



## U.S. Coast Guard Sector Maryland-NCR

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### MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN 10-25

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#### Autonomous Unmanned Vessel or Craft Operations

Sector Maryland-National Capital Region is issuing this Marine Safety Information Bulletin to bring awareness to autonomous unmanned vessel or craft operating in the upper Chesapeake Bay.

The Chesapeake Bay provides an ideal environment for testing and operations of unmanned autonomous vessels or craft. Federal and State agencies, educational institutions, and technology developers are utilizing these vessels for activities such as surveying, communications, and environmental assessments.

While these vessels represent a relatively new type of operation, their increasing presence and diversity of form, shape, and function adds complexity for other waterway users in the area. All mariners, vessel owners and operators should take the following precautions when planning an outing or transit in the area:

Stay Informed: Autonomous unmanned vessel or craft deployment and operations are communicated through the U.S. Coast Guard and made available to the public via the following communication means:



Broadcast Notice to Mariners (BNM) on VHF Channel 16

BNM textual format:

<https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/broadcast-notice-to-mariners>

Fifth District Local Notice to Mariners (LNM):

<https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/local-notices-to-mariners-main>

Subscribe to receive BNMs and/or LNMs weekly via email:

<https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/subscribe-email-rss-feeds>

Maintain Navigational Awareness: Autonomous unmanned vessel or craft can operate on the surface, underwater, or both and their capabilities vary significantly in autonomy, anti-collision capability, and maneuverability. Mariners should consider these as potential hazards to navigation and make all possible attempts to keep clear.

Identifiers for Autonomous Vessels or Craft: Although not mandatory, common identifiers of autonomous unmanned vessels or craft may include:

- Flashing white or yellow light
- Retro-reflective markings
- Markings indicated UNMANNED
- Yellow, orange, or gray paint schemes
- Radar reflector and/or Automatic Identification System (AIS)

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact LCDR Kate Newkirk at (410) 365-8141.

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