

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary SE District

PATON

**PRIVATE
AIDS TO NAVIGATION**

D7NS 30002.4

FEBRUARY 2026

Private Aids to Navigation



PATON

**Short-Range Aid to Navigation
owned and maintained by any
entity other than the Federal
Government**



Subpart 66.01- Aids to Navigation Other than Federal or State

a. No person, public body, or instrumentality not under the control of the Commandant, exclusive of the Armed Forces, will establish and maintain, discontinue, change or transfer ownership of any aids to maritime navigation without first obtaining permission to do so from the Commandant.

b. For purposes of the subpart, the term private aids to navigation includes all marine aids to navigation operated in the navigable waters of the United States other than those operated by the Federal Government or those operated in State waters for private aids to navigation.



33 CFR Chapter II Part 329



Part 329 – DEFINITION OF NAVIGABLE WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES

§329.4 General definition.

Navigable waters of the United States are those waters that are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide and/or are presently used, or have been used in the past, or may be susceptible for use to transport interstate or foreign commerce. A determination of navigability, once made, applies laterally over the entire surface of the waterbody, and is not extinguished by later actions or events which impede or destroy navigable capacity.



33 CFR § 66.01-30

§66.01-30 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Approval

a. Before any private aid to navigation consisting of a fixed structure is placed in the navigable waters of the United States, authorization to erect such structure shall first be obtained from the District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in whose district the aid will be located.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
APPLICATION FOR DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY PERMIT
For use of this form, see 33 CFR 325. The proponent agency is CECW-CO-R.

*Form Approved -
OMB No. 0710-0003
Expires: 08-31-2023*

b. The application to establish any private aid to navigation consisting of a fixed structure shall show evidence of the required permit having been issued by the Corps of Engineers.



CG 2554 Private Aids to Navigation Application

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
U.S. Coast Guard

OMB Approval: 1625-0011
Expiration Date: 05/31/2021

PRIVATE AIDS TO NAVIGATION APPLICATION

(See attached instructions and copy of Code of Federal Regulations, Title 33, Chap. 1, Part 66)

NO PRIVATE AID TO NAVIGATION MAY BE AUTHORIZED UNLESS A COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM HAS BEEN RECEIVED (14 U.S.C. 83; 33 CFR. 66. 01-5).

1. ACTION REQUESTED FOR PRIVATE AIDS TO NAVIGATION:	<input type="checkbox"/> A. ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN <input type="checkbox"/> B. DISCONTINUE <input type="checkbox"/> C. CHANGE <input type="checkbox"/> D. TRANSFER OWNERSHIP	2. DATE ACTION TO START:
3. AIDS WILL BE OPERATED:	<input type="checkbox"/> A. YEAR-ROUND <input type="checkbox"/> B. TEMPORARILY UNTIL _____ <input type="checkbox"/> C. SEASONAL FROM _____ TO _____	
4. NECESSITY FOR AID <i>(Continue in Block 8)</i>	5. GENERAL LOCALITY	6. AUTHORIZING PERMIT FOR THIS STRUCTURE OR BUOY USACE <input type="checkbox"/> PERMIT AND/OR STATE <input type="checkbox"/> PERMIT (Valid Permit Number) _____

FOR DISTRICT COMMANDERS ONLY			7. APPLICANT WILL FILL IN APPLICABLE REMAINING COLUMNS								
LIGHT LIST NUMBER	NAME OF AID	NO. OR LTR (7a)	LIGHT			POSITION (7e)	DEPTH OF WATER (7f)	CANDELA (7g)	FOCAL PLANE HEIGHT (7h)	STRUCTURE	REMARKS <i>(See instructions) (7j)</i>
			FLASH PERIOD (7b)	FLASH LENGTH (7c)	COLOR (7d)					TYPE, COLOR, AND HEIGHT ABOVE GROUND (7i)	

CG 2554 Private Aids to Navigation Application



8. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS				
9a. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON IN DIRECT CHARGE OF THE AID(S)		10a. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON OR CORPORATION AT WHOSE EXPENSE THE AID(S) WILL BE MAINTAINED		10b. THE APPLICANT AGREES TO SAVE THE COAST GUARD HARMLESS WITH RESPECT TO ANY CLAIM OR CLAIMS THAT MAY RESULT ARISING FROM THE ALLEGED NEGLIGENCE OF THE MAINTENANCE OR OPERATION OF THE APPROVED AID(S).
9b. TELEPHONE NO.		10c. DATE		10d. SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF OFFICIAL SIGNING
9c. E-MAIL ADDRESS				10d. SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF OFFICIAL SIGNING
FOR USE BY DISTRICT COMMANDER		RECD	DATE APPROVED	SIGNATURE <i>(By direction)</i>
SERIAL NO.	CLASSIFICATION OF AIDS(S)	CHART		
		LNM		

CG-2554 (05/18)

Reset

Page 1 of 5

Submit 2554 to District 7 Waterway Management (DPW)

SMB-D7-PATON@uscg.mil

Brickell Plaza Federal Building, 909 SE 1st Avenue, Miami, FL 33131-3050





§ 66.01-5 Basic Provisions for PATONs

1. Temporary PATON in place less than six months: 2554 not required but owner must notify USCG for publication in LNM.
2. Permanent PATON – to be in place longer than six months requires an approved 2554 application.

