



**Vessel Identification, Registration & Titling (VIRT)
Final Report to NASBLA Executive Board
Charge Activity Status,
Next Cycle Recommendations**

Date: August 1, 2017 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.

2012 – 2017 Vision Statement: Due for 5 year revision in the 2018 committee cycle

1. Have a universal Title Act in place based on the work of NCCUSL with an objective of 10% of the states or territories adopting [some form of] the Title Act into their vessel title laws.
2. Work with non-title states and territories in the adoption of vessel titling with a goal of adding more states and/or territories onto the list of those that title vessels.
3. Assist states with planning for implementation of required changes to Standard Numbering System, Vessel Identification System, and Boating Accident Reporting Database.
4. 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 professional's community.
5. Review the process of VIS, from becoming a member to the overall usage of the program, and make recommendations to strengthen its value as a resource to the states. Obtain a goal of adding 5 to 10 more states to the membership in 5 years.

VIRT_N&T_2016-1

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

Needs Statement: The NVDC has never notified states when a recreational vessel has been federally documented because of lack of federal funding and personnel. This is an effort to ensure consistency between States and the NVDC that notification to states be done by the NVDC when a recreational vessel is documented. (Ref: NASBLA Strategic & Implementation Plan Strategy 1.2.1)

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Government Accounting Office (GAO) contacted NASBLA in September, 2016 in regards to gathering information regarding an audit of the NVDC. Mike England & Rick Barrera had a conference call with Hugh Paquette and Jeff Jensen with the GAO in late September, 2016 and provided some insight to them regarding issues with the NVCD. In November, 2016, Hugh Paquette asked for some assistance to contact a few states to get their input. Five states were provided to the GAO to contact (AZ, OH, DE, MA & WI). GAO did contact AZ, MA & OH to get input. Last report was the GAO was in the message development phase and we are expecting a draft sometime late summer or early fall of 2017.
- ✓ **Implementation:** NVDC would notify States when a vessel is documented.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** Recreational vessels that are documented would not be titled in a State at the same time being Federally Documented.
- ✓ **Current status:** Work completed on this charge for this year. Committee waiting to hear back from Hugh Paquette with the GAO.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year. This charge is one the VIRT Committee has been working on for a number of 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.

Needs Statement: There are still a number of states that do not require the titling of any types of recreational vessels. The UCOTVA is a means that states can use to adopt or redefine titling laws across the U.S. with support of NASBLA and have consistency across the board. (Ref: NASBLA Strategic & Implementation Plan Strategy 1.2.1 & 2.1.1)

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Contact list for UCOTVA updated and posted to NASBLA Connect. Georgia introduced a titling bill that was not UCOTVA compliant. The hope was to get titling required in Georgia and then go back to make it UCOTVA compliant. Session proposal submitted and has been approved to have EM Miller to present the UCOTVA at the Rapid City Conference. EM Miller did respond to the Federal Register Notice regarding Evaluation of Existing CG Regulations via NCCUSL. Deb Gona is coordinating the NASBLA response. Comments were to be submitted by 7/10/17. Comment period extended to 9/11/17.
- ✓ **Implementation:** States would be adopting UCOTVA.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** As States adopt UCOTVA, it would be the start of a nationwide consistent way of titling recreational vessels.
- ✓ **Current status:** Georgia dropped their titling bill. No states adopted UCOTVA this year.

- ✓ **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

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 was January 1, 2017.

Needs Statement: Consistency of how HINS are to be issued and verified by States and manufacturers across the U.S. has been a major issue for many years. There are too many HINS that are issued that are issued improperly or recorded improperly. (Ref: U.S. Coast Guard RBS Initiative #2 & NASBLA Strategic & Implementation Plan Strategy 1.5.2)

- ✓ **Deliverables:** HIN Power Point that was developed in 2016 was updated with HIN Flowcharts and will be posted to NASBLA Connect. In addition, the revision was sent out to all BLA’s and state registration & titling contacts. Rick Barrera taught a session at the Leadership Academy in June 2016.
- ✓ **Implementation:** The NASBLA VIRT Committee in conjunction with the Coast Guard will continue to promote the HIN Power Point that has been developed via Conference Presentations, NASBLA Connect, BLA Workshops, NASBLA Leadership Academies and sending out the HIN Power Point and any revisions to each BLA and Registration & Titling Contacts each year.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** Less HINS being discovered that have been issued improperly and more HINS that have been verified would be found to be correct as States verify HINS.
- ✓ **Current status:** Work completed for this year. Committee expects some content revisions and formatting revisions next year.
- ✓ **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 went into effect 1/1/17.

