
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Coast Guard****46 CFR Parts 10, 15, 90, 98, 125-134, 170, 174, and 175****[USCG-1999-59511, |****Offshore Supply Vessels****AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DOT.**ACTION:** Notice of meeting; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard announces a public meeting to discuss potential revisions to its Offshore Supply Vessel (OSV) regulations. The meeting will focus on the possible establishment of International Tonnage Convention (ITC) tonnage values for OSVs; additional standards for larger OSV including licensing and manning; and standards for crewboats as a new category of OSVs. The Coast Guard encourages interested persons to participate by providing oral or written comments.**DATES:** The meeting will be held on August 26, 1999 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The meeting may close early if all business is finished. Written comments and related material must reach the Docket Management Facility on or before September 21, 1999.**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held in 12th Floor Conference Room, Room 1242, Eight Coast Guard District Office, Hale Boggs Federal Building, 501 Magazine Street, New Orleans, LA 70130-3396.

You may submit your written comments and related material by one of the following methods:

(1) By mail to the Docket Management Facility, (USCG-1999-4974), U.S. Department of Transportation, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001.

(2) By hand to Room PL-401 on the Plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is 202-366-9329.

(3) By fax to the Docket Management Facility at 202-493-2251.

(4) Electronically through the Web Site for the Docket Management System at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

The Docket Management Facility maintains the public docket for this notice. Comments and documents, as indicated in this notice, will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection or copying at Room PL-401 on the Plaza Level of the Nassif Building at the same address between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. You may electronically access the public docket for this notice on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information concerning this notice or public meeting, contact Mr. Jim Magill, Project Manager, Office of Operating and Environmental Standards, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, telephone 202-267-1082 or LT Charles Srioudom, Office of Operating and Environmental Standards, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, telephone 202-267-2498. For questions on viewing, or submitting material to the docket, contact Dorothy Walker, Chief, Documentary Services Division, U.S. Department of Transportation, telephone 202-366-9329.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Request for Comments

The Coast Guard encourages you to participate by submitting comments and related material, and by attending the public meeting. If you submit written comments, please include your name and address, identify the docket number for this notice (USCG-1999-XXXX), indicate the specific section of the **Federal Register** notice announcing this meeting to which each comment applies, and give the reason for each comment. You may submit your written comments and material by mail, hand, fax, or electronic means to the Docket Management Facility at the address under **ADDRESSES**; but please do not submit the same comment or material by more than one means. If you submit them by mail or hand, submit them in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. If you submit them by mail and would like to know they were received, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope. We will consider all comments and material received during the comment period.

Information on Service for Individuals with Disabilities

For information on facilities or services for individuals with disabilities or to request special assistance at the public meeting, contact LT Charles Srioudom at the address or phone

number under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** as soon as possible.

Background and Purpose

The Coast Guard published a final rule entitled "Offshore Supply Vessels" on September 19, 1997 (62 FR 49308). Since the publication of this rule, industry identified a need to determine a tonnage breakpoint, appropriate additional standards for larger OSV including licensing and manning, and to bring crew boats under the regulations as OSV. The purpose of this notice is to receive public comments pertaining to OSVs of 500 gross tons (U.S. Regulatory Tonnage) but less than 6,000 gross tons (ITC)

Areas of Concern

The Coast Guard invites comments pertaining to OSV regulations from interested persons. To help facilitate a productive public meeting, we offer the following subjects for consideration; interested persons may address meeting attendants with additional comments:

(1) What ITC tonnage value should be considered as equivalent to the present 500 gross tons (U.S. Regulatory Tonnage) value as the breakpoint between large and small OSVs? Does the figure of 3,000 gross tons (ITC) make good logic as it ties in with the STCW threshold value?

(2) Is there a need to establish regulations for conventional OSVs to carry more than 36 offshore workers, given the fact that the revised regulations will bring crew boats carrying up to 150 offshore workers under subchapter L? The new revision could also establish regulations for liftboats allowing more than 36 offshore workers onboard while jacked up.

(3) Would the establishment of dual certification to meet OSV and crewboat regulations make sense? This could, for example, allow dual certificated OSVs to carry unlimited fuel, maximum 36 offshore workers on one leg of a voyage, and carry more than 36 offshore workers under the crewboat regulations on the return leg of the voyage.

(4) Should OSVs of 500 gross tons (U.S. Regulatory Tonnage) but less than **6,000** gross tons (ITC) meet the requirements of 46 CFR Subchapter L and additional requirements from Subchapter I (Industrial Vessels) that are applicable to OSVs carrying less than 36 offshore workers?

(5) If OSVs of 500 gross tons (U.S. Regulatory Tonnage) but less than 6,000 gross tons (ITC) abide by both Subchapter L and Subchapter I requirements, what structural fire protection, fire detection, and lifesaving

equipment should be required to maintain vessel safety?

(6) If OSVs of 500 gross tons (U.S. Regulatory Tonnage) but less than 6,000 gross tons (ITC) abide by both Subchapter L and Subchapter I requirements, what accommodations should be provided for offshore workers assigned to the vessel for more than 24 hours? and

(7) Discussion is invited as to whether we should retain the current regulatory licensing structure for Masters and Mates up to 3,000 gross tons (ITC) and add a new licensing structure for over 3,000 gross tons (ITC) OSVs, requiring more training and experience?

Dated: July 15, 1999.

Howard L. Hime,

Acting Director of Standards, Marine Safety and Environmental Protection.

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