PROBLEM

Owners install aids without permits





33 CFR Chapter I Subchapter C Part 66

§66.01-10 Characteristics

The characteristics of a private aid to navigation must conform to those prescribed by the United States Navigation System set forth in subpart B of part 62 of this subchapter.

This means that PATON must conform to IALA B. Also, PATON lights must conform to statutory color and intensity standards. However, the size of fixed or floating PATON are not subject to the stipulations in the U.S. Coast Guard Aids to Navigation Manual - Administration.





33 CFR Chapter I Subchapter C Part 66

Classes of Private Aids to Navigation §66.01-15

Class I: Aids to navigation on marine structures or other works which the owners are legally obligated to establish, maintain and operate as prescribed by the Coast Guard.



Class II: Aids to navigation exclusive of Class I located in waters used by general navigation.

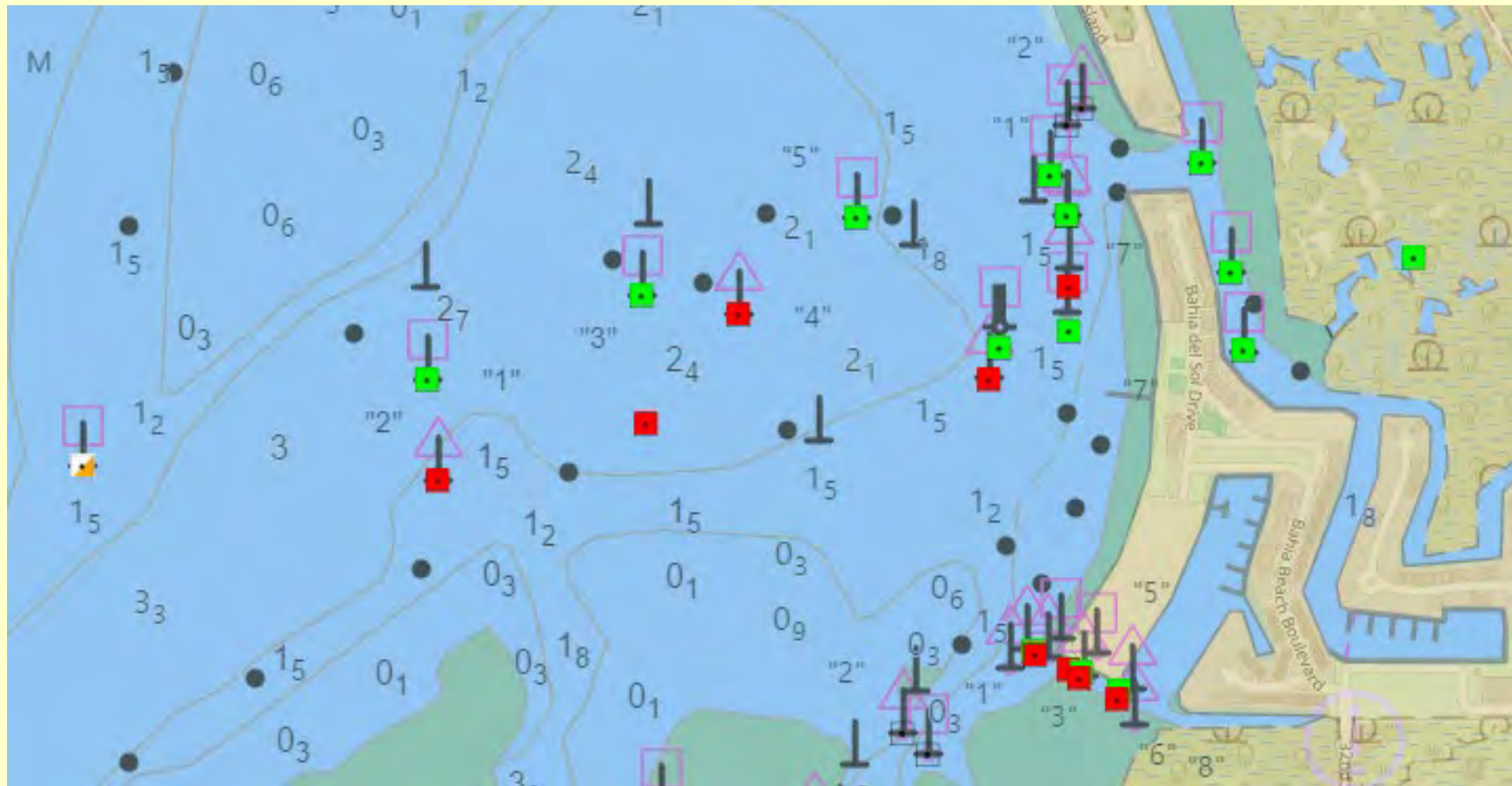


Class III: Aids to navigation exclusive of Class I located in waters not ordinarily used by general navigation.



CHARTING PRIVATE AIDS

NOAA charts may not show all the Class II aids in a channel.



NOAA US5TPAEI

**Class III aids
are usually
not shown.**

Regulatory & Information Marks



- **These aids are normally Private (PATON).**
- **They are often not charted.**
- **Precise location is not usually an issue.**
- **If these aids are in the navigable channel, that is a reportable discrepancy.**
- **These are non-lateral aids.**

Exclusion Area



Danger Marks

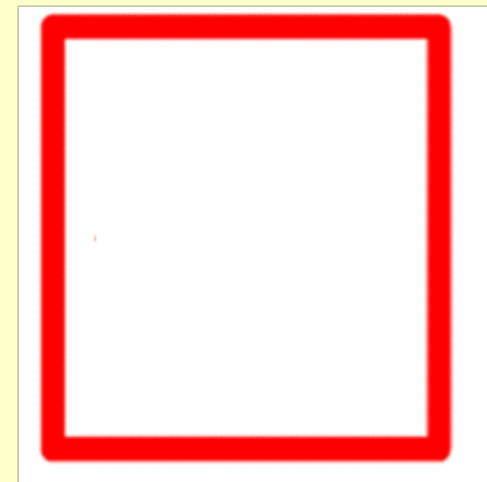
D
A
N
G
E
R



Information Marks



**Directions, distance, places,
food, repairs, fuel, marina,
other non-regulatory
messages**





Discontinuance and removal of Private Aids §66.01- 25

No person or public body shall change, move or discontinue any authorized private aid to navigation required by statute or regulation (Class I aids) without first obtaining permission to do so from the District Commander.

PROBLEM

