

	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	NOAA Administrative Order 201-116B	
	NOAA ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER SERIES	DATE OF ISSUANCE January 11, 2023	EFFECTIVE DATE February 21, 2023
	SUBJECT Policy for Naming NOAA Ships		

SECTION 1. PURPOSE.

This Order establishes policy for naming National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) ships.

SECTION 2. SCOPE.

- .01 This Order applies to all NOAA ships. This Order does not require that previously named NOAA ships be renamed.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS.

- .01 NOAA Ships. NOAA ships are those vessels greater than or equal to 300 gross tons that are owned by NOAA and operated by the NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO).

SECTION 4. POLICY.

- .01 NOAA ships will be named for missions, environmental phenomena, myths or traditions, geographical features, former decommissioned ships crewed by personnel of NOAA or its predecessor agencies, or deceased individuals that have made significant, uncontested contributions to NOAA or its predecessor agencies.
- a. For NOAA ships named for missions, the name must reflect some aspect of NOAA's overall mission or mission service areas.
 - b. For NOAA ships named for environmental phenomena, those phenomena may not include any phenomena that have caused major loss of life or property.
 - c. For NOAA ships named for myths or traditions, the mythological or traditional name should be reflective of this Nation's diverse cultural past. The use of a mythological or traditional name will be reviewed by the group (or groups) identified with the myth or tradition.
 - d. For NOAA ships named for geographic features, any geographic features should reflect this Nation's diverse heritage.

- e. For NOAA ships named for former decommissioned ships that were crewed by personnel of NOAA or its predecessor agencies, the newly named ship should perform a mission that is similar in nature to that of the ship being honored.
 - f. For NOAA ships named for deceased individuals that have made significant, uncontested contributions to NOAA or its predecessor agencies, the individuals must be deceased for a sufficient period of time to demonstrate the enduring impact of their significant, uncontested contributions and upstanding character. In order for a deceased individual to qualify as having made “significant, uncontested contributions,” and as demonstrating “upstanding character,” the NOAA Fleet Council (FC) must determine so by unanimous vote. Where possible, the individual’s family and/or estate will be asked to review the use of their name.
- .02 Although this Order is intended to provide a consistent method of naming NOAA ships, the need to make exceptions to the method may occur. In these cases, documentation justifying this exception will be provided to the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere (UNSEC) for final approval.

SECTION 5. RESPONSIBILITIES.

- .01 The NOAA FC serves as the council and authority within NOAA that recommends names for NOAA ships to the UNSEC. The UNSEC has the final approval authority to name NOAA ships that FC recommends. The NOAA ship naming process is as follows:
- a. The NOAA FC Executive Secretary solicits nominations for NOAA ship names from all NOAA Line, Program, and Staff Offices, and individual NOAA employees. The NOAA FC Executive Secretary must allow for at least 12 months between soliciting nominations for NOAA ship names and the anticipated date of the NOAA ship naming dedication ceremony.
 - b. Nominations should be submitted to the NOAA FC Chairperson.
 - c. The NOAA FC Chairperson will delegate all nominations it receives to the Fleet Working Group (FWG) for review.
 - d. The FWG reviews all NOAA ship name nominations and recommends NOAA ship names to the NOAA FC.
 - e. If, after reviewing the FWG’s recommended NOAA ship names, the NOAA FC determines it does not have sufficient information to make a determination about a particular NOAA ship name recommendation, the OMAO Director will designate an individual to conduct research into that name.
 - f. After the NOAA FC gathers all relevant information on the FWG’s recommended NOAA ship names, the NOAA FC meets, reviews, and votes on the NOAA ship name recommendations consistent with the decision-making process described in the NOAA FC’s Terms of Reference.
 - g. The NOAA FC Chairperson submits the NOAA ship name that received the most votes by the NOAA FC to the UNSEC for final approval.

SECTION 6. REFERENCES.

- .01 The NOAA FC's Terms of Reference document is available at:
<https://sites.google.com/noaa.gov/fleet-council/home>

SECTION 7. EFFECT ON OTHER ISSUANCES.

- .01 This Order supersedes NOAA Administrative Order 201-116A, Policy for Naming NOAA Ships, issued June 1, 2017.
- .02 The NOAA Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere signs because there is no delegation of authority for this NAO.

An electronic copy of this Order will be posted in place of the superseded Order on the NOAA Office of the Chief Administrative Officer website under the NOAA Administrative Issuances Section: www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/noaa-administrative-orders



Under Secretary of Commerce
for Oceans and Atmosphere
and NOAA Administrator

Offices of Primary Interest:

- Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO)