

BoatUS® Press Room

July 31, 2015

NEWS from BoatUS

Boat Owners Association of The United States

880 S. Pickett St., Alexandria, VA 22304

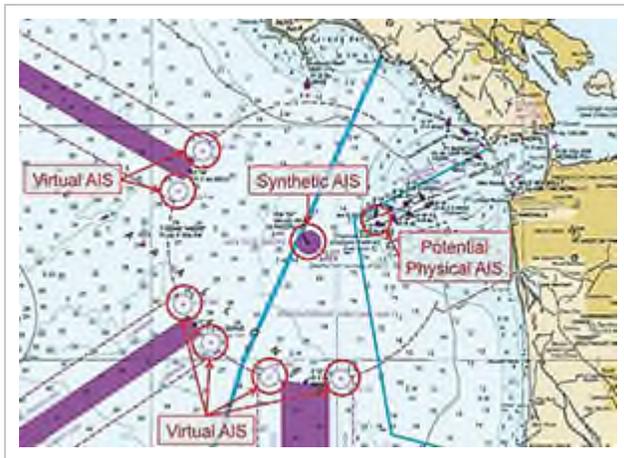
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Going "Virtual": How Do You Want Your Aids to Navigation?

US Coast Guard Wants to Hear from Boaters with 25-Question Survey



Six electronic buoys or "eATONs" now mark ship-traffic lanes outside San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge.

signposts mark the ship-traffic lanes outside the Golden Gate Bridge. The eATONs are only "visible" to vessels equipped with Automatic Identification System (AIS) technology that's currently found on large commercial vessels and a small portion of recreational boats.

Said BoatUS President Margaret Podlich, "Although the US Coast Guard recently had 12 public listening sessions, recreational boaters did not attend in large numbers. As a result, the agency now has an online survey to capture our viewpoints, and it's in every boater's interest to speak up."

"Unlike commercial vessels, recreational boats are much less likely to have sophisticated electronics needed to access some of the newer proposed systems, such as virtual buoys projected on electronic charts," said Podlich in testimony to the US House of Representatives subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation.

ALEXANDRIA, Va., July 31, 2015 – For recreational boaters, the waterway signposts known as aids to navigation are critical for a safe journey. But what if an aid to navigation (ATON) such as a floating buoy marking the edge a deep-water channel could only be seen on an electronic screen and not by the naked eye? Will recreational boaters benefit from these new "eATONs"? That's the question the US Coast Guard wants to find out with a 25-question online survey at www.surveymonkey.com/s/21stCenturyWaterways. A full look at the issue is found in the August/September issue of BoatUS Magazine at BoatUS.com/virtualnavigation.

On March 12, 2014 the USCG began operating 25 fully functioning "virtual" and "synthetic" eATONs in San Francisco waters with a goal to improved safety and efficiency. Some of these electronic waterway

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"There's still a significant need for the tried-and-true physical ATONs in areas where boaters operate, such as shallow-draft harbors and channels."

Boaters are encouraged to take the short survey before the end of the year.

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About Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS):

BoatUS is the nation's largest organization of recreational boaters with over a half million members. We are the boat owners' voice on Capitol Hill and fight for their rights. We help ensure a roadside breakdown doesn't end a boating or fishing trip before it begins, and on the water, we bring boaters safely back to the launch ramp or dock when their boat won't, day or night. The BoatUS Insurance Program gives boat owners the specialized coverage and superior service they need, and we help keep boaters safe and our waters clean with assistance from the non-profit BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water. Visit BoatUS.com.

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