*Owners change,
move, add aids
without filing permit*

Other private aids (Classes II & III) may be discontinued or removed following 30 days notice to the CG District Commander.





33 CFR Chapter I Subchapter C Part 66

Transfer of Private Aid ownership §66.01- 55

When any private aid to navigation authorized by the CG, or the essential real estate or facility with which the aid is associated, is sold or transferred, both parties to the transaction shall submit application to the Commander of the CG District requesting authority to transfer responsibility for the aid.

PROBLEM

Properties are frequently sold without any paperwork for the PATON

The PATONS and their maintenance become the responsibility of the new owner!



33 CFR Chapter I Subchapter C Part 66

Penalties §66.01- 55

Anyone who establishes a PATON without U.S Coast Guard approval

or

Anyone who makes changes to a PATON without U.S. Coast Guard approval

or

Anyone responsible for the maintenance of a PATON who fails to do so

may be fined up to \$100 per PATON per day

The Coast Guard does not enforce this law

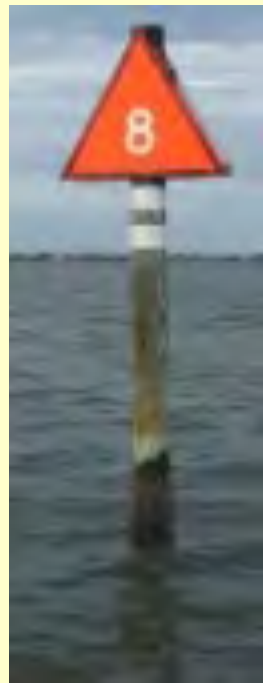


COMDTINST 16500.71 02 MAR 2005

Aids to Navigation Manual Administration

1. Private Aids to Navigation.

- a. **District Commander authorizes private aids to navigation. Where required, inspection of private aids are accomplished by the Coast Guard for Class I aids. Class I, Class II, and Class III private aids are inspected/verified by the Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary or the owner.**





COMDTINST 16500.71 02 MAR 2005

Aids to Navigation Manual Administration

1. Inspection and Verification of Private Aids to Navigation.

a. Private aids to navigation are authorized by the U.S. Coast Guard in accordance with law, and are to be maintained by, and at the expense of, the responsible parties. Inspections and verifications are to ensure that private aids are in compliance with the conditions of the private aid application.



