

33 USC 892a: Functions of the Administrator

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From Title 33-NAVIGATION AND NAVIGABLE WATERS

CHAPTER 17-NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

SUBCHAPTER IV-NOAA HYDROGRAPHIC SERVICES

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§892a. Functions of the Administrator

(a) Responsibilities

To fulfill the data gathering and dissemination duties of the Administration under the Coast and Geodetic Survey Act, promote safe, efficient and environmentally sound marine transportation, and otherwise fulfill the purposes of this subchapter, the Administrator shall-

- (1) acquire and disseminate hydrographic data and provide hydrographic services;
- (2) promulgate standards for hydrographic data used by the Administration in providing hydrographic services;
- (3) promulgate standards for hydrographic services provided by the Administration;
- (4) ensure comprehensive geographic coverage of hydrographic services, in cooperation with other appropriate Federal agencies;
- (5) maintain a national database of hydrographic data, in cooperation with other appropriate Federal agencies;
- (6) provide hydrographic services in uniform, easily accessible formats;
- (7) participate in the development of, and implement for the United States in cooperation with other appropriate Federal agencies, international standards for hydrographic data and hydrographic services; and
- (8) to the greatest extent practicable and cost-effective, fulfill the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (6) through contracts or other agreements with private sector entities.

(b) Authorities

To fulfill the data gathering and dissemination duties of the Administration under the Coast and Geodetic Survey Act, promote precision navigation, safe, efficient, and environmentally sound marine transportation, and otherwise fulfill the purposes of this subchapter, subject to the availability of appropriations, the Administrator-

- (1) may procure, lease, evaluate, test, develop, and operate vessels, equipment, and technologies necessary to ensure safe navigation and maintain operational expertise in hydrographic data acquisition and hydrographic services;
- (2) shall, subject to the availability of appropriations, design, install, maintain, and operate real-time hydrographic monitoring systems and hydrodynamic forecast models to enhance navigation safety and efficiency and provide foundational information and services required to support coastal resilience planning for coastal transportation and other infrastructure, coastal protection and restoration projects, and related activities;
- (3) where appropriate and to the extent that it does not detract from the promotion of safe and efficient navigation, may acquire hydrographic data and provide hydrographic services to support the conservation and management of coastal and ocean resources;
- (4) where appropriate, may acquire hydrographic data and provide hydrographic services to save and protect life and property and support the resumption of commerce in response to emergencies, natural and man-made disasters, and homeland security and maritime domain awareness needs, including obtaining mission assignments (as defined in section 741 of title 6);
- (5) may create, support, and maintain such joint centers with other Federal agencies and other entities as the Administrator deems appropriate or necessary to carry out the purposes of this subchapter; and
- (6) notwithstanding the existence of such joint centers, shall award contracts for the acquisition of hydrographic data in accordance with chapter 11 of title 40.

(c) Conservation and management of coastal and ocean resources

Where appropriate and to the extent that it does not detract from the promotion of safe and efficient navigation, the Secretary may use hydrographic data and services to support the conservation and management of coastal and ocean resources.

(Pub. L. 105-384, title III, §303, Nov. 13, 1998, 112 Stat. 3454 ; Pub. L. 107-372, title I, §103, Dec. 19, 2002, 116 Stat. 3079 ; Pub. L. 110-386, §3, Oct. 10, 2008, 122 Stat. 4107 ; Pub. L. 117-263, div. J, title CIII, §10308(b), Dec. 23, 2022, 136 Stat. 3980 ; Pub. L. 119-60, div. G, title LXXVII, §7701(h), Dec. 18, 2025, 139 Stat. 1836 .)

AMENDMENTS

2025-Subsecs. (a), (b). Pub. L. 119–60, §7701(h)(1), (2)(A), in introductory provisions, made technical amendment to reference in original act which appears in text as reference to "this subchapter", requiring no change in text.

