

*REVISED MARCH 2010*

# **U.S. Coast Guard Abandoned Vessel Program**

**SECTOR BALTIMORE**



# ***HANDBOOK FOR AUXILIARY COXSWAINS***

## **To all Auxiliary Coxswains in Sector Baltimore:**

The Sector Commander has asked the Auxiliary to help put into effect a new Abandoned Vessel Program that the Coast Guard has created to help monitor abandoned vessels. The program is designed eventually to make use of observations reported by all vessels on Chesapeake Bay, from cargo ships and workboats to fishing vessels and recreational boats. For now, the Auxiliary will participate in a pilot program designed to test the system out and build up a data-base.

Technically, this isn't new for Auxiliary patrol crews. It's always been one of our missions to monitor and report on abandoned vessels in the Sector. What's new about this is the way we'll be reporting what we find. The Coast Guard has set up a computerized reporting system to track these vessels and record them in a data-base, and we'll be using that system in our work. Although this is still only a voluntary program, I'm strongly encouraging all Auxiliary coxswains in Sector Baltimore to participate regularly—on *all* your patrols—and to consider it part of your standard operating procedure.

This booklet will outline the new simple procedure for obtaining a list of abandoned vessels in your AOR and their location just before you go out on patrol; for checking on them while you're under way; and for sending the information (and, hopefully, a digital photo of them) to Sector Baltimore when you return.

Please read this thoroughly and plan to make this part of your regular patrol to-do list. This is an important program for the Coast Guard and for us.

Thank you very much.

**Bob Birrane**  
District Captain, Sector Baltimore

# **IN THIS BOOKLET...**

**On the next few pages, you'll find:**

- (a) Instructions on what to do before, during and after your patrol.**
- (b) A copy of the Coast Guard's derelict/neglected vessel worksheet, to make it easier for you to take notes while you're on patrol.**
- (c) A copy of the "rating matrix" that the Coast Guard has designed to help you describe the vessel and what condition it is in.**
- (d) A map of Auxiliary patrol areas (Auxiliary Areas of Responsibility, or AORs), and a list and description of their boundaries.**
- (e) A set of frequently asked questions (and answers).**

# WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOU GO OUT ON PATROL:

## 1. Assemble the equipment you'll need:

- Binoculars
- A GPS receiver
- A digital camera
- Several printed copies of Abandoned Vessel Form (see below)
- A copy of the rating matrix (scale for rating abandoned vessels), which appears as part of this handbook.

2. Go online to the Abandoned Vessel Program website at: [www.avp-balt.org](http://www.avp-balt.org). The website will ask for your user name and password. You'll need to get those from your flotilla or division operations officer (we aren't listing them here because this handbook is a public document). Once you enter the website, click on the AVP DATABASE and log in.

Then:

(a) Once you've got the AVP DATABASE on your screen, find the words "Search for" at the left side of the light-blue band near the top. In the blank box, just to the right of the words "Search for," click on the arrow at the right of the box. A drop-down window will appear showing several categories (or fields) of data. Click on the line that says "Patrol area" and click once again to lock it in the window. Then skip over the second blank box in that row and go to the third blank box and type in the name of the river or area of responsibility (AOR) that you plan to patrol (example: South River). You'll see the number and formal name of your AOR appear in a drop-down window located just below the box (example: 10 SOUTH, WEST RIVERS).

Note: You can type in a name of a river if it corresponds to a designated AOR. However, if nothing appears when you do that—for example, suppose you type in Patuxent River and the name of the AOR doesn't come up—then you'll need to type in the name of the AOR, which in that case is SOLOMONS ISLAND. If nothing comes up when you type in the name of the AOR, that means that no one has yet entered any reports relating to that area. Whatever report that you file will be the first one to be listed under your AOR.

(b) Click on the name of the AOR in the drop-down window, and it will appear in the box itself (example: 10 SOUTH, WEST RIVERS). Then click on

the SEARCH button at the right of the box. You'll see a list of all the items that you or others who patrol that AOR have entered before.