COMDTINST 16500.71 02 MAR 2005

Aids to Navigation Manual Administration

- (1) Inspection:** An inspection is defined as Coast Guard personnel or Coast Guard Auxiliary performing a hands-on check of an aid to ensure the authorized hardware is installed as approved in the private aid application and that the aid is operating properly.
- (2) Verification:** A verification is a self-verification where the owner provides a written report to the Coast Guard stating that the aid is operating properly. It can also be Coast Guard or Coast Guard Auxiliary personnel viewing the aid from a distance and determining if the aid operates as advertised.



COMDTINST 16500.71 02 MAR 2005

Aids to Navigation Manual Administration

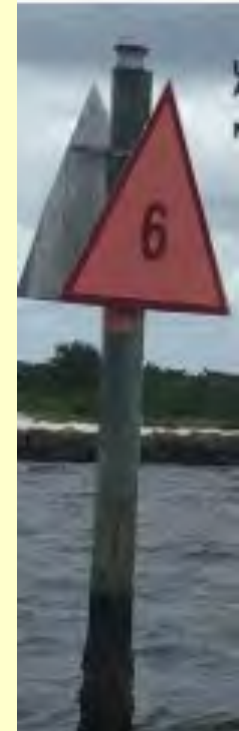
b. District Commanders shall ensure that all private aids to navigation in their areas of responsibility are inspected or verified on a periodic basis as outlined below.

(1) New Class I private aids should be verified by Coast Guard or Coast Guard Auxiliary personnel as soon after their establishment as possible.

(2) Class I private aids will be verified annually.

(3) Class II private aids will be verified every three years.

(4) Class III aids will be verified every five years.

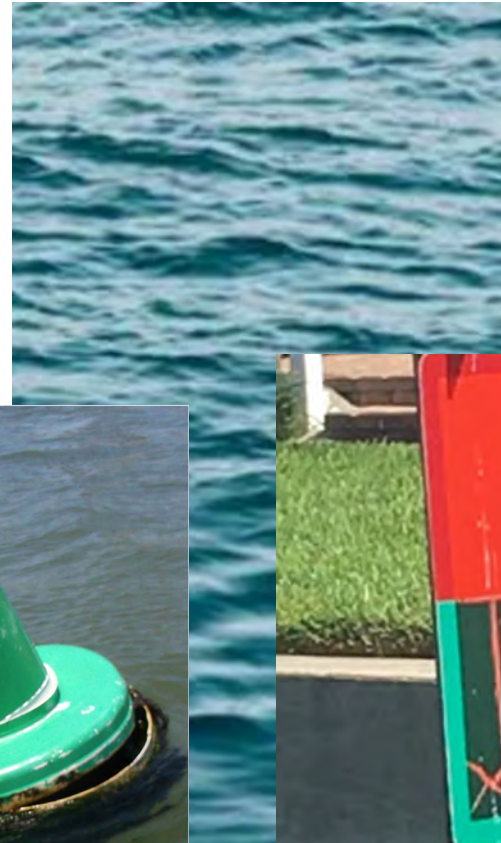


PROBLEM

The Auxiliary lacks the resources to conduct all Class II verifications

REALITY in DISTRICT 7

**There are almost 8,000 permitted PATON in D7
As of December 19, 2025, 1,056 were on the LNM**



AID TO NAVIGATION DISCREPANCIES

3 Categories of Discrepancy:

- **LOCATION**
- **CONDITION**
- **CHARACTERISTICS**



LOCATION DISCREPANCIES

	BUOY	FIXED	DAYMARK	LIGHT	SOUND
LOCATION	OFF STATION	NOT IN AP			
	MISSING	DESTROYED			
	ADRIFT				
	NOT MARKING BEST WATER	NOT MARKING BEST WATER			
	DISCONTINUED	DISCONTINUED			

CONDITION DISCREPANCIES

AID TO NAVIGATION CONDITION DISCREPANCIES					
	BUOY	FIXED	DAYMARK	LIGHT	SOUND
CONDITION			MISSING	MISSING	MISSING
	DAMAGED	DAMAGED	DAMAGED	DAMAGED	DAMAGED
	SINKING	LEANING > 45°	DELAMINATED		
	CAPSIZED		DEFACED		
			NOT REFLECTIVE	EXTINGUISHED	INOPERATIVE
			OBSCURED	OBSCURED	
			FADED - NOT READABLE	DIM	

A PATON leaning more than 45° is discrepant.

A Federal Aid leaning more than 15° is discrepant.

