

Motor Vehicle Procedure Manual
Vessel Title
State- Assigned Vessel Hull Identification Number

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Legal Authority

Title 33, Part 181, of the code of Federal Regulations mandates the unique identification on all pleasure craft vessel hulls to include a hull identification number. Vessels, manufactured exclusively for commercial purposes are exempt from these federal requirements; however, the manufacturer of such commercial vessels may elect to assign 12-character hull identification numbers. If they do not elect to do so, the state will assign the hull identification number.

Title 33, Part 181, of the code of Federal Regulations mandates that states assign a hull identification number for those vessels that a person builds or imports for their own use and not for the purposes of sale, such as homemade vessels.

Title 33, Part 181.31(b), for boats manufactured outside of the jurisdiction of the United States, a U.S. importer must obtain a manufacturer identification code as required by paragraph (a) of this section. The request must indicate the importer's name and U.S. address along with a list of the manufacturers, their addresses, and the general types and sizes of boats that will be imported.

Section 328.07(1), Florida Statutes, reads: "No person shall operate on the waters of this state a vessel the construction of which began after October 31, 1972, for which the department has issued a certificate of title or which is required by law to be registered, unless the vessel displays the assigned hull identification number affixed by the manufacturer as required by the United States Coast Guard or by the department for a homemade vessel or other vessel for which a hull identification number is not required by the United States Coast Guard. The hull identification number must be carved, burned,

stamped, embossed or otherwise permanently affixed to the outboard side of the transom or, if there is no transom, to the outermost starboard side at the end of the hull that bears the rudder or other steering mechanism, above the waterline of the vessel in such a way that alteration, removal, or replacement would be obvious and evident. The characters of the hull identification number must be no less than 12 in number and no less than one-fourth inch in height."

Description and Use

This procedure is provided to assist employees of the tax collector, license plate agent and the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV) in assigning state vessel hull identification numbers.

Assigning A State Hull Identification Numbers (HIN)

There are many unique situations when a state hull identification number (HIN) must be assigned, they are listed below:

- A. When a customer applies for a certificate of title on a vessel built prior to 1972 that does not have an existing hull identification number, the **customer** must provide an affidavit stating that no hull identification number exists on the vessel.
- B. When a customer submits a certificate of title for transfer with a hull identification number which has less than 12-characters, the model year is 1972 or newer or unknown, and the data base reflects the FL number with no spaces, this indicates that the hull identification number is duplicated with other vessel hull numbers in the database.

Form [HSMV 87183, Certification of Vessel Hull Identification Number](#), the **customer** must provide either a pencil tracing of the hull number or, if the model year is prior to 1972, a pencil tracing is not required.

- C. If the vessel was built prior to November 1, 1972, it is not required to have a 12-digit properly formatted HIN number. However, if the number is duplicated in the Division of Motorist Services (DMS) database, a number may be assigned.
- D. When a vessel is homemade and a vessel inspection has been performed on the vessel by the Florida Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the DMS database will assign the hull number upon application for certificate of title by the **customer**. For instructions on homemade vessels, see Procedure [VSTL-09](#).
- E. Some vessels are not required to have a 12-digit hull identification number:
 - 1. vessels built exclusively for commercial purposes
 - 2. vessels manufactured in another country

3. vessels used for commercial purpose and have weight of 5 net tons or more
 4. vessels built specifically for the U.S. Navy
- F. In the following cases, the tax collector's office should issue a state-assigned hull identification number and advise the customer how to place it on the vessel.:
1. If vessel has been documented with the Coast Guard and is now being titled and registered in Florida.
 2. If the hull ID number is not properly formatted or does not exist.

