

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE BOATING LAW ADMINISTRATORS

RESOLUTION 2014-1

ANSI Standards Developer Organization

WHEREAS, for more than 50 years, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) has served as the collective voice of the states regarding recreational boating safety matters, bringing to the table highly qualified personnel in specialized fields including boating law enforcement, law enforcement training, search and rescue, and boating safety education to ensure that the intent of the U.S. Congress to promote uniformity, reciprocity and comity in programs among the various states is given priority; and

WHEREAS, with a strong consensus among boating educators, industry, and government stakeholders, the 56 state and territorial voting members of NASBLA officially adopted National Boating Education Standards on September 22, 1999; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Coast Guard has demonstrated unwavering support for the standard in the past, administering nonprofit grant funding in support of activities and research in support of advancement of the standards and, through the USCG state/federal agreement, requiring: “A state recreational boating safety education program meeting or exceeding the minimum standards adopted by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators”; and

WHEREAS, according to U.S. Coast Guard Performance Report Part II data for 2006 - 2013, the states and education partners reported more than 3.4 million state/NASBLA-approved certificates, including a record 509,443 certificates in 2013; and

WHEREAS, on September 19, 2014, NASBLA received notice of accreditation as a standards developing organization from the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), confirming rigorous compliance of the Essential Requirement of Due Process for development and revision of voluntary consensus standards; and

WHEREAS, every U.S. state and territory offers a state-specific course which has been verified through a robust conformity assessment process by NASBLA as meeting the National Boating Education Standard, validating this Standard as a true measure of uniformity across the states even where education requirements for boat operators may differ; and

WHEREAS, NASBLA has been informed that the Coast Guard has established a policy of no longer referencing a successful course conformity assessment as “NASBLA-Approved,” with the potential of creating confusion on the part of boaters seeking to comply with state law and law enforcement personnel working to enforce state law; and

WHEREAS, NASBLA, in representing the consensus of the states, will continue to establish and maintain national standards and conformity assessment activities relating to recreational boating safety knowledge and competency within the broad scope of the approved ANSI Accreditation, covering knowledge and competencies for the recreational boaters and boating professionals working within or on behalf of the recreational boating community in North America; and

WHEREAS, that use of these phrases is in alignment with Federal mandates found in the National Technology and Advancement Act of 1995 and Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-119 (Revised)-Federal Participation in the Development and Use of Voluntary Consensus Standards and in Conformity Assessment Activities which guide federal agencies to “reference voluntary consensus standards, along with sources of availability, in appropriate publications, regulatory orders, and related internal documents.”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, meeting this 18th day of October 2014 in Bar Harbor, Maine, does hereby request formal recognition by the U.S. Coast Guard as the ANSI-Accredited Standards Developer for “knowledge and competencies for recreational boaters and boating professionals working within or on behalf of the recreational boating community in North America,” and to continue use of the widely known and referenced phrase, ‘NASBLA-Approved,’ for courses verified to be in compliance with NASBLA’s conformity assessment process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Admiral Paul F. Zukunft, Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, and to Vice Admiral Charles D. Michel, Deputy Commandant for Operations for their consideration and appropriate action.

October 18, 2014


Herb Angell, President