CHARACTERISTIC DISCREPANCIES

AID TO NAVIGATION CHARACTERISTIC DISCREPANCIES					
	BUOY	FIXED	DAYMARK	LIGHT	SOUND
IMPROPER CHARACTERISTICS	WRONG COLOR		WRONG COLOR	WRONG COLOR	
	WRONG SHAPE		WRONG SHAPE		
	NOT COMFORM TO IALA B		NOT COMFORM TO IALA B		
				WRONG PATTERN	WRONG SOUND

An aid which does not match its description in the Light List or its symbol on a NOAA Nautical Chart has an IMPROPER CHARACTERISTIC

HAZARDS TO NAVIGATION

Hazards to Navigation are aid discrepancies which could lead to damage or loss of a vessel and/or personal injury or loss of life.

- Absence of aid or inability to read correctly could lead to a grounding or other accident
- Missing dayboard
- Extinguished light
- Lack of reflective capability or any defect preventing aid from being seen at night
- Damaged aid presenting a risk to passing vessels
- An aid which could be misleading to general navigation, for example by being confused with a lateral aid

Report Hazards to Navigation immediately

PROFESSIONAL REPORTING

1. Know which OPCON to contact and how.
2. Have the Light List Number and exact name of aid.
3. Know if the aid is Federal or Private.
4. Check the aid is not already on the LNM.
5. Check the aid is not in the BNM.
6. Be ready to supply your name, phone #, and Member ID.
7. Take pictures. They can be emailed to your OPCON.
8. Reporting to OPCON :
 - a) Triggers a BNM and LNM alerting mariners.
 - a) Creates an actionable item for the ANT.

Snell Isle Daybeacon 8

DISTRICT: 7
LIGHT LIST NUMBER: 25020.5
NAME: Snell Isle Daybeacon 8
AID TYPE: PA
DESCRIPTION TYPE: DBN
COLOR: R
STATE: FL
GROUP JURISDICTION:
REMARK:
STRUCTURE REMARK: TR on pile.
LIGHT CHAR:
LIGHT FOCAL PLANE:
LIGHT NOM RANGE:
ASSIGNED LONGITUDE: 082-36-39.400W
ASSIGNED LATITUDE: 27-47-20.400N
DECIMAL LONGITUDE: -82.61
DECIMAL LATITUDE: 27.79
AID SUBTYPE: FX
HWATERWAY NAME: St Petersburg Channel
VOLUME NUMBER: 03
VOLUME TITLE: Atlantic and Gulf Coast (Little River South Carolina to Econfina River Florida includes Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands).

AIDS NOT IN THE LIGHT LIST

Report these aids as either:

- **Unauthorized –or- Not in Light List (Report according to your ANT directions).**
- **Unauthorized aids can have other deficiencies which should be reported in the same manner as permitted aids.**



OFF STATION



AP: 27-56-24.900N 082-25-5.900W

FIX: 27-56-22.000N 082-25-7.000W

FIX TO AP DISTANCE: 310 FEET

AID IS OFF STATION

MISSING



STRANDED



If a buoy is stranded AND missing from its AP, then the discrepancy is the **BUOY IS MISSING**.

Report the location and description of the stranded buoy to Sector so that it may be salvaged.

ADRIFT



NOT MARKING BEST WATER



Charted depth at MLLW: 20 feet

Measured depth adjusted for tide to MLLW: 4 feet

Shoaling observed for 100 ft up and down channel on the west side.

AID IS NOT MARKING BEST WATER

DAMAGED



SINKING



CAPSIZED



WRONG COLOR



This aid is a CAN with an ODD NUMBER

It therefore should be GREEN

This aid is the **WRONG COLOR**

This aid does **NOT CONFORM** to IALA B

This aid has IMCH – Improper Characteristic

IMPROPER CHARACTERISTIC



This is a junction / preferred channel mark with **RED** being the preferred side.

It therefore should be a **TRIANGLE**

This aid is the **WRONG SHAPE**

This aid does **NOT CONFORM** to **IALA B**

This aid has **IMCH** – Improper Characteristic

NOT IN AP



AP: 27-55-56.720N 082-41-36.990W

FIX: 27-55-55.500N 082-41-35.500W

FIX TO AP DISTANCE: 182 FEET

AID IS OFF STATION

DESTROYED - HAZNAV



DESTROYED - HAZNAV



NOT MARKING BEST WATER



DISCONTINUED



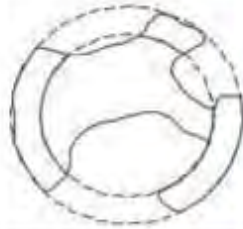



DAMAGED





DAMAGED – PILE CONDITION

Timber Pile Condition Rating

TIMBER PILE CONDITION RATING	CONDITION RATING	DEFECTS	LOST MATERIAL	SURFACE & INTERIOR	BORER DAMAGE	ABRAISON DAMAGE
	1	NO DEFECTS	< 5%	Sound surface material	No evidence	
	2	MINOR DEFECTS	5 - 15%	Sound surface material	No evidence	Minor
	3	MODERATE DEFECTS	15 - 45%	Significant loss of outer shell	Some evidence	Significant
	4	MAJOR DEFECTS	45 - 75%	Significant loss of outer shell & interior damage	Severe	Severe
	5	SEVERE DEFECTS	> 75%		Severe	

