



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

Date: August 12, 2024

David Trader, WV, Chair
Caroline Mantel, Boat History Report, Vice 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.

Work with the U. S. Coast Guard to standardize "Best Practices" that states/territories should be using.

Charge leaders are assigned to each charge and members either volunteer for charge(s) or are assigned to charge(s).

VIRT 20234-1

Assist the states and work with NCCUSL through their Enactment Committee while 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: Supporting UCOTVA is essential in making changes to positively influence consumer safety by creating consistency among states in regard to titling and identifying vessels that have been deemed unsafe, preventing them from being sold without disclosure. By having the support of the VIRT Committee, we are able to brainstorm potential sponsors within states and assist NCCUSL by identifying more productive points of contact and feedback. Members of VIRT can also help identify what the specific hesitations are within registration and titling departments in order to try to overcome those objections more quickly. VIRT recognizes that accurate vessel information is the backbone of recreational boating safety data, and UCOTVA helps to ensure that vessels chain of ownership is intact from owner to owner and state to state.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Alabama UCOTVA went into effect January 1, 2024. Texas still is interested in UCOTVA. A group has been put together to draft up examples of hull damage to be added to the commentary section of UCOTVA. Group also formed to begin discussions around Certified Titling States under UCOTVA.
- ✓ **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.
- ✓ **Status:** Currently there are eight states & three territories that do not title in some form. Mississippi is optional.
- ✓ **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 2024-2

Develop a “Self-Import Affidavit” for vessels being imported for “Sel-Use” and not for resale..

Needs Statement: Since the invention of the internet, China is direct shipping small inflatable vessels that are boxed and are direct shipped to a customer that purchases these via the internet as a self-import. Internet sales and sales that are organized by the overseas builder are NOT considered as a self-importer. By creating an affidavit for a person registering a boat as a “self-import,” the state will have some backing in enforcing self-import regulations.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Affidavit to provide states with an enforcement tool to enforce for self-imports.
- ✓ **Implementation:** Affidavit has been included in a BLA Brief, posted on the VIRT web page & included in the July VIRT Newsletter to all R & T Contacts
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** States now have a tool to use to enforce the regulations in the CFR on a vessel being registered as a “self-import.”
- ✓ **Status:** Charge Completed.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Completed, no carryover needed for next year.

VIRT 2024-3

Develop a model act regarding the titling of outboard motors.

Needs Statement: Currently there are only a few states that have some form of a requirement to title outboard motors. The International Association of Marine Investigators (IAMI) is interested in with VIRT on this charge. Tiling outboard motors would help for owner identification and would assist in the prevention of theft.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Charge group has had five conference calls to date. Initial draft of model act has been developed.
- ✓ **Implementation:** States will have a model act to use to assist in the tiling of outboard motors.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** Additional states would require the titling of outboard motors.
- ✓ **Current Status:** Model act still being developed.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year.

VIRT 2024-4

Revise and promote the use of the “HIN Verification & Validation” Power Point that was developed in 2016 to reflect the BSX-23 Policy 23-2, “Compliance Guidance for Hull Identification Numbers that went into effect September 2023.”

Needs Statement: Revise and promote the use of the “HIN Verification & Validation” Power Point that was developed in 2016 as a “Registration & Titling 101” educational product targeted to frontline registration and titling personnel. This charge has evolved to include the Policy Letter written by the USCG to corroborate the information in the PowerPoint. The policy was developed and approved by the USCG in 2023. The PowerPoint will be revised to reflect the BSX-23 Policy 23-2, “Compliance Guidance For Hull Identification Numbers” that went into effect September 2023.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** A revised and more comprehensive HIN Power Point and HIN Policy.
- ✓ **Implementation:** The NASBLA VIRT Committee in conjunction with the USCG will continue to promote the HIN Power Point that has been developed and via Conference Presentations, NASBLA Connect, NASBLA Web Page, BLA Workshops, NASBLA Leadership Academies and sending out the HIN Power Point and any revisions to each BLA and Registration & Titling Contacts each year. NASBLA to promote via the Web, direct emails to the BLA's, conference topics, BLA Workshop and the Leadership Academy.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** Greater consistency with HIN validation, assignment and other HIN related best practices and policies amongst states
- ✓ **Current Status:** In conjunction with VIRT, the USCG is in the process of revising the HIN Verification & Validation PowerPoint to reflect the Coast Guard Policy that went into effect in September 2023. VIRT has worked very closely with the USCG. Charge group has had ten conference calls to date with two more scheduled in August.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year. Work will continue to finalize the slides to match the policy. Any revisions in the policy that comes from the Coast Guard will need to be added as they happen.

VIRT 2024-5

Update the VIRT Dashboard if funding is available.