Miscellaneous Information

- A. To create a state-assigned number when the model year is "unknown," you should enter "00" as the last two digits for the model year. The system will prefill the vessel original title or registration screen with the HIN number. When the maintenance of vehicle screen requires a model year, place an "X" in the "UNKNOWN" block. The system will automatically prefill the model year with 0000, which will print on the title and registration certificate.
- B. When assigning an FLZ (Florida-assigned hull identification number) to a vessel, due to a duplicate HIN number in the system, insure it is not the same vessel and that the vessel owner is applying for a transfer rather than an original title.
- C. It is the customer's responsibility to have the hull identification number clearly imprinted in the transom or on the hull by stamping, impressing or marking with pressure. Or, the hull identification number may be displayed on a plate in a permanent manner.
- D. **A U.S. importer must request and obtain a [manufacturer identification code](#) in writing from the Commandant of United States Coast Guard(CG-BSX-23), Attn: Recreational Boating Product Assurance Branch, U.S. Coast Guard Stop 7501, 2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20593-7501 and indicate the importer's name and U.S. address along with a list of the manufacturers, their addresses, and the general types and sizes of boats that will be imported.**

Hull Identification Numbers Format (See Exhibit A-New format)

- A. Per code of Federal Regulations, hull identification numbers required by §181.23 must consist of twelve characters, uninterrupted by slashes, hyphens or spaces, as follows:
1. The first three characters must be a manufacturer identification code assigned under §181.31(a) or the importer designation assigned under §181.31(b).
 2. Characters four through eight must be a serial number assigned by the manufacturer in letters of the English alphabet, or Arabic numerals, or both, except the letters I, O and Q.

3. Characters nine and ten must indicate the month and year of certification when a date of certification is required. In all other cases, characters nine and ten must indicate the date of manufacture. The date indicated can be no earlier than the date construction or assembly began and no later than the date the boat leaves the place of manufacture or assembly or is imported into the United States for the purposes of sale. Character nine must be indicated using letters of the English alphabet. The first month of the year, January, must be designated by the letter “A”, the second month, February, by the letter “B”, and so on until the last month of the year, December. Character ten must be the last digit of the year of manufacture or certification and must be an Arabic numeral.

Characters eleven and twelve must indicate the model year using Arabic numerals for the last two numbers of the model year such as “82” for 1982 and “83” for 1983.

Revision(s) to Procedure

Added Title 33 181.31(b), “for boats manufactured outside of the jurisdiction of the United States, a U.S. importer must obtain a manufacturer identification code as required by paragraph (a) of this section. The request must indicate the importer's name and U.S. address along with a list of the manufacturers, their addresses, and the general types and sizes of boats that will be imported. Changed “applicant to customer.” Added language to miscellaneous section (D).

9/26/18: Statutory Review, added links to statutes, Historical Revisions section, IV. Hull Identification number Format and Exhibit A.

2/7/14: Clarified on page 2 when the license plate agency should assign a hull identification number.

Hull Identification Formats

NEW FORMAT **BMA 45678 H4 85**

August 1, 1984

Manufacturers
ID Code (MIC)

Production
or Serial #

*Month Year
of Production

Model
Year

**Key to month of production for New Format;*

A - January	D - April	G - July	J - October
B - February	E - May	H - August	K - November
C - March	F - June	I - September	L - December

The **NEW FORMAT** replaced the **STRAIGHT YEAR** and **MODEL YEAR** formats. Although optional as of January 1, 1984, both the **NEW FORMAT** and the confidential HINs were required as of August 1, 1984.

STRAIGHT YEAR **ABC 12345 08 83**

November 1, 1972

Manufacturers
ID Code (MIC)

Production
or Serial #

Month Year
of Production

MODEL YEAR **XYZ 45678 M 84 A**

November 1, 1972

"M" designates
Model Year format

Model
Year

*Month of
Production

**Key to month of production for Model Year format;*

A - August	D - November	G - February	J - May
B - September	E - December	H - March	K - June
C - October	F - January	I - April	L - July

This information is being provided to assist in the identification of stolen boats.

**International Association
of
Marine Investigators, Inc.**



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