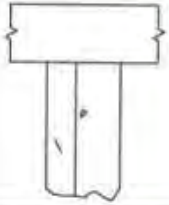
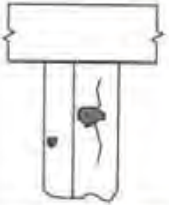

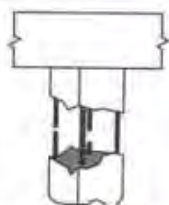
DAMAGED – PILE CONDITION

Steel Pile Condition Rating

	CONDITION RATING	DEFECTS	SURFACE MATERIAL	CORROSION	LOSS OF SECTION
STEEL PILE CONDITION RATING	1	NO DEFECTS	SOUND < 10% COATING DETERIORATION	NO SURFACE RUST OR PITTING	
	2	MINOR DEFECTS	10 - 20% COATING DETERIORATION	LIGHT SURFACE RUST LIGHT PITTING	
	3	MODERATE DEFECTS	WIDESPREAD COATING DETERIORATION	RUST THAT IS LOOSE & FLAKING WITH SOME PITTING - CAN BE REMOVED WITH SOME EFFORT USING SCRAPER OR CHIPPING HAMMER	MEASUREABLE BUT NOT SIGNIFICANT
	4	MAJOR DEFECTS		REMOVAL OF SCALE REQUIRES INCREASED EFFORT USING SCRAPER OR CHIPPER HAMMER	INCREASED LOSS
	5	SEVERE DEFECTS		HEAVY, STRATIFIED RUST OR SCALES, EXTENSIVE PITTING REMOVAL MAY REQUIRE MECHANICAL MEANS	SIGNIFICANT LOSS

DAMAGED – PILE CONDITION

Concrete Pile Condition Rating

CONCRETE PILE CONDITION RATING	CONDITION RATING	DEFECTS	SURFACE		CRACKS	CHIPPING & SPALLING	CORROSION	
	1	NO DEFECTS	Good original surface	Hard material	Hairline cracks			
	2	MINOR DEFECTS	Good original surface	Hard material	Minor cracks or pits	Small chips or popouts	Slight rust stains	Corrosion of the wires
	3	MODERATE DEFECTS	Limited spalling of concrete	Softening of concrete	Reinforcing steel ties exposed	Popouts or impact damage	Rust stains along rebar	Minor corrosion of exposed rebar
	4	MAJOR DEFECTS	Spalling of concrete results in 10-15% loss	Widespread surface disintegration	Deep wide cracks along rebar	Large spalls 6 inches or more wide	Major rust stains along rebar	
	5	SEVERE DEFECTS	More than 15% loss of concrete					Exposed rebar with 50% loss of steel section

LEANING > 45°

Federal > 15°



Private > 45°

DAYBOARD(S) MISSING



DAYBOARD DAMAGED



DAYBOARD DAMAGED



**Loose and
hanging at
an angle**

DAYBOARD BACKING



Dayboard Backing Material

DELAMINATION should not affect $>25\%$

Material should not be *warped* so it impairs recognizing and reading the aid

Mounting points should not be softened or deteriorated to the extent the board might come loose in a storm.

