contacted again and given two weeks to respond. Brenda Verner has been on this from the get go and has done an excellent job in trying to get states to respond. Survey was resent to the 16 states that did not respond with a deadline to return it of 6/6/16. As of 6/8/16, four more states returned the survey, leaving a total of 12 states that have not responded. Group will still be working to get more states to respond over the next few weeks. On 7/14/16, Brenda Verner reported that 12 states have not responded to the two surveys. Madelyn Fenske, April Hughes and Brenda Verner will compare surveys to see if the same states are not responding to the three surveys. Contacts will be made to try and get the non-respondents to respond to all three surveys.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Due to the lack of responses from states, this charge needs to be carried over for next year. It is imperative for the committee to get all states to respond so we have a true picture in order to evaluate registration and titling programs. Once completed, this is another document that can be posted on NASBLA Connect.

## VIRT\_VIS\_2016-3

Working with the Numbering & Titling Subcommittee, review measures of statistics and program uniformity for other government programs. I identify a minimum of two measures of program uniformity for states in registering and titling vessels. Assess states based on these measures of program uniformity. Work with states not using “best practices” to increase program uniformity between the states.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Survey sent out to all states on 1/25/16 with a deadline date of 2/8/16. . Deadline has been extended numerous times in order to try and get responses from all states.
- ✓ **Current status:** Brenda Verner (PA) reported that only 25 states responded as of 3/12/16 (Committee meeting in Knoxville). At the committee meeting it was decided to contact the states again that had not responded. As of the 5/4/16 VIRT conference call, there were still 16 states that have not responded. This is even after being contacted a second time. The 16 states are: Alaska, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah and West Virginia. These 16 states will be contacted again and given two weeks to respond. Brenda Verner has been on this from the get go and has done an excellent job in trying to get states to respond. Survey was resent to the 16 states that did not respond with a deadline to return it of

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- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Due to the lack of responses from states, this charge needs to be carried over for next year. It is imperative for the committee to get all states to respond so we have a true picture in order to evaluate registration and titling programs. Once completed, this is another document that can be posted on NASBLA Connect.

#### VIRT\_VIS\_2016-4

Develop a recommended new form for the “Report of Certificate of Numbers Issued to Boats” that would comply with the implementation of the regulatory changes in the Standard Numbering System, Vessel Identification System, and Boating Accident Report Database, effective January 1, 2017. Provide form to the USCG to get approval that the form is compliant. If form is designated compliant, turn the form into a model procedure for the states.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Madelyn Fenske (AZ) submitted a revised form to Vann Burgess on 1/13/16. Committee heard nothing back until the Committee meeting in Knoxville on March 12<sup>th</sup>.
- ✓ **Current Status:** At the March 12<sup>th</sup> VIRT Committee meeting Vann Burgess reported they know there are going to be issues with the conversion. Coast Guard has to go to OMB to get permission to use this new form. Less data fields will be collected by Coast Guard. Vann indicated the Coast Guard does not and has not used some of these data fields in the last 20 years. Coast Guard will go back out for another comment period. No time line for comment period at the present time. States have already submitted their 2015 reports. These were due 3/1/16. States will report using the same form in 2017 for 2016. States can use the new form if approved if they so desire for reporting 2016 data in 2017 or the current form (old form). In 2018, states reporting for 2017, will use the new form. Coast Guard uses the type of boat and the length of boat for program direction. As of today’s, no further movement from the Coast Guard has been received.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year. VIRT will need to make comments on the Federal Register when it is published by the Coast Guard. VIRT will also need to work with the states on this transition.

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## **NEW CHARGE SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT COMMITTEE YEAR:**

**Title of Proposed Charge:** Draft a VIRT NASBLA “Best Practices Document” that indicates states should notify other states when a vessel is registered if it has been previously registered in another state.

***Rick Barrera***

- ✓ **Need:** This is a national issue. If a state does not notify a state when a vessel is registered and it has been registered in another state previously, change of ownership issues arise immediately with not only the registration but also with the title if a title state is involved.
- ✓ **Resources:** VIRT has done survey questions in the past on this. Of those states responding, only fourteen indicated they notified other states when a vessel was registered in their state.
- ✓ **Product:** Approval by Executive Board of the “Best Practices Document.”
- ✓ **Linkage:** **NASBLA Strategic & Implementation Plan**, Strategy 1.1.4 - Develop policy positions, resolutions, model acts and other advocacy tools on issues that gain association member consensus.