U.S. Vessel Identification System (VIS)
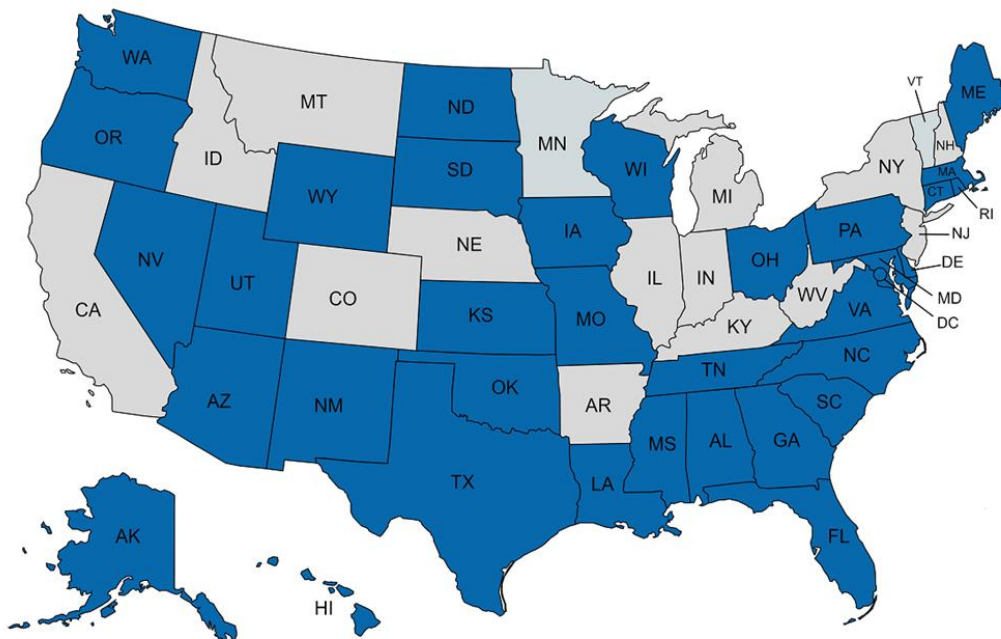
What is VIS?

The Vessel Identification System (VIS) is a centralized database of state registered and Coast Guard documented vessels. It is only accessible to law enforcement and state registration & titling personnel. The purpose of VIS is to provide federal, state and local authorities with the information necessary to help deter theft, reduce fraud, and identify potential threats to homeland security. It has also proven to be a valuable resource for boating safety, stolen vessel recovery and abandoned vessel identification.

Why should your state participate?

Participation in VIS is voluntary but the more states that participate the more beneficial it is to everyone. As of year-end 2022, 39 states and territories have signed on for VIS and they are finding the system to be especially helpful in protecting consumers from potential fraud, especially when boats are brought in from other states. Also, law enforcement is better equipped to identify potential security threats on our nation's waterways. In other words, your participation in VIS is good for your state's residents and good for our country.

States Participating in VIS as of Year-end 2022

How much will this cost?

Most likely, nothing. Little, if any, extra work is necessary to prepare your registration data for inclusion in VIS. And access to VIS is free to participating states. It is accessible to approved users via a standard web browser and does not require any special computers or equipment.

How do you get started?

Simply review and sign the VIS Memorandum of Agreement with the U.S. Coast Guard. To obtain a copy of this Agreement, please contact Jeff Decker at the USCG's Boating Safety Division. Jeff's email address is Jeffrey.E.Decker@uscg.mil and his telephone number is **202-372-1507**. Once signed by both parties, someone from Info-Link, the Coast Guard's designee for VIS, will contact your IT group to confirm whether the data you are already providing meets the specifications for VIS.