(c) Click on the words **PRINTER FRIENDLY VERSION** in the gray section at the top of the data base. Go to the horizontal gray bar at very top of your screen (for your browser) and click **FILE**. Then click on **PAGE SETUP** and set your printer "orientation" to "LANDSCAPE." This will print the information horizontally so you can fit it all in without running off the page. Print out the listing for your AOR and take it with you on patrol.

(d) Also print a few copies of the separate AVP worksheet provided at the bottom of the website homepage. Take them with you on your patrols to use in making notes.

## **DURING YOUR PATROL:**

1. As you patrol, visit each of the vessels listed and note whether there has been any change since the last time that it was checked. Is it still there? Has it begun to list or sink? Is it leaking and spewing pollutants into the water? Compare the entry on your printout to the actual situation. Note the lat/long, description of the vessel and other piece of information that you'll need, and take digital photos of the boat from all sides. Use the rating matrix as a guide for the kind of information you'll need to update the database.

2. Also, please be on the lookout for other abandoned vessels that may *not* be in the database yet. Such boats may be anywhere—beached along the shoreline, in a marina or out in open water. If it looks as though the boat has been abandoned—for example, if it's partly sunken or is listing badly—please report it anyway, and the Coast Guard will decide whether it's a problem.

**Note: Approach the vessel slowly—and carefully. Do not leave your own boat to board the abandoned vessel under any circumstances.** If someone is on board the boat—or standing nearby—ask questions. But if the person seems adversarial, *do not confront or challenge him or her.* If you can't locate a vessel that's on the list, write **NOT FOUND** across the form.

When you come upon a vessel that looks as though it's been abandoned, note its lat/long, name, type of boat and general situation, and take a set of digital photos. Again, use the matrix as a guide for the kind of information that you'll need when you get home.

If you find an abandoned vessel that is adrift, or is leaking gasoline, diesel fuel or some other substance, or seems to be sinking, *immediately* call the

Sector Baltimore Operations Center at 410-576-2525 and report it, and wait for further instructions.

## WHEN YOU GET BACK HOME:

Just call up the website again when you return, go back to the database, and click on ADD NEW at the left. Fill in the blanks, following the form indicated for lat/long, telephone numbers, etc. When you've finished each item, click on SAVE at the bottom of the website.

1. Go back online the Abandoned Vessel Program website at: [www.avp-balt.org](http://www.avp-balt.org). Log onto the database with your user name and password. Once you enter the website, click on ADD NEW at the left side of the column headings. Fill out the online form that appears. Attach any digital photos that you have taken.

2. Be sure to use the standard formats shown on the entry form. For example, telephone numbers should be listed with dashes, as 410-555-1111 (not 410.555.1111). For Lat/Long, please use the digital format shown on your GPS, not the degrees/minutes/seconds format that you'd use on a paper chart. If you need to convert degrees/minutes/seconds to a digital format, call up <http://www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/bickel/DDDMSS-decimal.html> for an easy-to-use converter.

3. When you have completed the form, click on the SAVE button at the bottom.

### Some important points to remember when you file your report:

—If you check on a vessel that was entered previously in the database and nothing has changed since the last entry, just click on EDIT next to that entry and type in the date of the patrol that you just conducted. Please do not change anything else in the entry.

—If the status of that vessel has changed since the last entry—for example, if it has sunk deeper into the water or has moved from its previous position, then click on EDIT next to that entry and type in the new information in place of what was there before. Please do NOT create a new, separate entry each time you need to update a previous listing.

Note: This is a pilot version of this program, so you probably can expect some initial glitches. If you encounter any problems, please don't hesitate to call Auxiliarist Bill Howard, AVP technical support, at [bh@carver33.com](mailto:bh@carver33.com) or 410-215-5780.

