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## Chapter 3 Flags, Signs, Insignia, and Markings

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**Introduction** This chapter describes flags, signs, insignia, and markings authorized for use by the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

**In this Chapter** This chapter contains the following sections:

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## Section A. Flags

**Introduction** This section describes the flags authorized for Auxiliary use.

**A.1. Authorization** U.S.C. 891 authorizes Auxiliary flags. District Materials Centers and the Auxiliary Center (AUXCEN) stock the flags described in this section. Auxiliarists may purchase these flags through their FSO-MA.

**A.2. National Ensign** The following policy applies when flying the National Ensign:

- All surface facilities underway must fly the National Ensign.
- While there is no law against flying the National Ensign at night, it is customary to fly it only between sunrise and sunset when not underway.
- All facilities must fly the National Ensign whenever the Auxiliary Ensign is flown.
- The National Ensign must be about one inch on the fly for each foot of overall boat length. **Table 3-1** provides standard National Ensign sizes relative to boat length.
- Auxiliarists must never display the National Ensign upside down on Auxiliary facilities. This is not a recognized international distress signal because the flags of many nations appear the same when flown upside down.

**Table 3-1  
Recommended Flag Sizes**

Vessel Length (Feet)	National Ensign (Inches)	Auxiliary & Patrol Ensigns (Inches)
14 – 18	12 x 24	9 x 15.5 (#5)
18 – 24	16 x 24	12 x 21 (#4)
24 – 30	20 x 30	15 x 24 (#3)
30 – 36	24 x 36	24 x 36 (#2)
Over 36	30 x 48	30 x 48 (#1)

**A.3. Coast Guard Ensign** A surface facility must fly the Coast Guard Ensign when assigned to duty and there is a Coast Guard officer or petty officer aboard on official duty. Auxiliarists must not fly it when the Coast Guard personnel are onboard for a social event, personnel or logistics transportation, area familiarization, or similar activities. Auxiliary surface facilities must only fly the National Ensign and the Coast Guard Ensign in the above situations. They must strike all other flags, pennants, burgees, etc.



#### A.4. Union Jack

The union jack is a flag composed of white stars on a blue field of the National Ensign. Only government vessels that are commissioned vessels may fly the union jack. When assigned to duty, an Auxiliary facility becomes a government vessel, however, it is not a commissioned vessel. The union jack may not be displayed from an Auxiliary surface facility at any time.

#### A.5. Auxiliary Ensign

The Auxiliary Ensign (**Figure 3-1**), also called the “Blue Ensign,” has a blue field and white slash, on which is the Auxiliary emblem. The following policy applies when flying the Auxiliary Ensign:

- Auxiliarists may fly the Auxiliary Ensign, but only on inspected surface facilities and non-operational facilities that display a current facility decal. Those Auxiliarists may fly the Auxiliary Ensign day and night. However, while underway, an Auxiliarist must be onboard when flying the Auxiliary Ensign.
- Auxiliarists must fly the Auxiliary Ensign from the main truck, if the boat has a mast. If there is no mast, Auxiliarists may fly the Auxiliary Ensign from the bow staff, or, if equipped with a radio antenna, from the antenna at a point approximately two-thirds the height of the antenna. Auxiliarists must never fly the Auxiliary Ensign at the stern, so as not to confuse it as a flag of nationality.
- **Table 3-1** provides the proper Auxiliary Ensign size in relation to boat length. Auxiliary Ensigns are available from the Auxiliary Center (AUXCEN) or District Material Centers in five standard sizes. Dimensions of the Auxiliary Ensign flying on a boat may not exceed those of the National Ensign flown at the same time.



**Figure 3-1**  
**Auxiliary Ensign**



### A.6. Auxiliary Patrol Ensign

The Auxiliary Patrol Ensign (**Figure 3-2**) is a modification of the Auxiliary Ensign, established to promote recognition during operational activities. The Patrol Ensign field is white with an Auxiliary emblem centered on a broad diagonal Coast Guard red stripe. The stripe has two narrow stripes to the right or left, first a white stripe and then a Coast Guard blue stripe. The following policy applies when flying the Auxiliary Patrol Ensign:

- Auxiliarists may fly the Auxiliary Patrol Ensign only when on inspected vessel facilities that display the current facility decal. The Ensign may be flown day or night, but only when the facility is assigned to duty. Auxiliarists must fly the Patrol Ensign in the same manner as, and in place of, the Auxiliary (blue) Ensign.
- Boats must display the largest practical size using the recommendations from **Table 3-1**. Patrol Ensigns are available from the Auxiliary Center (AUXCEN) and District Materials Center in five sizes. An Auxiliarist may not fly a Patrol Ensign on a boat if its dimensions exceed the dimensions of the National Ensign flown on the same boat.
- When operating under orders, Auxiliarists may fly the Auxiliary Patrol Ensign and National Ensign, plus one leader's flag. See *paragraph A.7* of this section for restrictions on flying flags.



**Figure 3-2**  
**Auxiliary Patrol Ensign**



**A.7. Auxiliary Leader Flags**

Only inspected and approved surface facilities and non-operational facilities may fly elected or appointed leader pennants and past leader’s burgees. Auxiliarists may fly these flags day and night when the leader is aboard.

- A vessel facility must not display more than one leader’s flag, pennant, or past leader’s burgee. If an incumbent leader and past leader (of the same position level) are onboard a facility, the coxswain must fly the incumbent leader’s flag or pennant rather than the past leader’s burgee. However, if a senior leader is onboard as a visitor, it is a courtesy to display the flag of the senior leader, whether it is a flag, pennant, or burgee. Past leaders may fly the burgee of the highest office held, or the flag or pennant of the present office.
- Auxiliarists must fly a pennant or burgee from the starboard yardarm, if the boat has yardarms (spreaders). If the boat has a mast, but no yardarms (such as a power boat’s mast), Auxiliarists may fly the Auxiliary Ensign from the truck of the mast and the leader’s pennant or burgee from the bow staff. If the boat does not have a mast, an Auxiliarist may fly the pennant or burgee instead of the Auxiliary Ensign from the bow staff.
- A vessel facility assigned to duty may fly only a leader’s flag, pennant or burgee, and the National and Patrol Ensigns. The coxswain must remove all other flags, yacht Ensigns, U.S. Power Squadron Ensigns, yacht club burgees, squadron pennants, windsocks, or like items.
- Auxiliary leaders, past or present, may not fly their flags, pennants, or burgees on land.

**A.8. Auxiliary Ensign Displayed by Coast Guard Units**

Coast Guard units may and should display the blue Auxiliary Ensign to emphasize the Commandant’s “Coast Guard Forces” concept. Coast Guard units may fly the Auxiliary Ensign whether or not an Auxiliarist is onboard. Display shall be in accordance with normal flag protocol.

**A.9. Auxiliary Ensign Displayed by Auxiliary Land Facilities**

Currently, certified Auxiliary land facilities may display the blue Auxiliary Ensign at their base location. The Ensign may only be displayed during the time that the location or facility is in service.

**A.10. Flag Display**

**Table 3-2** summarizes Auxiliary surface facilities and their requisite flag display rules. **Figure 3-3** and **Figure 3-4** show the proper display of flags on Auxiliary surface facilities and non-operational facilities.



**Table 3-2  
Summary of Flag Display By Auxiliary Surface Facilities**

	<b>National Ensign</b>	<b>Coast Guard Ensign</b>	<b>Auxiliary Ensign</b>	<b>Auxiliary Patrol Ensign</b>	<b>Auxiliary Leader</b>
<b>Not Under Orders</b>	Optional	No	Optional w/ National Ensign	No	Optional w/ National Ensign
<b>Assigned to Duty</b>	Yes	No	No	Yes	Optional
<b>Ordered Coast Guard Aboard</b>	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Ref Section</b>	A.2	A.3	A.5	A.6	A.7
<b>Use Notes</b>	A.11		A.12	A.13	A.14

**A.11. National Ensign Notes**

All surface facilities and non-operational facilities must fly the National Ensign whenever the Auxiliary Ensign is flown.

**A.11.a. Power Boats**

The National Ensign is flown aboard power boats from the stern staff except when it has a gaff, in which case the Ensign must fly from the stern staff at anchor and the gaff when underway.

**A.11.b. Sailboats**

The National Ensign is flown aboard sailboats from the stern staff while underway or at anchor. It may optionally fly, when under sail, from peak of aftermast sail on a gaff-rigged boat, or from two-thirds up the leech of aftermost sail on a Marconi rigged boat (**Figure 3-3, Configuration B**).

**A.12. Auxiliary Ensign Notes**

The Auxiliary Ensign will be flown onboard surface facilities and non-operational facilities as follows:

**A.12.a. Power Boats**

The Auxiliary Ensign is flown aboard power boats:

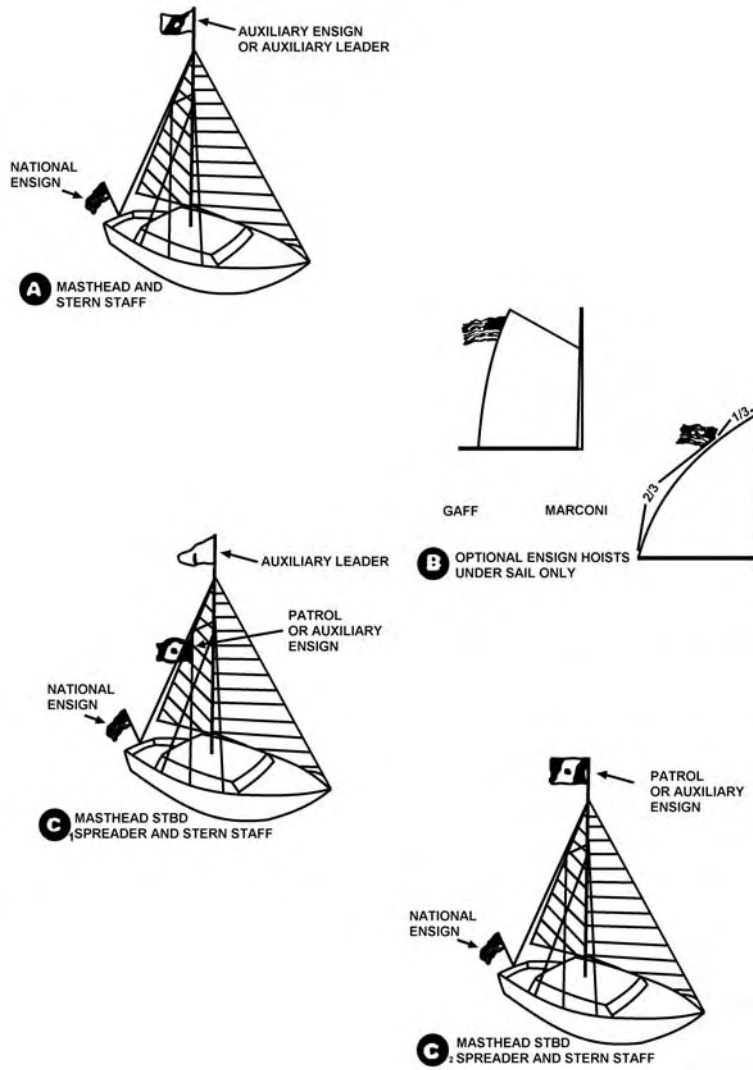
- From the main truck when boat has a mast(s).
- Without a mast, from the bow staff (**Figure 3-4, Configuration A**).
- (Optional) Without a mast, but with a radio antenna, display the Auxiliary Ensign from the antenna. The uppermost portion of the Ensign must be put at a point about two-thirds the way up the antenna (**Figure 3-4, Configurations B and F**).



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A.12.b. Sailboats	<p>The Auxiliary Ensign is flown aboard sailboats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At mainmast head of catboat, cutter, sloop, ketch, or yawl; foremost masthead of a schooner.</li><li>• At the principal starboard spreader/shroud when Auxiliary leader flag/pennant/burgee is at masthead/shroud (<b>Figure 3-3, Configurations A and E<sub>1</sub></b>).</li></ul>
<b>A.13. Auxiliary Patrol Ensign Notes</b>	<p>The Auxiliary Patrol Ensign will be flown in place of the Auxiliary (blue) Ensign when assigned to duty.</p>
<b>A.14. Auxiliary Leader Flag Notes</b>	<p>A surface facility assigned to duty may fly an Auxiliary leader's flag, pennant, or burgee (see <i>Figure 11-6</i> of the <i>Auxiliary Manual</i>, COMDTINST M16790.1 (series)), in addition to the national and Patrol Ensigns as follows:</p>
A.14.a. Power Boats	<p>An Auxiliary Leader's flag, pennant, or burgee is flown aboard power boats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• From starboard yardarm when boat has yardarms (spreaders). If the boat has a mast but no yardarms (such as a power boat's radar mast), fly the Auxiliary Ensign from the truck of the mast and the leader's flag, pennant, or burgee from the bow staff (<b>Figure 3-4, Configuration D</b>).</li><li>• With one flag, pennant, or burgee at any one time.</li></ul>
A.14.b. Sailboats	<p>An Auxiliary Leader's flag, pennant, or burgee is flown aboard sailboats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At masthead of boat without spreader halyard instead of Auxiliary Ensign (<b>Figure 3-3, Configuration A</b>).</li><li>• At masthead of single-masted boat when Auxiliary Ensign is at starboard spreader or shroud (<b>Figure 3-3, Configuration C<sub>1</sub></b>).</li><li>• At aftermost masthead of multi-masted boat when Auxiliary Ensign is carried on foremost masthead (<b>Figure 3-3, Configuration E<sub>2</sub></b>).</li><li>• On port/starboard spreader/shroud under Auxiliary Ensign when electronic equipment at masthead (<b>Figure 3-3, Configurations D<sub>1</sub> and D<sub>2</sub></b>).</li></ul>

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**Figure 3-3**  
**Sailboat Flag Display**

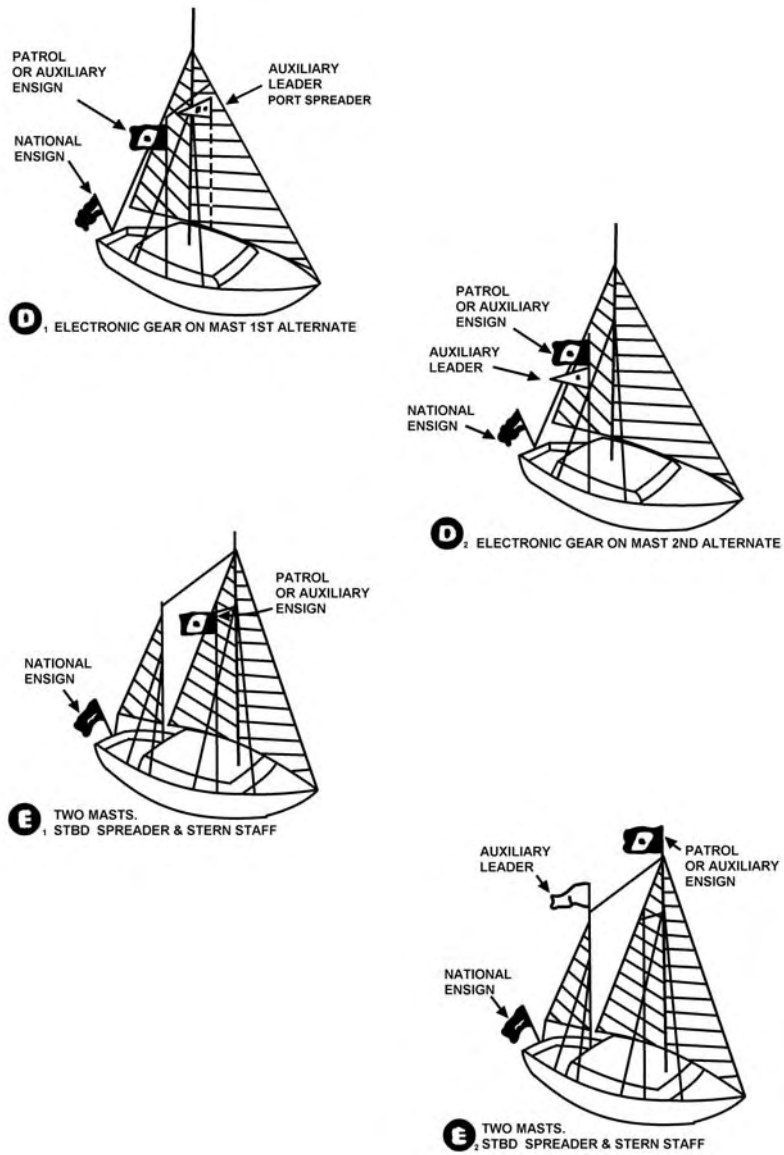
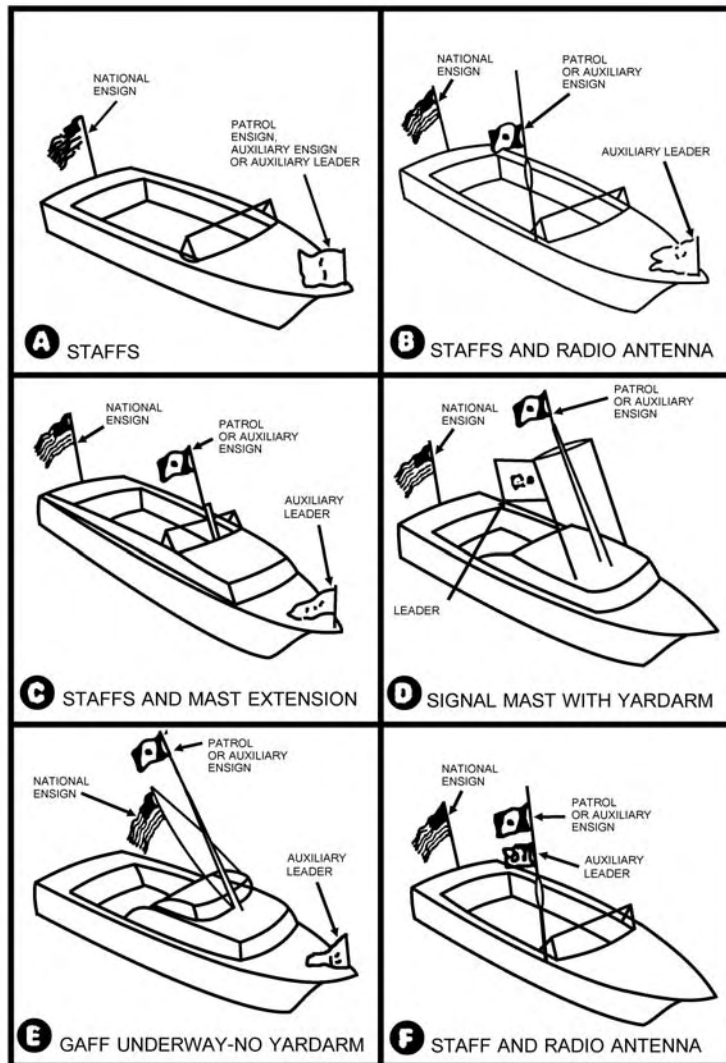


Figure 3-3  
Sailboat Flag Display - Continued



**Figure 3-4**  
**Powerboat Flag Display**



## Chapter 3 – Flags, Signs, Insignia, and Markings



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## Section B. Patrol Signs

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### Introduction

This section describes the patrol signs authorized for Auxiliary use.

### B.1. Surface Facility Patrol Signs

Auxiliarists operating Auxiliary surface facilities on patrol must prominently display the patrol signs shown in **Figure 3-5**. These signs must be visible on both sides of the facility. A facility must not display patrol signs while it is not assigned to duty. If a facility is on ordered patrols for consecutive days, patrol signs may remain displayed during periods of non-use.



Starboard Side



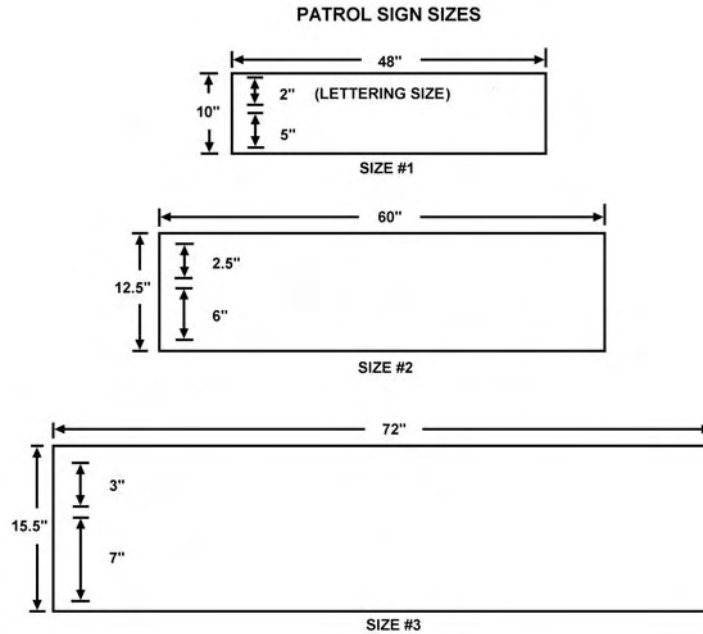
Port Side

**Figure 3-5**  
Auxiliary Facility Patrol Signs



B.1.a. Sizes

Patrol signs are available in three sizes. **Figure 3-6** provides the approximate dimensions and **Table 3-3** provides the recommended sign size for the corresponding facility length.



**Figure 3-6**  
**Auxiliary Facility Patrol Sign Dimensions**

**Table 3-3**  
**Auxiliary Facility Patrol Sign Sizes**

Facility Length, Overall	14' – 24'	20' – 30'	Over 30'
Recommended	#1	#2	#3

B.1.b. Lettering  
Color

Patrol sign lettering must be black or dark blue. A similarly colored sign border or oversized mounting board is optional.

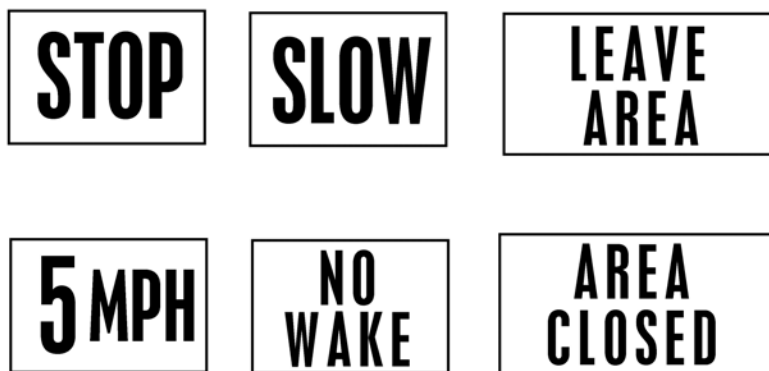


**B.1.c. Optional Stern Patrol Sign Board** Auxiliary surface facilities assigned to duty may carry and display a stern patrol sign board. This option is only for boats with sterns of adequate size. Auxiliarists may use either a port or starboard sign board in the stern position (stripe going in either direction). The optional stern sign board must be the same size or smaller than the required port and starboard sign boards.

**B.1.d. Director Authorization** Directors may authorize appropriate placement and size of sign boards on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, the Director may approve modifications to signs, but only after review of the submitted specifications.

**B.1.e. Exemptions** PWCs and special purpose facilities are exempt from the provisions of this section.

**B.2. Vessel Control Signs** Auxiliary facilities conducting regatta patrols are encouraged to carry and use control signs. Auxiliarists may construct or purchase control signs (**Figure 3-7**). Control signs must have solid black (or dark blue) block letters (minimum 4 inches in height) on a yellow, orange, or red background. For further information, see *Auxiliary Special Course Patrols (AUXPAT) Instructor Text*, COMDTPUB P16794.27 (series).



**Figure 3-7  
Control Signs**

**B.3. Mobile Unit Patrol Signs** Operators of Auxiliary land mobile radio units may display the Auxiliary land mobile radio unit patrol signs. These signs are made with plastic magnetic tape and similar in design to the Auxiliary facility patrol signs in **Figure 3-5**. The following policy applies:

- Auxiliarists may only display mobile unit patrol signs while assigned to duty.
- Auxiliarists must only use the manufactured patrol signs, which are available from the Auxiliary National Supply Center (ANSC). No substitutes are acceptable.
- Auxiliarists may not permanently affix a patrol sign to their personal vehicle.
- Auxiliarists must place patrol signs on the upper half of the front doors on both sides of the vehicle, as much as the vehicle design will permit.



**B.4. Commercial  
Advertisements/  
Identification**

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Commercial advertisement signs on any facility may not be visible while under patrol orders.

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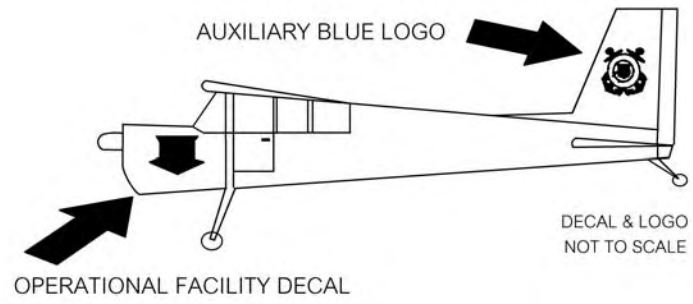

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## Section C. Decal Insignia

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<b>Introduction</b>	Facilities may display only the decal insignia and markings authorized below and only on those specific facility types listed.
<b>C.1. Surface Facilities</b>	Auxiliary surface facilities must display the facility decal insignia with the operational wreath and may display the Operational Excellence Decal if awarded.
C.1.a. Facility Decal and Wreath	The facility decal and wreath must be displayed on the port side of the boat. They must be visible when meeting other boats in the typical “port to port” situation. The wreath must be positioned immediately underneath the facility decal causing them to blend together. Auxiliarists may not display a VSC decal on any Auxiliary facility.
C.1.b. Operational Excellence Decal	The Operational Excellence (“E”) decal is awarded to those surface facilities that have demonstrated their operational excellence level in accordance with the <i>Coast Guard Auxiliary Operational Excellence Program</i> , COMDTINST 16794.4 (series). The decal will be displayed on the port side forward window, just aft of the operational decal and wreath if possible. For vessels with no port side window, the E-decal may be displayed on the port side of the operating console, above the viewing line of the vessel’s gunwale.
<b>C.2. Non-Operational Facilities</b>	Auxiliary non-operational facilities must display only the facility decal insignia, without the operational wreath. The decal must be displayed on the port side of the boat. It must be visible when meeting other boats in the typical “port to port” situation. Auxiliarists may not display a VSC decal on any Auxiliary non-operational facility.
<b>C.3. Special Purpose Facilities</b>	Special purpose facilities may display a VSC decal but are not authorized to display a surface facility or non-operational facility decal.
<b>C.4. Radios</b>	Auxiliary radio facilities may only display the miniature decal (see <i>paragraph B.4 of Annex 4</i> ).
<b>C.5. Aircraft</b>	Display of the Auxiliary decal must be in conformance with the following guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The facility decal and wreath must be displayed on the port side of the aircraft fuselage, forward of the pilot’s door or wing (see <b>Figure 3-8</b>).</li> <li>• Since an aircraft does not lend itself to the flying of the Auxiliary Ensign, owners may place the Auxiliary blue logo decal on the aircraft.</li> <li>• Auxiliarists must only place this logo on both sides of the vertical stabilizer (outside of the stabilizer for twin-tail aircraft) or on both sides of the fuselage, aft of the wing.</li> <li>• The Auxiliary blue logo must not be in both positions (see <b>Figure 3-8</b>).</li> </ul>

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**Figure 3-8**  
**Aircraft Operational Facility Decal**



## Section D. Air to Surface Marking and Coast Guard Identification Insignia

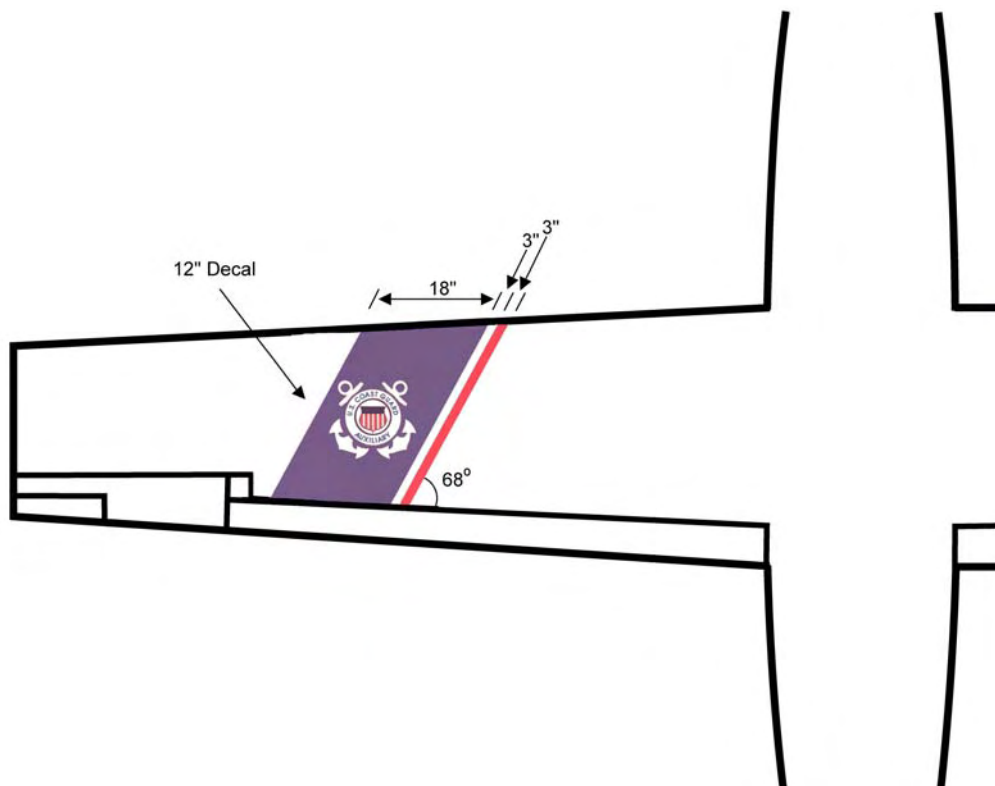
**Introduction** This section describes authorized air to surface marking and Coast Guard identification insignia.

