
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 13, 2008

PRESS CONTACT: Daniel T. Furlong
(302) 674-2331 x19

U.S. Coast Guard Maritime Safety Proposals

On March 31, 2008, the Department of Homeland Security posted an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) that has the potential to impact certain commercial fishing vessels. The Coast Guard is developing a set of proposed amendments to enhance maritime safety through changes to commercial fishing industry vessel regulations. The proposed changes would add new requirements for vessel stability and watertight integrity, stability training and assessments, vessel maintenance and self-examinations, immersion suits, crew preparedness, safety training, emergency preparation, safety and training personnel, safety equipment, and documentation. Miscellaneous conforming, clarifying, and other administrative changes are also contemplated.

To view the ANPR visit <http://www.regulations.gov> (In the search box type in USCG-2003-16158 proposed rule). You can also secure a copy of the ANPR by: visiting the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's website at <http://www.mafmc.org>; requesting a copy of the ANPR from the Council by calling (302) 674-2331; or, emailing the Council at info@mafmc.org.

Following is the list of the 30 questions included at the end of the Federal Register Notice to which the Coast Guard is requesting public response.

1. Given the statistics on vessel losses in Tables 2 and 3, what issues related to stability and watertight integrity should the Coast Guard consider addressing in regulations?
2. Table 2 shows that vessel flooding results in the most vessel losses, and Table 3 shows that flooding and sinking account for a significant portion of fatalities. What areas should be addressed to reduce vessel flooding losses and fatalities?
3. What routine measures are used to prevent unintentional flooding?
4. How often is your vessel examined by a marine surveyor and under what circumstances? Is documentation of the survey provided?
5. Table 3 shows that fire is a significant cause of vessel losses. What areas should the Coast Guard consider addressing to reduce the number of fire related vessel losses (including, but not limited to: construction standards, detection and extinguishing equipment, fire fighting equipment, and firefighting training)?
6. What means are used to limit the danger of fires and the consequence of fires?
7. Table 2 shows that a significant number of vessel losses are related to allisions, collisions, and groundings; how should the Coast Guard address these causes of vessel losses?
8. What impact has safety training had in improving safety within the commercial fishing industry? Do you have recommendations concerning safety training?
9. What impact has crew drills had in improving safety within the commercial fishing industry? Do you have recommendations concerning crew drills?
10. If training were required would it be accomplished during off-season times?
11. How would additional training impact one's ability to fish?
12. If stability standards for vessels between 50 feet and 79 feet in length are considered, what standards should apply, and to which vessels should the standards apply?

13. How does a crew become experienced in safety procedures?
14. Should entry level crewmembers be expected to have a minimum level of familiarity with safety procedures?
15. How and when is stability guidance used? If stability guidance is available but not used, please explain why.
16. How are operating personnel made aware of stability and watertight integrity guidance?
17. How often should stability guidance be reviewed, updated, or validated?
18. How are modifications to a vessel or its gear accounted for relative to the vessel's maximum load, watertight integrity, and other stability considerations?
19. How adequate are current requirements for personal protection and survival equipment?
20. How do crew members become familiar with vessel safety and survival equipment?
21. How are safety risks aboard your vessel(s) identified and minimized?
22. If you are a small business, what economic impact on you, your business, or your organization would the rules we are considering have? In your comments please explain why, how, and to what degree such rules would have an economic impact.
23. Have you experienced—or are you aware of—any situations where any of the measures under consideration saved lives, or prevented/reduced harm/damage to vessels?
24. Are there areas not addressed that would benefit safety within the commercial fishing industry?
25. What are the costs of each requirement we are considering? Are there comparable alternative solutions to each requirement under consideration that may be more cost effective?
26. What are the direct and indirect costs of each requirement we are considering? For example, labor costs, training costs, and hourly wages of fishermen (or alternative measures of valuing their time if they are not salaried)? The costs of vessel losses, including equipment, lost catches, and any other opportunity costs?
27. Can any of the requirements we are considering be completed offseason? If so, which ones? For those that cannot, how much time would be taken away from productive fishing time to complete the requirement? How would this affect revenue, i.e., fish catches?
28. What would be the impact on the domestic fishing industry, if any, of each requirement we are considering? Would there be a differential impact by size of vessel or region?
29. What would be the economic impact of each requirement we are considering on States, local, and tribal governments?
30. What other requirements, if any, should the Coast Guard be considering?

Comments and related material must reach the Docket Management Facility on or before July 29, 2008. You may submit comments identified by Coast Guard docket number USCG-2003-16158 to the Docket Management Facility at the U.S. Department of Transportation. To avoid duplication, please use only one of the following methods:

- (1) Online: <http://www.regulations.gov>.
- (2) Mail: Docket Management Facility (M-30), U.S. Department of Transportation, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.
- (3) Fax: 202-493-2251.
- (4) Hand deliver: Room W12-140 on the Ground Floor of the West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC, 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is 202-366-9329.

If you have questions on the proposed rule, call M.M. Rosecrans, Chief, Fishing Vessel Safety Division (CG-5433), U.S. Coast Guard, telephone 202-372-1245, or e-mail Michael.m.rosecrans@uscg.mil. If you have questions on viewing or submitting material to the docket, call Ms. Renee V. Wright, Program Manager, Docket Operations, telephone 202-366-9826.