



---

# Virtual United States Coast Guard Standard Operating Procedures

vuscg.sop.002

Last Revision: 07/28/08

## Table of Contents

<b>Section I. Communications.....</b>	<b>3</b>
A. Callsign Assignment and Usage.....	3
B. AOL Instant Messenger.....	4
C. Voice Communications (ATC & TeamSpeak).....	4
D. NATCOM and Radio Guard.....	5
<b>Section II. General Flight Simulator Configuration and Operations.....</b>	<b>7</b>
A. Configurations.....	7
B. VATSIM Flights.....	7
<b>Section III. Aircraft Usage.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Section IV. Special Operations.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Section IV. Forms.....</b>	<b>9</b>
A. PIREPS.....	9
B. SAR Mission Reports and Notice of Casualty Location.....	9
<b>Section V. Fixed-Wing and Rotary-Wing Operations.....</b>	<b>9</b>
A. Fixed-Wing Aircraft Equipment Drops.....	9
B. Rotart-Wing Surface Vessel Basket Hoist Operations.....	11

## Section I. Communications

### A. Callsign Assignment and Usage

1. All VUSCG active members will be given a three digit identifier. Then, depending on which District they are stationed at, their callsign will start with the letters "CG", followed by the district identifier digit, followed by their three digit ID Number (i.e. CG1234)
2. Reservist will be issued an ID number with the prefix "CGR" followed by their district and a two digit ID number (i.e. CGR152)
3. The member's unique three digit number (two digit number for reservist) will always remain the same. Only the district designation will change in the event of a district transfer.
4. District Commanders will always have the CG#001 designation where the # depends on their district. District Chiefs of Staff will have the CG#002 designation.
5. Trainees will be issued a temporary ID number, with a prefix of "CGA", followed by a unique two digit number and a suffix of "A" (i.e. CGA12A). Upon successful completion of the training program, and assignment to a district, the member will be issued a new ID number as described in A.1. above.
6. Members of the national command will be given a two digit identifier only good for that position. If the member moves out of the national command, he/she will be issued a new number.
7. Numbers shall be issued as follows:

Commandant: CG-01  
Chief Administrative Law Judge: CG-01J  
Vice Commandant: CG-02  
vUSCG Chief of Staff: CG-03  
Atlantic Area Commander: CG-04  
Pacific Area Commander: CG-05  
Personnel Director: CG-06  
Training Director: CG-07  
vUSCG Reserves Director: CG-08  
Engineering Director: CG-09  
Public Affairs Director: CG-10  
District 1: 1xxx  
District 5: 5xxx  
District 7: xxx  
District 8: 8xxx  
District 9: 9xxx  
District 11: 2xxx

District 13: 3xxx  
District 14: 4xxx  
District 17: 6xxx

B. AOL Instant Messenger

1. All members of the vUSCG shall have an AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) account and screen name.
2. Screen names shall be in the format of "vUSCG", their district, first initial and last name (i.e. vUSCG5JSmith).
3. Anytime the member is flying for the vUSCG on VATSIM and/or any time the member is available for tasking, he/she shall be logged into their AIM account under their vUSCG screen name.
4. Anytime a member is logged into AIM, but is not flying or available for tasking, shall set their away icon.
5. AIM shall be used in the event of a loss of voice communication and/or for secure communications.

C. Voice Communications (ATC & TeamSpeak)

1. Communications with online ATC takes precedence over any VUSCG communications within the Class A, B, C or D controlled airspace.
2. All VUSCG assets shall tune to and monitor local ATC frequencies prior to departing any VUSCG Air Station, CG Station, airfield or cutter.
3. All VUSCG assets shall contact the appropriate ATC service while enroute.
4. The primary source for all voice communications shall be done on Team Speak. In the event the primary source fails, Roger Wilco shall be used.
  - Teamspeak Server - 67.19.163.180:8987
  - Roger Wilco - rw.liveatc.net/vuscg
5. Default channel for communications during flights is the NATCOM/VUSCG default channel.
6. Other TS channels include:
  - Pilot's Ready Room: for pre and post flight briefings.
  - Pilot's Lounge: for general discussions
  - NATCOM LANT: for NATCOM operations in the Atlantic Region
  - NATCOM PAC: for NATCOM operations in the Pacific Region

- vUSCG HQ: password protected channel for Commandant, Vice Commandant, LANTCOM & PACCOM
- DCO Secure: password protected channel for DCOs.
- District Channels: for district meetings and operations
- HITRON: password protected channel for HITRON operations and trainings
- Training Admin: password protected channel for training administration
- Training 1 & 2: for training communications. Used in lieu of NATCOM/VUSCG default channel during times of high traffic, so as not to tie up the channel.