**U.S. COAST GUARD – SECTOR BALTIMORE  
Abandoned Vessel Reporting Worksheet**

**NOTE: IF VESSEL IS ADRIFT, LEAKING OR SINKING, CALL SECTOR  
COMMAND CENTER IMMEDIATELY AT 410-576-2525**

Is this a new entry, not already on database?  Yes  No

If vessel is already on database, what is its ID number? \_\_\_\_\_

Your patrol area (AOR): \_\_\_\_\_

Location of vessel: \_\_\_\_\_ N. Lat. | \_\_\_\_\_ W.Long.

Vessel name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home port: \_\_\_\_\_

Vessel registration number (MD or USCG or VIN): \_\_\_\_\_

Color (hull, cabin), description: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated length overall: \_\_\_ feet | Beam: \_\_\_\_\_ feet | Propulsion: \_\_\_\_\_

Hull material:  wood |  fiberglass |  steel |  aluminum |  other \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Distance from vessel: \_\_\_\_\_ Water depth: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you seen vessel before?  How long has it been here? \_\_\_\_\_

**USE MATRIX BELOW TO ASSIGN 1-5 RANK UNDER “TODAY”**

	<b>TODAY   BEFORE</b>	
<b>HULL CONDITION:</b> Note holes in hull, broken planks, rust, broken ports	_____	_____
<b>POSITION IN WATER:</b> Listing, low in stern or bow, grounded, sunken	_____	_____
<b>HOW SECURED:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Tied securely to dock   <input type="checkbox"/> tied but not secure   <input type="checkbox"/> on mooring buoy   <input type="checkbox"/> anchored	_____	_____
<b>NAVIGATION HAZARD:</b>	_____	_____
<b>PUBLIC SAFETY HAZARD:</b>	_____	_____
<b>PUBLIC VISIBILITY:</b>	_____	_____
<b>TOTAL SCORE FROM ALL OBSERVATIONS RECORDED ABOVE:</b>	_____	_____

Does vessel appear to have someone associated with it?  Is there fishing gear aboard?

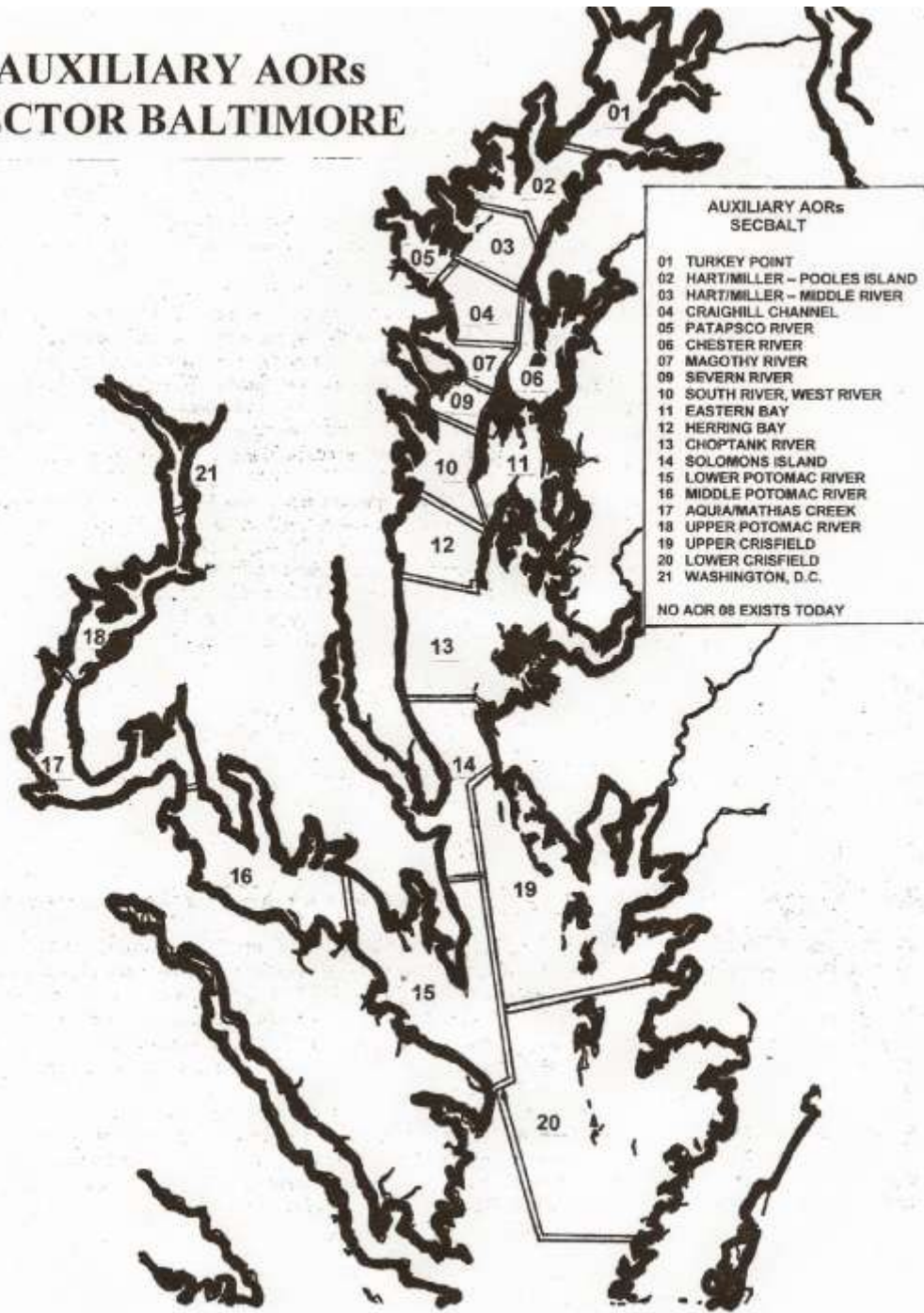
Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ Your ID number: \_\_\_\_\_ Your phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**U.S. COAST GUARD – SECTOR BALTIMORE  
Abandoned Vessel Reporting Worksheet**

