



## NOAA Small Boat Summit – Summary September 12-14, 2017 Boulder, CO



NOAA Small Boat Summit participants, September 14-16, 2017 at the NOAA David Skaggs Research Center in Boulder, CO

The NOAA Small Boat Summit was held September 12-14, 2017 at the NOAA David Skaggs Research Center in Boulder, CO. The purpose of the Small Boat Summit was to roll out the NOAA Small Boat Standard and Procedure Manual 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (SBS&PM) as well as create a venue to promote communication and partnerships between the NOAA Small Boat Program (SBP), Vessel Program Coordinators (VPC) and Vessel Operations Coordinators (VOCs) across all NOAA Line/Staff Offices, with the end goal of creating a more cohesive NOAA Small Boat Community. The Summit approach was to establish a clear understanding of the new procedures and standards in the Manual followed up with in depth discussions in smaller breakout groups. Additional topics provided by the community were addressed in Community Forum Sessions.

A total of sixty-five NOAA personnel attended the summit, including the Small Boat Safety Board, Small Boat Program Office, Vessel Program Coordinators, Vessel Operations Coordinators, and waterfront personnel from all Line Offices. Keynote speakers were: Dr David Quivey, Director, NOAA Environmental, Safety and Sustainability Office; and Mr Gary Reisner, Deputy Assistant Administrator, OMAO.

RADM Score authorized a six month phase-in timeline for compliance with the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the SBS&PM. All small boats must be in compliance no later than January 2018.



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The following bullets highlight the major and minor changes related to the SBS&PM roll out.

New sections or section of significant changes:

- **Section 5:** Procedure for Risk Analysis and Management – changes how risk assessment is accomplished (Baseline, Mission and GAR vs. previously Annual and GAR)
- **Section 9:** New Section on Stability, Design and Construction
- **Section 10:** Lifesaving Equipment and Small Boat Equipment Requirements - major re-writes due to a paradigm shift
- **Section 11:** Emergency readiness - major re-writes due to change in policies
- **Section 16:** New Section on Maintenance Plan
- **Section 17:** Accident and Damage Reporting – added new accident and damage reporting tables with outlining categories that align with the NOAA Safety and Environmental Compliance Office reporting requirements.
- **Section 19:** Rigging and Proof Testing – new testing and logging requirements for rigging equipment.

Minor changes and refinements within each section:

- Defined applicability of this Manual(1.02)
  - NOAA owned and operated
  - NOAA owned and operated by others
  - NOAA Operators of private / commercial boats
  - NOAA Operators of other agency / institution boats
- Removed “Passenger” as a category of embarked persons on small boats
- Added VPC roles and responsibilities and expanded on VOC roles and responsibilities (2.02)
- New minimum age requirement (3.04)
- Included foreign nationals and controlled technologies policies (3.05)
- Included harassment policies (3.07)
- Included medical and fitness considerations (3.10)
- Included a waiver process (3.12)
- Defined “Active and Inactive” boats (4.02)
- New three year refresher requirement for PQS (6.02)
- New crewmember PQS requirement and documentation (6.03)
- Included advanced and continued training recommendation (6.06)
- Included definition to work day, watch and rest requirements (7.05)
- Included additional Float Plan detail (8.01)
- New log book / trip report requirements (8.9)
- New small boat pre-acquisition process (12.01)
- Removed requirement for standardized hull and equipment colors
- Simplified ASBE for non-motorized / portable outboards boats (14.)



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- Added authorized deviations for Class III and SRV (14.03)
- New environmental compliance requirements (15)

Changes made in order to streamline the manual:

- Moved reference material to website
- Minimized external references
- Shifted from prescriptive requirements to risk based process
- Provided guidance that allows for customized content (Section 11 and Section 16)

Other topics discussed (not related to the SBS&PM roll out) during the Summit were:

- Inspection Findings
- Metrics
- Critical Element for VOC performance plans
- Community forum sessions discussed with the entire group: “How to create one NOAA Group” and “Funding, Cost of Compliance, Cost of Maintenance.”

Based on VOC feedback, the three day summit was a success and listed below are several key areas for future focus:

- Content suggestions for improvement and clarification of the SBS&PM.
- Networking and a desire for more was a critical element of the Summit.
- Breakout sessions proved valuable and there is a want for more with a variety of areas in the next Summit.
- A change of format to a workshop focused Summit instead of a conference, more presentations by both internal and external subject matter experts (SMEs) and programs.

Action items and next steps:

- The Board to send out a memo with wording clarification for Section 11: Emergency readiness.
- The small boat community to send feedback on how the Manual rolls out with operators.
- Initiative for collecting meaningful metrics to demonstrate the impact of small boats within NOAA

Throughout the summit, the importance of metrics for the program and organization were instilled. The 2017 Small Boat Summit summary is posted on the [Summit 2017](#) page of the Small Boat Program website. You can also find all the presentations, supporting documents, and a compilation of the post summit feedback attendees submitted.