Subsec. (b)(6). Pub. L. 119–60, §7701(h)(2)(B), substituted "chapter 11" for "subchapter VI of chapter 10".

2022-Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 117–263, §10308(b)(1), inserted "precision navigation," after "promote" in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 117–263, §10308(b)(2), inserted "and hydrodynamic forecast models" after "monitoring systems" and "and provide foundational information and services required to support coastal resilience planning for coastal transportation and other infrastructure, coastal protection and restoration projects, and related activities" after "efficiency" and struck out "and" after semicolon at end.

2008-Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 110–386, §3(1), substituted "the Coast and Geodetic Survey Act, promote safe, efficient and environmentally sound marine transportation, and otherwise fulfill the purposes of this subchapter," for "the Act of 1947," in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 110–386, §3(2), substituted "data and provide hydrographic services;" for "data;".

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 110–386, §3(3), added subsec. (b) and struck out former subsec. (b) which related to actions of Administrator to fulfill data gathering and dissemination duties of the Administration under the Act of 1947.

2002-Subsec. (b)(4). Pub. L. 107–372, §103(a), amended par. (4) generally. Prior to amendment, par. (4) read as follows: "may design and install where appropriate Physical Oceanographic Real-Time Systems to enhance navigation safety and efficiency."

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 107–372, §103(b), added subsec. (c).

STATUTORY NOTES AND RELATED SUBSIDIARIES

CHARTING AND SURVEY SERVICES

Pub. L. 116–259, [title V, §501, Dec. 23, 2020](#), 134 Stat. 1178 , provided that:

"(a) IN GENERAL.-Not later than 270 days after the development of the strategy required by section 1002(b) of the Frank LoBiondo Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2018 [Pub. L. 115–282] (33 U.S.C. 892a note), the Secretary of Commerce shall enter into not fewer than 2 multi-year contracts with 1 or more private entities for the performance of charting and survey services by vessels.

"(b) CHARTING AND SURVEYS IN THE ARCTIC.-In soliciting and engaging the services of vessels under subsection (a), the Secretary shall particularly emphasize the need for charting and surveys in the Arctic."

SYSTEM FOR TRACKING AND REPORTING ALL-INCLUSIVE COST OF HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEYS

Pub. L. 115–282, [title X, §1002, Dec. 4, 2018](#), 132 Stat. 4365 , provided that:

"(a) IN GENERAL.-Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act [Dec. 4, 2018], the Secretary of Commerce shall-

"(1) develop and implement a system to track and report the full cost to the Department of Commerce of hydrographic data collection, including costs relating to vessel acquisition, vessel repair, and administration of contracts to procure data;

"(2) evaluate measures for comparing cost per unit effort in addition to measures of cost per nautical square mile; and

"(3) submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report on which additional measures for comparing cost per unit effort the Secretary intends to use and the rationale for such use.

"(b) DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGY FOR INCREASED CONTRACTING WITH NONGOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES FOR HYDROGRAPHIC DATA COLLECTION.-Not later than 180 days after the date on which the Secretary completes the activities required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall develop a strategy for how the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will increase contracting with nongovernmental entities for hydrographic data collection in a manner that is consistent with the requirements of the Ocean and Coastal Mapping Integration Act ([subtitle B of title XII of] Public Law 111–11; 33 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.)."

HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY

Pub. L. 106–541, [title V, §554, Dec. 11, 2000](#), 114 Stat. 2679 , provided that: "The Secretary [of the Army] shall enter into an agreement with the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-

"(1) to require the Secretary, not later than 60 days after the Corps of Engineers completes a project involving dredging of a channel, to provide data to the Administration in a standard digital format on the results of a hydrographic survey of the channel conducted by the Corps of Engineers; and

"(2) to require the Administrator to provide the final charts with respect to the project to the Secretary in digital format, at no charge, for the purpose of enhancing the mission of the Corps of Engineers of maintaining Federal navigation projects."