**ABANDONED VESSEL EVALUATION MATRIX**

<b>RANK</b>	<b>HULL CONDITION</b>	<b>POSITION IN WATER</b>	<b>HOW SECURED</b>	<b>NAVIGN HAZARD</b>	<b>PUBLIC SAFETY</b>	<b>PUBLIC VISIBILITY</b>
5	Sunk or broken up and no longer is seaworthy	Severe list (30 degrees or more) and/or sunk or aground	Adrift or is not secure	In middle of navigable waterway (i.e., a traffic lane)	Leaking oil or hazardous materials. Unrestricted public access onto vessel	Near large city, clearly visible to many people
4	Visible holes in hull, vessel bottomed in shoal water	Listing or still upright, but low enough to bottom during low tide	Not secure but not adrift (grounded or beached). Mooring lines parting	In middle of high-traffic area, such as approach to large marinas or ports	Multiple containers of unknown materials visible on vessel. Limited access to vessel	Near smaller city, clearly visible to many people
3	Wooden hull or other hull in poor condition	Riding noticeably low in water, but floating free	Moored or anchored securely	In middle of moderate traffic area (approaches to smaller marinas or ports)	Could potentially carry large amounts of fuel or hazardous materials. Limited access by public	Offshore near large city, mainly visible from water or private property
2	Steel, aluminum or fiberglass hull, rusted or aged	Sitting slightly low in water, but appears to be floating free	Moored or anchored securely	Near limited vessel traffic	Does not likely contain much fuel or hazardous material. Not very accessible to public	Offshore near smaller city, mainly visible from water or private property
1	Steel, aluminum or fiberglass hull in good condition	Floating with normal freeboard	Tied securely to dock with sound lines	Away from vessel traffic	Known to be clean, not accessible to public	Offshore and away from public view, not within a populated area

