

Guidelines on How to Handle MARB's & Come-Upon's

MARB's:

If you hear a Marine Assistance Request Broadcast (MARB) and you are on patrol in or near vessel's reported position, you should not go to scene or contact vessel on your own, since the Coast Guard has strict procedures for use of MARB's and that must be followed.

However, if you find that you're close to scene described in MARB, you may call Sector Command Center by cellphone, tell them your position and inform them that you are prepared to go to scene if they deem it appropriate. If Command Center asks you to do so, you should survey scene and report back to watchstander. You should not regard this as a come-upon, where you are free to take vessel in tow.

Come-Upon's:

1. **If you come upon a boat that's in trouble, you should ask skipper:**
 - what problem is
 - whether there are any medical emergencies
 - how many persons are onboard
 - whether (1) Coast Guard or (2) a commercial towing service has been contacted.
 - If ANSWER IS YES, you must stand by until Coast Guard or towing company boat arrives; you may not take boat in tow unless told to do so by Coast Guard or situation deteriorates.
 - If ANSWER IS NO, notify controlling station (by cellphone) & Sector Command (usually done by controlling station) that you are taking disabled boat in tow.
2. **If you cannot reach your controlling station, call Sector Command Center yourself at 410-576-2525. Make sure Sector Command takes down:**
 - name of your vessel
 - call-sign number
 - location
 - plans
 - name & description of boat being towed
 - name of disabled vessel's captain
3. **Ask station or Command Center to provide a case number by time you finish tow.**
4. **Disabled vessel may only be towed to nearest safe haven. Usually defined as a marina that will:**
 - accept vessel for safe mooring and
 - has means of communication available for vessel's captain or crew (normally a telephone)
5. **If you're ever in doubt or want to clarify a situation, call Command Center directly. The watchstanders there are expert in Coast Guard and Auxiliary procedures and deal with such situations every day. They can help you make correct decision.**