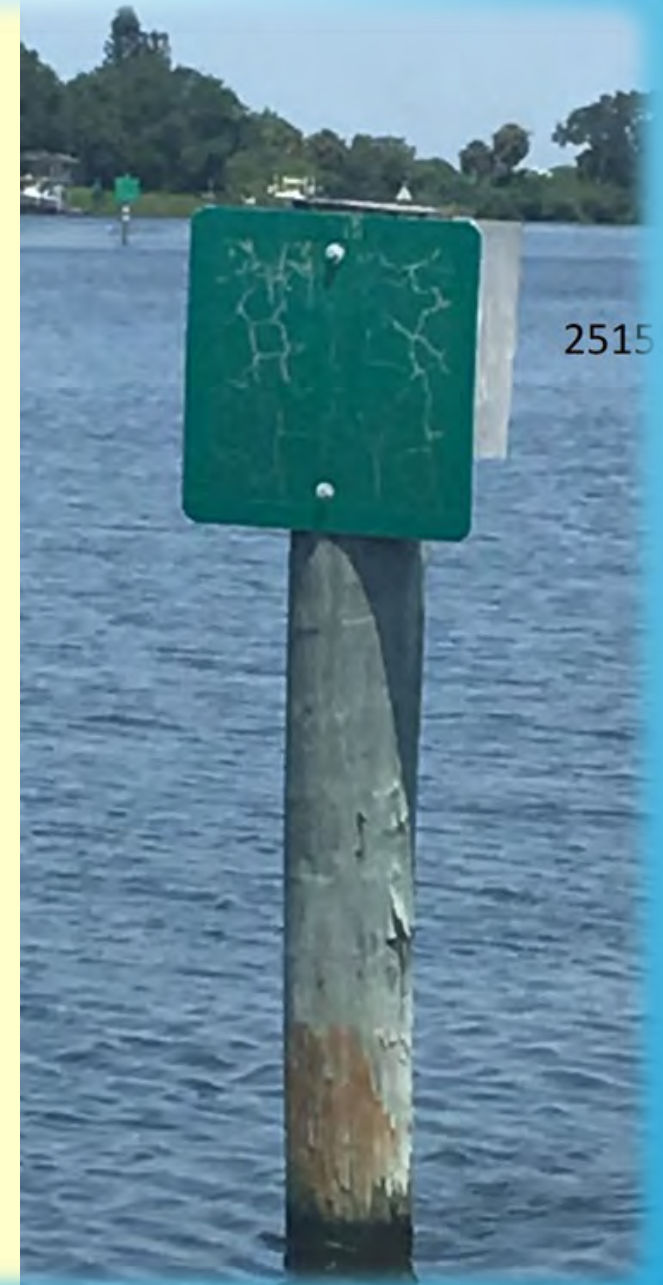


DAYBOARD SURFACE

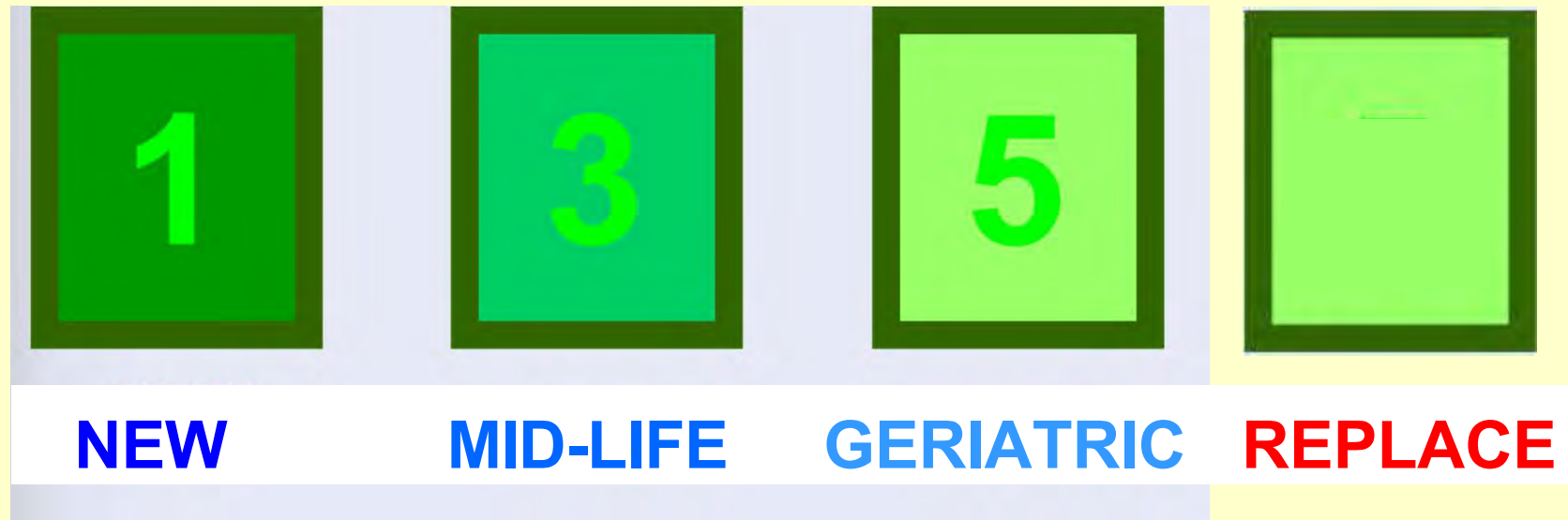
DELAMINATION of the film
should not affect **>10%**

Material should not be ***cracked, checked, or abraded*** with a dull or roughened surface

Attached material should not have ***peeled off*** **>10%** of the surface area



DAYBOARD FADED - UNREADABLE



DAYBOARD DEFACED



NOT REFLECTIVE

Red retro-reflective tape around the edges



Number is reflective and same color as edge tape

DAYBOARD OBSCURED



DAYBOARD UNREADABLE



DAYBOARD WRONG COLOR



DAYBOARD WRONG SHAPE



2

DOES NOT CONFORM TO IALA B

This aid has IMCH – Improper Characteristic

LIGHT MISSING



1210 NORTHWEST CAPE LIGHT 4
FI R 2.5s
TR on pile

LIGHT DAMAGED



LIGHT DISCREPANCIES

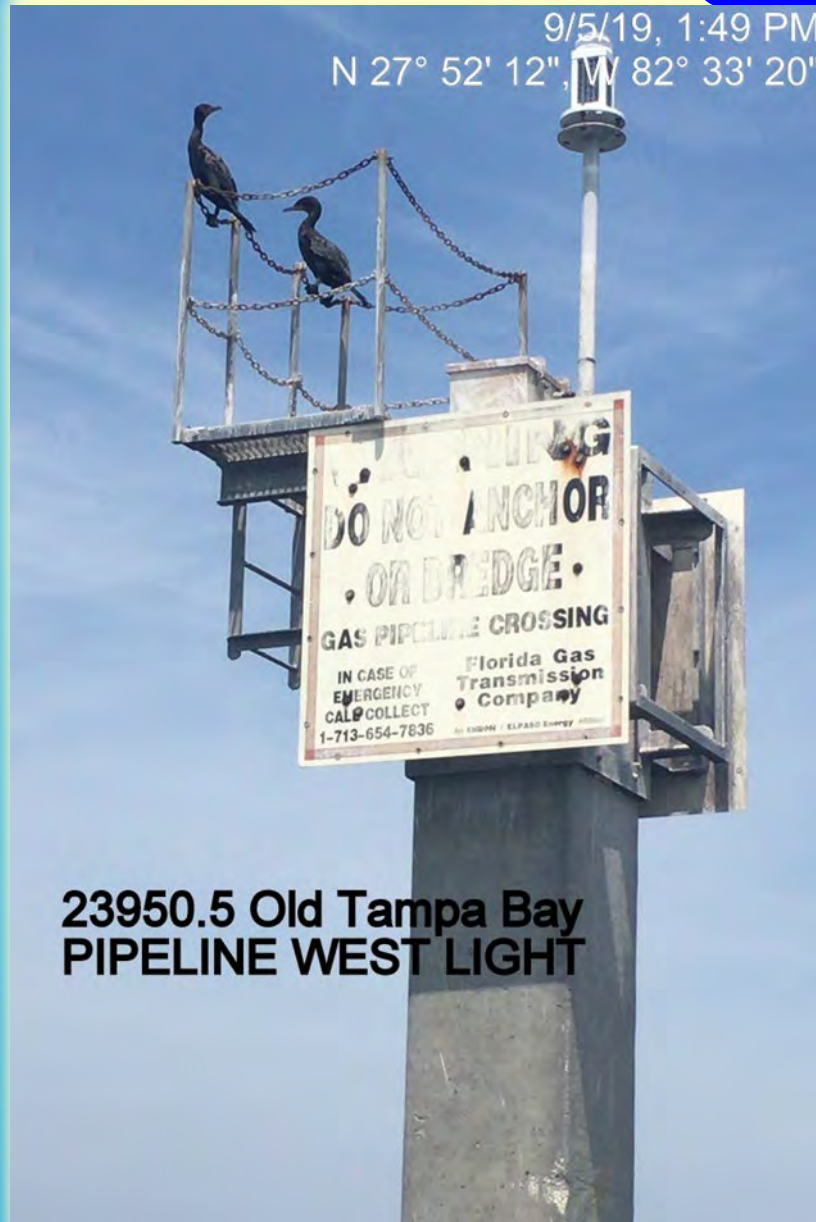


Lights can only be checked at night, after first verifying the aid in daylight.

Any of these discrepancies may be observed:

- Light extinguished
- Light is dim (Aux can only report this subjectively)
- Light is wrong color – does not match Light List or IALA B (IMCH)
- Wrong Pattern – does not match Light List

SIGNAGE DISCREPANCIES



Warning signs must be legible

The examples that follow are all PATON



**Standards for PATON are less stringent
than for Federal Aids**

DISCREPANT



DISCREPANT



DISCREPANT



WP



DISCREPANT



WP



WP



DISCREPANT



WP



DISCREPANT



WP
(if grandfathered)



DISCREPANT



PATON

Questions?



WE

Save Lives

US COAST GUARD AUXILIARY