# AUXILIARY AORs SECTOR BALTIMORE



**AUXILIARY AORs  
SECBALT**

- 01 TURKEY POINT
- 02 HART/MILLER – POOLES ISL
- 03 HART/MILLER – MIDDLE RVR
- 04 CRAIGHILL CHANNEL
- 05 PATAPSCO RIVER
- 06 CHESTER RIVER
- 07 MAGOTHY RIVER
- 09 SEVERN RIVER
- 10 SOUTH, WEST RIVERS
- 11 EASTERN BAY
- 12 HERRING BAY
- 13 CHOPTANK RIVER
- 14 SOLOMONS ISLAND
- 15 LOWER POTOMAC RIVER
- 16 MIDDLE POTOMAC RIVER
- 17 AQUIA/MATHIAS CREEK
- 18 UPPER POTOMAC RIVER
- 19 UPPER CRISFIELD
- 20 LOWER CRISFIELD
- 21 WASHINGTON, D.C.

NO AOR 08 EXISTS TODAY

**AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY (AORs) FOR AUXILIARY PATROLS  
SECTOR BALTIMORE**

**AOR 01 – TURKEY POINT** – Northern boundary is the Maryland-Delaware border just north of Chesapeake City on the Chesapeake and Delaware (C&D) Canal. Southern boundary is a line from Romney Creek (39-22.8N, 076-11.2W) easterly to Howell Point (39-22.28N, 076-06.65W). Orders issued by Auxiliary **Division 21**.

**AOR 02 – POOLES ISLAND** – Northern boundary is a line from Romney Creek (39-22.8N, 076-11.2W) east to Howell Point (39-22.28N, 076-06.65W). Southern boundary is a line from Wells Point (39-16.5N, 076-23.0W) easterly to Pooles Island Bar Light (39-15.7N, 076-16.6W), then southeasterly to Tolchester Beach (39-12.8N, 076-14.6W). Orders issued by Auxiliary **Division 22**.

**AOR 03 – HART/ MILLER ISLAND** – Northern boundary is a line from Wells Point (39-16.5N, 076-23.0W) easterly to Pooles Island Bar Light (39-15.7N, 076-16.6W), then southeasterly to Tolchester Beach (39-12.8N to 076-14.6W). Southern boundary is a line from North Point (39-11.7N, 076-26.53W), easterly to Swan Point (39-08.71N, 076-16.73W). Orders issued by Auxiliary **Division 22**.

**AOR 04 – CRAIGHILL CHANNEL** – Northern boundary is a line drawn from North Point (39-11.7N, 076-26.53W) easterly to Swan Point (39-08.71N, 076-16.73W). Eastern boundary is a line from Swan Pt. (39-08.71N, 076-16.73W) southerly to Love Point Light (39-03.4N, 076-17.0W). Southern boundary is a line from Love Point Light westerly to Mountain Point (39-03.6N, 076-25.9W). Western boundary is a line along the shore from Mountain Point (39-03.6N, 076-25.9W) to Rock Point (39-10.0N, 076-28.7W) then northerly to North Point. Orders issued by Auxiliary **Division 22**.

**AOR 05 – PATAPSCO RIVER** – Eastern boundary is a line from North Point (39-11.7N, 076-26.53W) southerly to Rock Point (39-10.0N, 076-28.7W). Orders issued by Auxiliary **Division 22**.

**AOR 06 – CHESTER RIVER** – Western boundary is a line from Swan Point (39-08.71N, 076-16.73W) southerly to Love Point Light (39-03.4N, 076-17.0W) southwesterly to Love Point (39-02.38N, 076-18.17W). The southern boundary is the north side of the Kent Narrows Bridge. Orders issued by Auxiliary **Division 21**.

**AOR 07 – MAGOTHY RIVER** – Northern boundary is a line from Mountain Pt (39-03.6N, 076-25.9W) easterly to Love Point Light (39-03.4N, 076-17.0W) southwesterly to Love Point (39-02.38N, 076-18.17W). Southern boundary is a line from the Western end of the Bay Bridge (38-59.0'N, 076-24.22'W) through a point (38-59.82'N, 076-23.73W) to the Eastern end of the Bay Bridge (38-59.0'N, 076-20.01'W). This line represents a midpoint which passes between the north and south spans of the bridge. Orders issued by **Division 23**.