VIRT_N&T_2016-4

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.

Needs Statement: A centralized area is needed for any discussions and information regarding registration & titling issues for recreational vessels. NASBLA Connect is the ideal area to store information and discussions topics regarding registration & titling. (Ref: NASBLA Strategic & Implementation Plan Strategy 1.5.2)

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Revised listing of state registration & tiling requirements posted. Revised HIN Power Point posted. VIS survey and Performance Measurement Matrix survey will be posted even though not all states

have responded. Registration Fees Survey to be posted. VIS Learning Module to be posted.

- ✓ **Implementation:** As topics/discussions are developed, posting these to NASBLA Connect for references and discussions.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** NASBLA to check to see how many discussions and site contacts there are on NASBLA Connect under Committee Topics.
- ✓ **Current status:** Current results of this year's surveys (R & T, VIS and Performance Measurement Matrix) will be posted. More work on these for next year since a number of states did not respond
- ✓ **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

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.

Needs Statement: A standardized area for reference material is needed by states to assist them with inquiries by superiors and law makers regarding registration/titling fees, etc. for comparisons between states. (Ref: NASBLA Strategic & Implementation Plan Strategy 1.5.2)

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Survey was sent out to all BLA's and Registration & Tilting personnel. Committee still trying to get some states to complete so information will be missing from those states that have not responded. Rick Barrera talked at the Spring BLA Workshop to emphasize the importance of completing the survey. Hannah sent the survey information out a second time and states that have not responded have been contacted more than once to respond.
- ✓ **Implementation:** Will be posted on NASBLA Connect. Any revisions after that will be updated and posted on NASBLA Connect on an annual basis.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** NASBLA to check how many "hits" is received on NASBLA Connect in looking for this type of information.
- ✓ **Current status:** Will post what results the committee has received to NASBLA Connect and will continue to work with the states that have not responded next year to capture their information.
- ✓ **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.

Needs Statement: VIS is a Federal Coast Guard program where states that participate can access vessel information from all States and U.S. Territories that are submitting registration data. This is essential tool states can use when it comes to law enforcement, stolen vessels and vessels transferring from one state to another. (Ref: NASBLA Strategic & Implementation Plan Strategy 1.2.1)

- ✓ **Deliverables:** George Birdwell (TN) updated the VIS Learning Module. Rick Barrera and Ron Sarver held a VIS Session at the BLA Workshop. Only two states attended the session. VIS Map updated by Ron Sarver. Committee will be working to get this posted on NASBLA Connect. Iowa and South Carolina signed up for VIS this year.
- ✓ **Implementation:** A State notifies the Coast Guard they would like to participate and then a MOU must be

signed with the Coast Guard and then access is granted. Goal is to have all States and U.S. Territories signed up.

- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** As a state comes on board, increased participation into VIS.
- ✓ **Current status:** Still hoping Maine, Arkansas and New Hampshire to come next.
- ✓ **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.

Needs Statement: Goal is to have consistency from state to state in how each State & Territory handles registration & titling information. This this is an effort to establish consistency between states & territories and use best practice metrics across the board. (Ref: NASBLA Strategic & Implementation Plan Strategy 2.4.2)

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Survey sent out to all states. Rick Barrera talked at the Spring BLA Workshop to emphasize the importance of completing the survey. Committee still trying to get some states to complete so information will be missing from those states that have not responded. Rick Barrera talked at the Spring BLA Workshop to emphasize the importance of completing the survey. Hannah sent the survey information out a second time and states that have not responded have been contacted more than once to respond. As of today’s date, 10 states and territories still have not responded.
- ✓ **Implementation:** Surveys being conducted, results will be posted on NASBLA Connect and sent out to all BLA’s and State R & T contacts with the hope of implementing the identified best practice metrics to be implemented to achieve consistency across the board.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** Increase in the number of states using the “Best Practices Metrics” to achieve consistency across the board.
- ✓ **Current status:** Will continue to work the states and territories that have not responded. Will developed a list of states that are not using the best practices in order of hoping to increase their performance measurements. Committee will be posting results to NASBLA Connect.
- ✓ **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.

VIRT_VIS_2016-3

Working with the Numbering & Titling Subcommittee, review measures of statistics and program uniformity for other government programs. 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.

Needs Statement: Goal is to have consistency from state to state in how each State & Territory handles registration & titling information. This this is an effort to establish consistency between states & territories and use best practice metrics across the board. (Ref: NASBLA Strategic & Implementation Plan Strategy 2.5.1)

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Survey sent out to all states. Rick Barrera talked at the Spring BLA Workshop to emphasize the importance of completing the survey. Committee still trying to get some states to complete so information will be missing from those states that have not responded. Rick Barrera talked at the Spring BLA Workshop to emphasize the importance of completing the survey. Hannah sent the survey information out a second time and states that have not responded have been contacted more than once to respond. As of today's date, 10 states and territories still have not responded.
- ✓ **Implementation:** Surveys being conducted, results will be posted on NASBLA Connect and sent out to all BLA's and State R & T contacts with the hope of implementing the identified best practice metrics to be implemented to achieve consistency across the board.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** Increase in the number of states using the "Best Practices Metrics" to achieve consistency across the board.
- ✓ **Current status:** Will continue to work the states and territories that have not responded. Will developed a list of states that are not using the best practices in order of hoping to increase their performance measurements. Committee will be posting results to NASBLA Connect. Committee will be developing performance measurements for states to use next year.
- ✓ **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.

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.

Needs Statement: USCG requires an annual "Report of Certificate of Numbers Issued to Boats." Currently right now the Coast Guard is allowing 4-5 forms to be submitted. This is an effort to standardize the report into one form that all states will use to report annually. (Ref: NASBLA Strategic & Implementation Plan Strategy 1.2.1 & U.S. Coast Guard RBS Initiative #2)

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Coordinated by Deb Gona, NASBLA did respond to the Federal Register Notice regarding State Registration. The deadline to comment was 1/30/17. The Committee solicited comments from states regarding which form (Report of Certificate of Numbers Issued to Boats) the states felt they would like to use prior to submitting comments to the Federal Register Notice.
- ✓ **Implementation:** Once the form is finalized, the Coast Guard will advise all state and territories of when the form will be required to be used.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** Standardized form to be used to submit annual report to the Coast Guard.
- ✓ **Current Status:** Currently there are 4-5 forms the Coast Guard is currently accepting. Currently waiting to hear back from the Coast Guard regarding the Federal Register responses and what form they will decide upon to be used.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year. VIRT will need to work with the states on the transition of the new form once it is approved by the Coast Guard.

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NEW CHARGE SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT COMMITTEE YEAR:

Title of Proposed Charge: Revise the draft of 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.

Title of Proposed Charge: Legacy HIN Documentation & Best Practice

Need: This is a national issue. First collect and analyze policy each state implements for "Legacy HIN" in regards to documenting HIN within state registration database, as well as placement of "secondary" or state assigned HIN (i.e. is state assigned HIN placed over, or in addition to legacy HIN on vessel). Then create a "Best Practice" for states to use as a guideline going forward. Additionally, we will need to come up with a way to include the legacy HIN on interstate documents to ensure the original HIN is not lost and is available for agencies/individuals investigating the history of the vessel (i.e. law enforcement, insurance companies, potential owners, etc...). This is important to ensure the history of the vessel is not lost, and to help prevent stolen vessels being registered across state borders.

Resources: VIRT will create a survey to find out the current state policies. VIRT will also follow up with USCG to find out what the official USCG guideline is.

- ✓ **Product:** Approval by Executive Board of the “Best Practices Policy for Legacy HIN.”

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.