Needs Statement: Work with Ron Sarver to update the VIRT Dashboard Registration & Titling Section. Fourteen (14) states' Registration by County data has been uploaded. Next step is to acquire more states' county registration data and upload it into the Dashboard.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** County data has been updated with some corrections that were found.
- ✓ **Implementation:** As state information changes, updates will be completed on a regular basis.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** States and the public will have a central location to access states/territories basic registration and titling information/requirements.
- ✓ **Status:** Completed the county data. Waiting for the status of funding from the Coast Guard. Received notice of funding in July 2024.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year. The charge for next year will be to capture additional states' county data if possible and will do a survey of states to update their state information.

VIRT 20234-6

Review & revise, if necessary, the existing NASBLA Model Acts for Vessel Dealer/Manufacturers Licensing & Vessel Dealer/Manufacturers Numbers.

Needs Statement: Original model acts were approved by NASBLA Membership in 2000, were revised and approved again in 2005. Look into the feasibility of combining the two model acts into one along with updating the definitions.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Revised document to be presented to the Ex. Board in August and if approved will be up for a vote at the business meeting in September.
- ✓ **Implementation:** Once approved, will be included in a BLA Brief and posted to the VIRT Web page.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** Model act for states to use for assistance.
- ✓ **Status:** Charge completed once approved by Ex. Board & NASBLA Membership.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Completed, no carryover needed for next year.

VIRT 2024-7

Continue to work with NASBLA staff on the VIRT Newsletter to be distributed to all registration & titling contacts.

Needs Statement: This newsletter addresses specific R & T issues and includes updated and accurate VIRT information that is sent directly to R & T contacts.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** First Newsletter went out in February second newsletter went out in July. Both were also included in a BLA Brief and were posted to the VIRT Web page.
- ✓ **Implementation:** Delivered to all R & T contacts and all BLA's via email.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** VIRT Information getting into the correct hands of people who actually deal with the issues of numbering & titling on a daily basis.

- ✓ **Status:** Charge completed for the year. The charge should be carried over for next year.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year.

VIRT 2024-8

Review & Revise the NASBLA Moel Procedures for Abandoned/Salvaged Vessels.

Needs Statement: Original model procedures were adopted & approved by NASBLA Membership in 1998.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Revised & updated model procedure to reflect current definitions and best practices.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** Revised procedure to assist states with abandoned/salvage vessels.
- ✓ **Status:** Charge currently on hold pending the outcome of legislation that has been introduced in the U. S. House of Representatives (H.R. 7719 Abandoned & Derelict Vessel Removal Act of 2024). California & New Jersey monitoring this and is now working with NOAA as they have discovered NOAA has possible grants that state could possibly apply for.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year.

VIRT 2024-9

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: It is important that as many states as possible be enrolled in VIS so that states can identify vessels for marine theft, registration and titling purposes. There is a need to continue to educate and assist states in VIS availability, enrollment and data history.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** New states becoming members of VIS.
- ✓ **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:** Additional states participating in VIS.
- ✓ **Status:** No additional states came on board this year. Iowa and California are actively working with the USCG for approval.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Charge should be carried over for next year.

VIRT 2024-10

Work with the USCG on providing comments & recommendations on the revised “Report for Certificate of Numbers Issued to Boats” that will comply with the implantation of the regulatory changes of the Standard Numbering System that went into effect 1/1/17.

Needs Statement: With the “new” Numbering Standards imposed by the USCG, the States have to have a “new” Report of Certificate of Numbers Issued to Boats to capture the information of the changes that have been made. Old form that is currently being used does not capture the new requirements.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** States & territories now are using the same form to report.
- ✓ **Implementation:** Once the form is finalized, the Coast Guard will advise all states and territories of when the form will be required to be used. This information was also included in a BLA Brief and a VIRT Newsletter.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** States & territories now are using the same form to report.
- ✓ **Status:** Charge completed.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Completed, no carryover needed for next year.

VIRT 2024-11

Standardize the process in how states correct erroneous state issued HINS. Who is responsible for correcting the HIN and what to do with the erroneous state HIN on the vessel.

Needs Statement: Standardized process is needed to assist states when a state assigned HIN has been discovered by another state that was issued erroneously.

- ✓ **Deliverables:** Standardized process on how states are to handle a state assigned HIN that has been issued Erroneously.
- ✓ **Implementation:** Will be added to a revised BSX-23 Policy 23-2, “Compliance Guidance for HINS that went Into effect September 2023.
- ✓ **Measures of Effectiveness:** Will assist in the number is state assigned HINS being issued in error.
- ✓ **Status:** Ex. Board had no further comments in their July meeting. Will Hillyer has been given the OK to present to the Coast Guard for inclusion in their next revision of the Policy.
- ✓ **Next cycle recommendation:** Completed, no carryover needed for next year.

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