7. Additional channels may be set up as needed for special joint operations.

#### D. NATCOM/Radio Guard

1. Only individuals authorized by an Area Commander, the Vice Commandant or the Commandant are authorized to provide NATCOM services.
2. All assets are required to communicate on TeamSpeak when flying. *NOTE: ATC communications take precedence over vUSCG communications.* Units shall be in contact with NATCOM, or, if NATCOM is not on-line, the unit shall provide radio calls to "Coast Guard Traffic".
3. When contacting NATCOM, make an initial call (i.e. "NATCOM, this is Coast Guard 1234") prior to advising your traffic. This will ensure that NATCOM is receiving your transmission and is ready to write down any information you have.
4. Speak slowly and clearly; imagine you are having to write down everything you are saying.
5. Initiating Radio Guard
  - a. All vUSCG assets are required to initiate radio guard and provide position/status reports (whether NATCOM is on-line or not).
  - b. Assets are to contact NATCOM or "Coast Guard Traffic" once airborne with the following information:
    - Time of takeoff
    - Departure airport
    - Aircraft type
    - Number of persons onboard
    - Mission and/or destination, including route
  - c. Example:

"Coast Guard Traffic, Coast Guard 1234 off of CGAS Elizabeth City at 1932z. Aircraft type is an HC-130 with 7 persons on board. Destination is CGAS Mobile. Transporting HH-65 aircraft parts. Initiating Radio Guard at this time."

## 6. Position/Status Reports

a. Once airborne, rotary-winged (helos) and single engine aircraft are required to give position/status reports every 15 minutes. Fixed wing/multi-engine aircraft are required to give reports every 30 minutes. The NATCOM operator may require more stringent or lenient reporting times as they deem necessary.

b. Reports should include the following information:

- Unit being called (NATCOM or "Coast Guard Traffic")
- Callsign
- Flight Status (default is "Ops Normal". When on scene of an incident, or conducting a search leg, give that information in lieu of Ops Normal).Departure airport.
- Position (reported as lat/long or distance to nearest landmark such as a VOR, NDB, airport, etc.).
- Current heading

c. Example:

"NATCOM, this is Coast Guard 1234, with a position report."

*Await response from NATCOM*

"NATCOM, Coast Guard 1234, flight ops. normal, current position 32 degrees, 34 decimal 82 North, 80 degrees, 01 decimal 12 West; heading two seven zero degrees. Over."

## 7. Terminating Radio Guard

a. Once the asset has landed, is on the pad, and is shut down, he/she shall contact NATCOM or "Coast Guard Traffic" to secure their Radio Guard.

b. Example:

"NATCOM, this is Coast Guard 1234". *Await response*

"NATCOM, Coast Guard 1234 is on the ground at CGAS Mobile, request you secure my radio guard at this time."

## Section II. General Flight Simulator Configurations and Operations

### A. Configurations

1. "Unlimited Fuel" should be turned off.
2. Crash Detection shall be turned off, to allow for landing on buildings and cutters.
3. Multiplayer should be set to 5nm range for marine units (including distressed vessels), 10nm for rotor aircraft, and 20nm for fixed aircraft.
4. TCAS may NOT be used until the vessel in distress has been visualized and may NEVER be used by a vessel in distress.

### B. VATSIM Flights

1. Every effort should be made to conduct all vUSCG flights on VATSIM.
2. Connection to the VATSIM network will be done with FSInn.
3. All aircraft are expected to follow all FAR and VATSIM regulations. At no time is a member permitted to deviate, interpret, modify, etc., any clearance, directive, or valid order. vUSCG aircraft fall under normal regulations like any other aircraft when outside military ranges or operating areas. There will be no exceptions.
4. At no time is a vUSCG aircraft to exceed the posted speed restrictions of 250 knots under 10,000 ft unless more than 20 miles offshore.
5. As per VATSIM and FARs formation flights are allowed under the following conditions:
  - a. All pilots in the formation agree to the formation flight
  - b. The flight leader will be the only aircraft to activate the Mode C transponder. All other aircraft will remain in standby. All pilots will monitor the same ATC frequency, and all pilots will follow the instructions given to the flight leader by the ATC.
  - c. All pilots within the formation are responsible for the safety of the other pilots and aircraft, maintaining a safe distance from other aircraft, and maintaining control of their aircraft.
6. The vUSCG does not promote or practice the simulation of any emergency of vUSCG aircraft, including, but not limited to, in-

flight emergencies, mechanical failures, control surface failures, electrical failures, etc.

7. Simulated emergencies may be conducted during flight training. These simulated emergencies will only be conducted with the approval of the Training Director and/or the Assistant Training Director, and under the supervision of the flight instructor.
8. At no time are vUSCG aircraft and their crews allowed to operate from any unsafe location. It is understood that many times rescue and drug interdiction operations require aircraft to operate in areas outside an airfield, and all steps will be taken to avoid damage to the aircraft.

