

III. AIDS TO NAVIGATION

A. AIDS TO NAVIGATION (AtoN) OVERVIEW

1. Reporting AtoN Discrepancies: If you see an AtoN discrepancy, (buoy off station, light extinguished, etc.) contact the Coast Guard Sector at (310)521-3800. Your timely report could prevent an accident.

The Coast Guard will list AtoN changes in the Local Notice to Mariners (LNTM) to allow for nautical chart updates.

Use the following numbers to address AtoN concerns:

Discrepancy reports: Captain of the Port (COTP)
(310) 521-3800

General Local AtoN concerns: Chief, Waterways Management Division
(310) 521-3860

CG Waterways Management Office (oan) in Alameda

Branch Chief (510) 437-2975

AtoN Section Chief (510) 437-2968

AtoN Changes/WAMS (510) 437-2982

Notice to Mariners/charts (510) 437-2970/2981

Private AtoN (510) 437-2983

Bridge Section Chief (510) 437-3516

2. AtoN Objectives: The Coast Guard develops, establishes, operates, and maintains AtoN systems to:

- a. Assist the mariner in determining position.
- b. Assist the mariner in determining a safe course.
- c. Warn the mariner of dangers and obstructions.
- d. Promote safe and economic movement of commercial vessel traffic.

3. U.S. AtoN System: This system includes buoys and beacons conforming to the International Association of Lighthouse Authorities guidelines, and other short range AtoN, intended for use with nautical charts. For additional important information, see the Light List Vol. VI and U.S. Coast Pilot 7.

The U.S. AtoN System uses several types of marks, including lateral marks, preferred channel marks, non-lateral marks, safe water marks, special marks and information and regulatory marks.

4. Establishing, Reviewing and Modifying AtoN Systems: Coast Guard AtoN primarily mark channels and other areas of safe water in order to facilitate marine transportation. Specific criteria for AtoN include promoting safety, aiding national defense, aiding navigation, preventing collisions, preventing wrecks,

serving commerce, assessing the amount and nature of traffic, benefiting the public and preserving natural resources. The Coast Guard considers the needs of all categories of users as well as the operating environment; e.g. weather conditions, channel lengths and widths, traffic density and traffic patterns. Benefits evaluated include, e.g., number of vessels moving through the area, vessel tonnage, cargo value and nature, level of economic activity, pleasure boating and fishing.

To meet user needs, the Coast Guard conducts a Waterways Analysis and Management System (WAMS) review of each district waterway on a five-year cycle. WAMS comprehensively analyzes the quality of each waterway's AtoN system. During this process, the Coast Guard contacts waterway users for their input and feedback.

The Office of Aids to Navigation (oan) in Alameda acts as clearinghouse for all AtoN issues in the LA/LB area. However, the COTP, the local representative, can collect, review and forward information to Alameda.

The Coast Guard welcomes comments on the AtoN system at any time, independent of the WAMS cycle. The Aids to Navigation Section evaluates recommendations for changes to the AtoN system using the above criteria.

To propose AtoN changes, write to:

Commander (oan)
Eleventh Coast Guard District
Building 50-6
Coast Guard Island
Alameda, CA 94501-5100

The Coast Guard normally announces proposed AtoN changes in the LNTM, with a request for feedback from the system users. The LNTM usually publishes AtoN changes at least 30 days before they occur.

5. Coast Guard Light List: The Coast Guard Light List, Vol. VI, Pacific Coast and Pacific Islands, includes information on all AtoN in the LA/LB area. The Coast Guard assigns its Light List numbers to its AtoN to make the Light List easy and clear for users. The Light List also includes such information as the approximate position (to facilitate locating an AtoN on a nautical chart), light characteristic, height above the water (for fixed AtoN), nominal range and general remarks such as fog signal characteristic, RACON characteristic, and arc of visibility. The Light List does not include minor, private AtoN without navigational significance, such as mooring buoys and racing marks.

The Light List is published annually and sold by LA/LB-area nautical agents and by:

Superintendent of Documents
U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, DC 20402
Stock Number 050-012-00437-4

Or available for download at:

<http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/pubs/LightLists/V6COMPLETE.pdf>

6. LNTM: The Eleventh Coast Guard District publishes a weekly LNTM that includes Light List and Chart updates. Use this LNTM to keep your Light List and nautical charts current. The LNTM covers AtoN, charts, channel depths, marine construction, military operations, bridge repair/construction, significant marine events and other information of interest to mariners.

The LNTM is now issued exclusively via the internet. Go to <http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/lnm/d11> to view the LNTM or for e-mail notification regarding; LNM updates, Light List updates, and other marine related information updates.

A Navigation Information Service Watchstander can answer questions 24 hours a day at (703) 313-5900.

7. Broadcast Notice to Mariners (BNTM): BNTMs disseminate information of interest to mariners that is received too late to be published in the LNTM, such as AtoN discrepancies. BNTMs are repeated until either the LNTM confirms them or they are no longer valid.

B. NAVIGATIONAL HAZARDS:

1. Navigators can easily see the LA/LB Harbors' fixed navigational hazards: breakwaters protecting the outer harbor anchorage areas from the open sea and various land masses which comprise the harbor complex. These hazards are both easily visible by radar and currently well-lighted. See Harbor Charts 18751, 18749 and LNTMs for most current information.

2. Four bridges cross the navigation channels of both ports. All have restricted vertical clearances, and two have restricted horizontal clearances as well. Also, overhead power lines with restricted vertical clearance cross Cerritos Channel. Chapter IX describes these hazards in detail.