



NOAA OFFICE OF COAST SURVEY Navigation Response Teams

Rapid maritime response

NOAA navigation response teams (NRT) respond to the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Captain of the Port (COTP), maritime pilots, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE), and regional port authority requests for surveys to locate and identify obstructions and/or evidence of shoaling. The NRTs conduct hydrographic surveys of main shipping channels (approaches, shore-to-shore, and pier faces). They are used to assist reopening shipping lanes after major hurricanes and for checking the positions of fixed and floating aids-to-navigation. When not engaged in emergency responses, the NRTs work under NOAA's charting mission, providing data for updates to NOAA's suite of nautical charts.

Response assets and capabilities

- 30-foot trailerable survey boat with three-person survey team and two government vehicles
- Search and recovery support with side scan sonar
- Differential GPS positioning
- In-house survey planning/design, data collection, post processing, constituent products, and reporting
- Meets NOAA and IHO survey specifications

Requirements

- Lodging or access to lodging for three personnel
- Access to fuel (gasoline - approximately 80 gallons/day/team for survey operations and transportation)
- Food supplies/meals for three personnel throughout duration of response



- Secure storage for aluminum boat trailer - 39-foot LOA (USCG base preferred)
- Secure parking for 2 government vehicles - Suburban and one-ton pickup (USCG base preferred)
- Access to boat ramp or secure in-water dockage for 30-foot survey launch
- Shore side power requirements: 125v (50a or 30a) - *optional*
- Office space for processing/plotting - *optional*
- Highway patrol or other law enforcement escort, depending on traffic conditions
- Includes access to emergency fuel sites en route – as needed



Limitations

- Limited to two to three foot sea state
- Side scan sonar and multibeam echo sounder affected by sea state, turbidity, thermocline and halocline
- Vulnerable to surface road conditions and ingress routes
- Requires access to fuel, lodging, and food
- NRT mobilization time is generally within 24 - 48 hours (road conditions may affect response times)

Initiating a rapid maritime response

Requests for a NRT response should originate from the USCG COPT, state pilot association, or USACE office. The written request must be submitted through the regional NOAA navigation manager to the chief, NOAA Navigation Response Branch. The survey request shall: 1) identify areas needing sonar/hydrographic survey; 2) define the deliverable products desired; 3) identify the mission objective(s),

including order of priority if multiple areas are included in the request. The request must also identify any HAZMAT known to exist in the area.

The chief, NOAA Navigation Response Branch, will evaluate the request. Once the chief authorizes the response, further coordination between NOAA and the requesting entity will establish time lines, local contacts, chains of authority and any other logistical requirements. Depending on the nature of the response, the NOAA navigation manager may travel to the site to serve as the NOAA liaison/ NOAA response coordinator under the direction of the USCG on-scene commander. Funding of a NRT deployment is generally covered under NOAA/NRB's base funding and does not require funding support of the requesting federal or state agency. However, there are existing pre-scripted mission assignments (PSMA) on file with FEMA (NOAA-10).

Location of navigation response team assets