**D.1. Air to Surface Marking** To provide easier identification of Auxiliary aircraft from the surface, owners may place the word “RESCUE” or “PATROL” on the underside of the wing or fuselage. In lieu of the words “RESCUE” or “PATROL”, Auxiliary air facilities may be marked with an Auxiliary stripe and 12-inch Auxiliary logo decal using the dimensions provided in **Figure 3-9**. The placement shall be under the wing as shown in **Figure 3-10**.

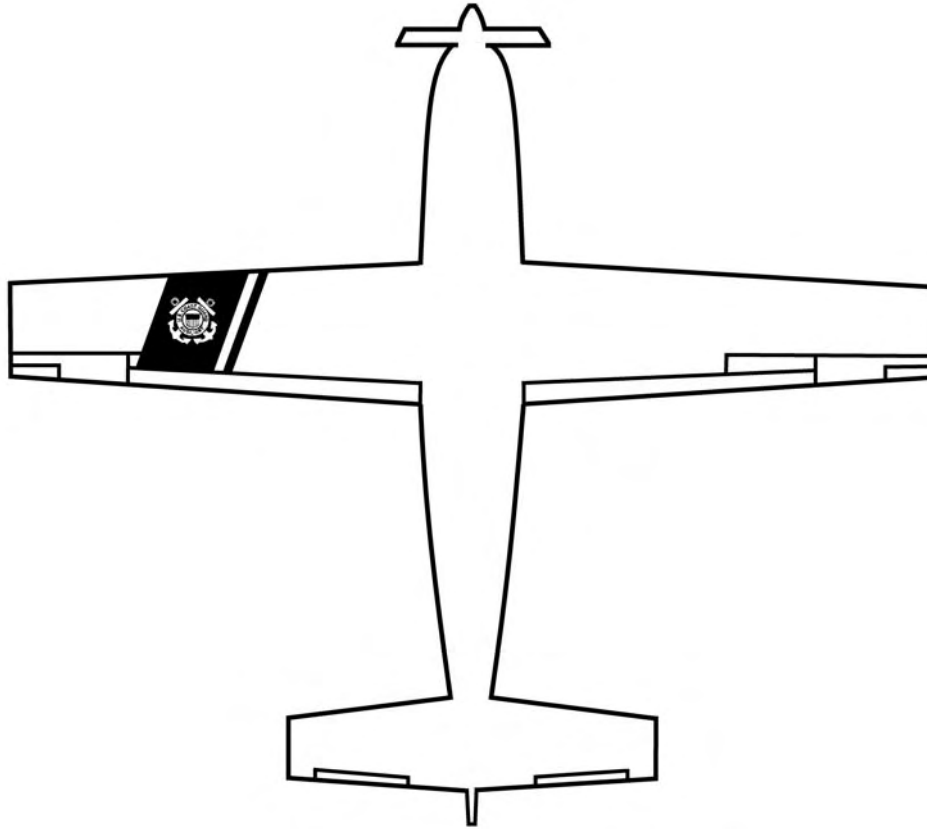
The Coast Guard color numbers are as follows:

- Wide Stripe - CG Blue 15182
- Narrow Stripe - CG Red 12199
- Separator - CG White 17925

Colors are found in the *Coatings and Color Manual*, COMDTINST M10360.3 (series).



**Figure 3-9**  
**Auxiliary Aircraft Marking Dimensions**



**Figure 3-10**  
**Auxiliary Aircraft Marking Placement**

**D.2. Coast  
Guard  
Identification  
Insignia**

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Auxiliarists, individuals, or groups may not use the Coast Guard’s well known stripe (properly known as the Coast Guard Identification Insignia) without prior authorization from the Commandant. The Coast Guard stripe is for identifying Coast Guard boats, cutters, aircrafts, and units. The Coast Guard also uses it on semi-official and official publications, stationery, etc., and on such items as authorized Coast Guard jewelry.

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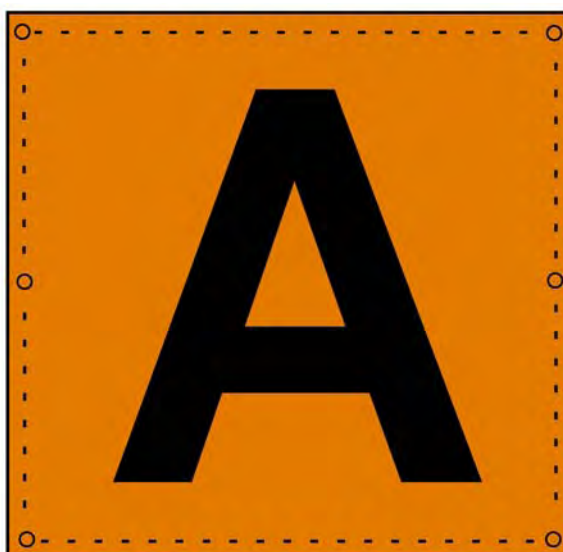
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## Section E. Surface to Air Recognition Banner

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**Introduction** This section describes the purpose, use, and construction of the surface to air recognition banner.