**AOR 08 – BAY BRIDGE** – This AOR **no longer exists** and has been apportioned between the Magothy River and Severn River patrol areas.

**AOR 09 – SEVERN RIVER** – Northern boundary is a line from the Western end of the Bay Bridge (39-00.47N, 076-24.22W) through a point (38-59.82N, 076-23.73W) to the Eastern end of the Bay Bridge (38-59.0N, 076-20.1W). The line represents a midpoint that passes between the north and south spans of the bridge. Southern boundary is a line drawn from Tolley Point (38-56.5N, 076-27.0W) easterly to the range lights (marks) at Kent Island (38-55.1N, 076-21.85W). Orders issued by Auxiliary **Division 23**.

**AOR 10 – SOUTH RIVER/WEST RIVER** – Northern boundary is a line from Tolley Point (38-56.5N, 076-27.0W) easterly to the southern range lights (marks) at Kent Island (38-55.1N, 076-21.85W). Eastern boundary is a line from Kent Point (38-50.18N, 076-22.1W) southerly to Lowes Point (38-46.53N, 076-20.0W). Southern boundary is a line from Cedarhurst (38-49.88N, 076-29.78W) southeasterly to Lowes Point (38-46.53N, 076-20.0W). Orders issued by **Division 24**.

**AOR 11 – EASTERN BAY** – Western boundary is a line from Lowes Point (38-46.53N, 076-20.0W) northerly to Kent Point (38-50.18N, 076-22.1W). Northern boundary is the south side of the Kent Narrows Bridge. Orders issued by **Division 21**.

**AOR 12 – HERRING BAY** – Northern boundary is a line from Cedarhurst (38-49.88N, 076-29.78W) southeasterly to Lowes Point (38-46.53N, 076-20.0W). Southern boundary is a line from Chesapeake Beach (38-41.45N, 076-31.92W) easterly to Blackwalnut Point (38-40.23N, 076-20.37W). Orders issued by **Division 24**.

**AOR 13 – CHOPTANK RIVER** – Northern boundary is a line from Chesapeake Beach (38-41.45N, 076-31.92W) easterly to Blackwalnut Point (38-40.23N, 076-20.37W). Southern boundary is a line from Kenwood Beach (38-29.95N, 076-20.0W) easterly to the southern tip of James Island (38-30.16W, 076-20.33W) to the northwest point of Taylor's Island (38-30.0N, 076-19.7W). Orders issued by **Division 21**.

**AOR 14 – SOLOMONS ISLAND** – Northern boundary is a line from Kenwood Beach east to James Island. Southern boundary is a line from (38-12.0N, 076-21.30W) on the Western shore in St. Mary's County easterly to the boundary of Station Crisfield near the "HS" buoy at (38-12.19, 076-14.33.W), including all tributaries along the western shore of this patrol area. Orders issued by Auxiliary **Division 23**.

**AOR 15 – LOWER POTOMAC** – Northern boundary is a line from (38-12.0N, 076-21.30'W) on the western shore in St. Mary's county easterly to the boundary of Station Crisfield near the "HS" buoy at (38-12.0N, 076-14.33W), southeasterly to the Maryland-Virginia state line and southwesterly along that line to Smith Point. Western boundary is a line from Ragged Point (38-

08.95N, 076-36-63W on the Virginia shore of the Potomac River, north to White Point Beach on the Maryland shore. Orders issued by **Division 23 and Flotilla 10 of Division 03.**

**AOR 16 – MIDDLE POTOMAC RIVER** – Eastern boundary is a line from Ragged Point (38-08.95N, 076-36-63'W) on the Virginia shore to the Maryland shore at White Point Beach (38-13.43N, 076-37.38W). Western boundary is the Governor Harry Nice Bridge (Route 301). Orders issued by **Division 25.**

