Marine Safety Information Bulletin
Southwest District

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NOTICE OF UNMANNED MARITIME SYSTEM OPERATIONS IN USCG SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Autonomous and Unmanned Maritime System (UMS) operations are increasingly common throughout the Coast Guard's Southwest District Area of Responsibility. These activities may include autonomous or remotely operated surface and underwater vessels conducting testing, research, survey work, security operations, national defense support, and other uses.

This MSIB requests and encourages UMS operators to provide the Coast Guard advance notice of planned operations within the Southwest District. Early notice improves Coast Guard and mariner awareness and supports safe UMS integration into the regional marine transportation system. Operators should become familiar with CG-5P Work Instruction (WI) 5P-WI-002(1), Oversight of Unmanned, Autonomous, and Remote-Control Operations, dated 1 June 2026, which outlines information the Coast Guard may request to understand a planned UMS operation, or "Concept of Operation." The WI is available on the U.S. Coast Guard website by searching "5P-WI-002(1)."

Operators are asked to provide notification at least 14 days before planned or recurring operations. The information detailed in the above Work Instruction should be submitted to the applicable Captain of the Port, and also the Southwest District Local Notice to Mariners by emailing CGDSW-LNM@uscg.mil.

Southwest District Local Notice to Mariners will, at minimum, need the following information to adequately advise the public of the planned operation:

- Operator/company and primary and emergency Point of Contact information
- UMS description, identifiers, communications capabilities, and operating mode
- Operating dates, times, area, activity, escort status, and number of UMS
- Recovery procedures and navigation-impacting circumstances

UMS operators remain responsible for complying with all applicable statutes and regulations, including International and Inland Navigation Rules. Submission of a notification does not constitute Coast Guard approval, authorization, certification, or a Letter of No Objection. This MSIB does not create new regulatory requirements nor relieve any owner or operator of their navigation responsibilities.

Questions may be directed to the Southwest District Waterways Management Branch at CGDSW-DPW@uscg.mil.

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Commander, Southwest Coast Guard District

This release has been issued for public information and notification purposes only.