### **Section III. Aircraft Usage.**

1. Aircraft displayed in the VUSCG Museum are not be used during normal operations, these aircraft are used during displays and other special events.
2. Whenever possible, vUSCG airmen are asked to use vUSCG aircraft such as the HC-130H and the HU-25 Guardian for the purposes of moving between air stations, and those hours may be recorded for vUSCG hours.
3. Coast Guard One and Coast Guard Two are only to be flown as directed or requested in the communications forum. It is not to be used for regular patrols.
4. vUSCG airmen should, as much as possible, use vUSCG assets to fly between air stations. However, airman may also utilize commercial air carriers to facilitate the quick relocation of airmen.
5. vUSCG airmen may use any VA-type aircraft they choose which is appropriate for the airport size and the distance traveled. Flight time in these aircraft, however, may not be recorded with the vUSCG.
6. All VUSCG flights should set their transponders to 1277 when transiting to and from a SAR case and while on station. Usage of the 1277 squawk code does NOT give a VUSCG priority unless permitted by the local ATC agency. If requested by ATC, you must reset your transponder to that which ATC has assigned.

### **Section III. Special Operations**

1. Unless specified otherwise, special Operations, such, but not limited to the IIP and HITRON shall be handled at the district level. District Commanders shall appoint individuals to oversee these operations.
2. Individuals in charge of these special operations shall report directly to the District Chief of Staff.

### **Section IV. Forms**

#### **A. PIREPS**

1. Anytime work (either administrative or flight operations) is conducted on behalf of the vUSCG, it shall be recorded in a PIREP.
2. Only approved flights in vUSCG aircraft shall be eligible for documentation.
3. NATCOM and Administrative tasks (such as personnel work, web design, meetings, etc.) may also be logged in a PIREP.
4. Refer to the vUSCG Regulations and By-laws, Section V.A for more information on the required number of PIREPS.

#### **B. SAR Mission Reports and Notice of Casualty Location**

1. District Commanders shall be responsible for providing their aircrews with a blank SAR Mission Report (SMR) and Notice of Casualty Location (NOCL) form upon reporting for duty.
2. After completion of a SAR mission, the On Scene Coordinator (OSC) shall complete the SMR. If only one asset was used during the SAR Mission, that aircrew shall complete the report.
3. Use of the NOCL shall be used to report the condition of any recovered victims.
4. The SMR will then be sent to the District Commander, who will then forward to Area Commander for tracking.

### **Section V. Fixed-Wing and Rotary-Wing Operations**

#### **A. Fixed Wing Aircraft Equipment Drops (HU-25 Guardian, C-130 Hercules)**

The following is a checklist that will be followed when conducting equipment drop operations between a fixed-wing asset and a surface

vessel. Ensure that the checklist is followed in order, in detail and no steps are skipped. This is will provide for a safe and successful basket hoist or retrieval. The steps, in brief are as follows:

1. Make radio contact with vessel that will be involved with the package drop.
2. Keep the vessel informed of what you plan to do in each step of the drop sequence.
3. Tell the vessel that you will first over fly them and determine their exact position.
4. Get a current wind direction and instruct the vessel to turn into the wind and give them the heading that you have for the wind direction. Have them turn to your wind direction heading if they are getting a different weather update.
5. Make an over fly of the vessel and determine the exact location and mark a fix on your FSNAV GPS. Ask the vessel to confirm that they saw you over fly to make sure you have the correct vessel.
6. Advise the ship that you will circle around and approach them from the stern and you will keep them advised of your distance.
7. Advise the vessel to be prepared for a package drop behind them and then a trail line will fall over their vessel which they can use to pull in the package. If the trail line does not fall exactly on their boat they may need to retrieve it with a hook. Package should land as close as 20 feet from rear of vessel, but no more than 100 feet from the stern of the vessel. Trail line is expected to deploy and land on top of the vessel. Larger heavier packages should be dropped further back from the vessel between 50 and 100 feet away.
8. Advise the vessel to maintain given heading and to keep speed at 10 Kts or below.
9. Make a wide circle around the vessel and setup at a point behind the vessel at about 5 NM.
10. Position your aircraft and begin to fly an approach to the vessel by flying the same heading the vessel is on, and approach the stern of the vessel. Recommended drop altitude is 300 feet.
11. Give call outs as "seconds till drop" to the vessel as you approach them.
12. When you are directly overhead have your crewmen follow package push out procedure and contact the vessel by saying "DROP, DROP, DROP" at the exact time that the package leaves the aircraft.
13. Circle back around and verify via radio that the vessel is able to retrieve the package. If not, you may need to circle

around the area and help them locate the exact the location of it if the drop was not successfully made directly behind them.

#### B. Rotary-Wing Surface Vessel Basket Hoist Operations Procedure

The following is a checklist that will be followed when conducting basket hoist operations between a helo and a surface vessel. Ensure that the checklist is followed in order, in detail and no steps are skipped. This is will provide for a safe and successful basket hoist or retrieval. The steps, in brief are as follows:

1. Helo makes contact with the surface vessel.
2. Helo determines approach method, then determines the delivery method, each based on the current weather conditions, sea state, winds, vessel type and condition of the vessel.
3. Helo and surface vessel execute the safety/emergency briefing.
4. Commence drop / retrieval.

This should be conducted as an exercise as often as practicable with a variety of surface vessels, as it is done in the real Coast Guard. This is a standard operation that is preformed and it is expected that all of the vUSCG helo pilots will become proficient at executing this operation. The proper usage of autopilot and auto-hover are both essential and crucial to successfully completing this operation.