**AOR 17 – AQUIA/ MATHIAS CREEK** – Eastern boundary is the Governor Harry Nice Memorial Bridge (Route 301). Northern boundary is a line parallel to the power lines at Moss Point, running from (38-31.52N, 077-15.28W) to (38-21.79N, 077-15.29W). Orders issued by **Division 25.**

**AOR 18 – UPPER POTOMAC RIVER** – Southern boundary is a line parallel to the power lines at Moss Point, running from (38-31.52N, 077-15.28W) to (38-33.0N, 077-16.47W). Northern boundary is the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (38-47.57N, 077.02.37W). Orders issued by Auxiliary **Division 25.**

**AOR 19 – UPPER CRISFIELD** – Northern boundary is a line from (38-23.8N, 076-17.0W) southwesterly to (38-22.0N, 076-20.0W). Western boundary is a line from (38-22.0N, 076-20.0W), southerly to the midpoint of the western boundary of Crisfield (38-00.50N, 076-13.6W). Southern boundary is a line from the midpoint of the western boundary of Crisfield (38-00.50N, 076-13.6W) to the northwest tip of Smith Island (38-02.19N, 076-02.67W) to the mouth of the northern tip of the Big Annemessex River (38-03.63N, 075-52.53W). This includes the Nanticoke River to Seaford, Delaware; the Wicomico River to Salisbury, Maryland; and the Manokin River to its head. Orders issued by **Division 12.**

**AOR 20 – LOWER CRISFIELD** – Northern boundary is a line from the midpoint of the western boundary of Crisfield (38-00.50N, 076-13.6W) to the northwest tip of Smith Island (38-02.19N, 076-02.67W) and then to the mouth of the Big Annemessex River northern tip (38-03.63N, 075-52.53W). Western boundary is a line along the western boundary of Station Crisfield (38-00.50N, 076-52.53W). Southern boundary is a line from (37-39.0N, 076-07.2W). The AOR also includes the Pocomoke River to Snow Hill, Maryland, and the Annemessex River to its head. Orders issued by **Division 12.**

**AOR 21 – WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Southern boundary is the Woodrow Wilson Bridge from (38-47.57N, 077-02.37W) to (38-47.6N, 077-02.37W). Northern boundary is the Chain Bridge (38-00.77N, 077-07.0W) and the Whitney Young Memorial Bridge (38-53.38N, 076-057.92W). Orders issued by Auxiliary **Division 25.**

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

## **Where can I get the most current version of this Abandoned Vessel Program Handbook?**

Call up the AVP website and print out the handbook on your home computer. Since this is a work in progress, we may revise the handbook frequently. Please check periodically to make sure that you have the latest one.

## **What if I find an obviously abandoned vessel tied up to a dock?**

Generally speaking, if a vessel is tied to a dock it is not abandoned under the regulations. If the dock-owner tells you the vessel doesn't belong to him, the state of Maryland will sometimes assist in removal, but the Coast Guard is prohibited from doing that. In such cases, it's not necessary to enter the vessel on the AVP data-base. If a vessel that you've entered previously is tied up to a dock and is submerged, please do not delete it. The Coast Guard still wants it kept in the database.

## **What if I find an abandoned vessel that is leaking gasoline, diesel fuel, or some other substance?**

Immediately call the **Sector Baltimore Command Center at 410-576-2525** to report your findings and await further instructions.

## **What if I find an abandoned vessel that looks like it is interfering with waterway navigation or may do so in the near future?**

If it appears to be an immediate threat to navigation, contact the **Sector Baltimore Command Center at 410-576-2525** and ask the duty officer to contact the Waterways Management Division.

## **How many photos should I take, and what resolution and format should they be?**

JPEG formats are the easiest for the AVP program to handle, but any format will be acceptable. If you use a format other than JPEG, please note that in the message that you send accompanying the photos. If possible, please send medium resolution images (under 500K). More detailed instructions and help will be on the website.

**Questions?** Contact Phil Wentz, assistant district staff officer for operations, ADSO-OP (SB), at 301-518-4131 or [wentzpj\\_1@verizon.net](mailto:wentzpj_1@verizon.net).