**E.1. Purpose** To provide the best view for and identification from other surface locations, coxswains must display Auxiliary Ensigns, flags, lights, and patrol signs in a vertical plane. However, identification of an Auxiliary surface facility by an aircraft is difficult. This is due to the limited time, near vertical viewing angle, and altitude restrictions an aircraft has available. Using the surface to air recognition banner (**Figure 3-11**) in a horizontal plane will help air crewmembers identify an Auxiliary facility.



**Figure 3-11**  
**Surface to Air Recognition Banner**

**E.2. Use** Auxiliarists may display the surface to air recognition banner in the following manner:

- Use it only on a surface facility that is assigned to duty.
- Do not permanently affix the banner to any facility.
- Use the banner as an optional display.
- Display the banner in a horizontal plane, on the fore-deck, pilothouse, or bimini top. The base of the “A” must be towards the stern of the boat.



**E.3.  
Construction**

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Auxiliarists may make a surface to air recognition banner under the following guidelines:

- The banner must be 36 inches by 36 inches in size. Use a larger banner only if adequate display area is available on the facility.
  - Make the banner using nylon, hemmed edges, and grommets for fastening banner to display location.
  - Sew on the letter “A” (for better durability) or use the silk screening process.
  - Use international orange color for the background and black for the letter “A”. The “A” must be 80% of the banner’s height.
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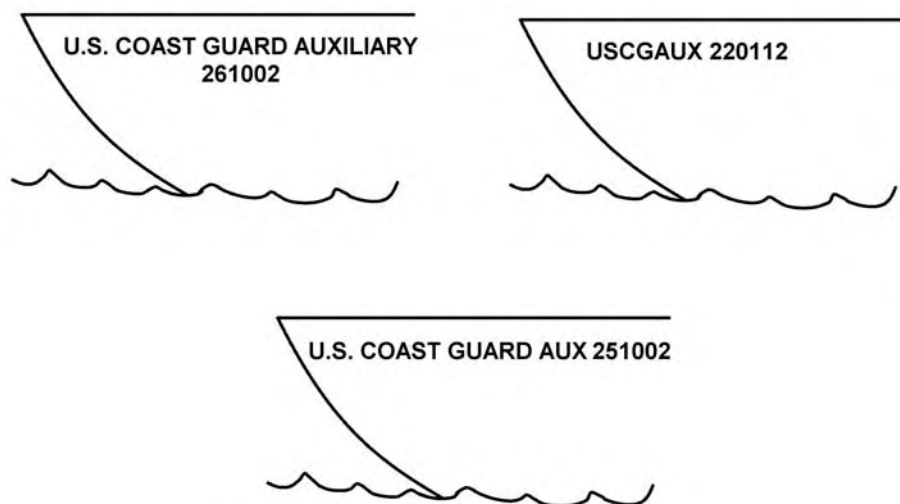

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## Section F. Auxiliary Markings

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**Introduction** This section describes the requirements for Auxiliary unit vessels and vehicle markings.

**F.1. Mandatory Markings** In addition to complying with flag and sign provisions in this chapter, Auxiliary unit vessels owned by the unit shall be marked on each side of the hull (and, if feasible, marked on the transom) with the words “U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY”, “U.S. COAST GUARD AUX”, or “USCGAUX”. The facility call sign, required to be issued by the Director of Auxiliary in accordance with the provisions of *paragraph F.4 of Chapter 1*, shall be placed directly below the Auxiliary markings, if space permits. Otherwise, the number should be placed aft of the Auxiliary markings so as not to be confused with state registration numbers. The letters and numbers shall be affixed to the vessel and be “block type, 4 inches in height, and either white or black (contrasting to the hull color). (see **Figure 3-12**)



**Figure 3-12**  
**Auxiliary Unit Vessel Call Sign Display**

**F.2. Optional Markings** Auxiliary unit vessels may display a Coast Guard Auxiliary identification insignia consisting of a broad diagonal blue stripe followed towards the stern by two narrow stripes, first white then red. The Auxiliary emblem shall be centered within the confines of the broad blue diagonal stripe.

**F.3. Coast Guard Owned and Commercially Maintained Boats** The Coast Guard markings on Coast Guard owned boats, authorized by Commandant (G-OCS) to be specifically made available for Auxiliary use, must be replaced with Auxiliary markings in accordance with this chapter.

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#### **F.4. Vehicle Markings**

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Law enforcement lights may not be mounted or used in any way on a vehicle engaged in Auxiliary activities. Public safety lights may not be energized while engaged in Auxiliary activities. Law enforcement or public safety identifying stripes or markings may not be displayed while assigned to duty.

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