

§ 1472. Grave and imminent danger from oil pollution casualties to coastline or related interests of United States; Federal nonliability for Federal preventive measures on the high seas

Whenever a ship collision, stranding, or other incident of navigation or other occurrence on board a ship or external to it resulting in material damage or imminent threat of material damage to the ship or her cargo creates, as determined by the Secretary, a grave and imminent danger to the coastline or related interests of the United States from pollution or threat of pollution of the sea by convention oil or of the sea or atmosphere by a substance other than convention oil which may reasonably be expected to result in major harmful consequences, the Secretary may, except as provided for in section 1479 of this title, without liability for any damage to the owners or operators of the ship, to her cargo or crew, to underwriters or other parties interested therein, take measures on the high seas, in accordance with the provisions of the convention, the protocol and this chapter, to prevent, mitigate, or eliminate that danger.

(Pub. L. 93-248, §3, Feb. 5, 1974, 88 Stat. 8; Pub. L. 95-302, §1(2), June 26, 1978, 92 Stat. 344.)

AMENDMENTS

1978—Pub. L. 95-302 substituted “convention oil or of the sea or atmosphere by a substance other than convention oil” for “oil”, and “convention, the protocol” for “Convention”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1978 AMENDMENT

For effective date of amendment by Pub. L. 95-302, see section 2 of Pub. L. 95-302, set out as a note under section 1487 of this title.

§ 1473. Consultations and determinations respecting creation of hazards to human health, etc.; criteria for determinations respecting grave and imminent dangers of major harmful consequences to United States coastline or related interests

(a) The Secretary, after consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Secretary of Commerce, shall determine when a substance other than those enumerated in the protocol is liable to create a hazard to human health, to harm living resources, to damage amenities, or to interfere with other legitimate uses of the sea.

(b) In determining whether there is grave and imminent danger of major harmful consequences to the coastline or related interests of the United States, the Secretary shall consider the interests of the United States directly threatened or affected including but not limited to, human health, fish, shellfish, and other living marine resources, wildlife, coastal zone and estuarine activities, and public and private shorelines and beaches.

(Pub. L. 93-248, §4, Feb. 5, 1974, 88 Stat. 9; Pub. L. 95-302, §1(3), June 26, 1978, 92 Stat. 344.)

AMENDMENTS

1978—Pub. L. 95-302 added subsec. (a), designated existing provisions as subsec. (b), and inserted “human health,” before “fish”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1978 AMENDMENT

For effective date of amendment by Pub. L. 95-302, see section 2 of Pub. L. 95-302, set out as a note under section 1487 of this title.

§ 1474. Federal intervention actions

Upon a determination under section 1472 of this title of a grave and imminent danger to the coastline or related interests of the United States, the Secretary may—

(1) coordinate and direct all public and private efforts directed at the removal or elimination of the threatened pollution damage;

(2) directly or indirectly undertake the whole or any part of any salvage or other action he could require or direct under subsection (1) of this section; and

(3) remove, and, if necessary, destroy the ship and cargo which is the source of the danger.

(Pub. L. 93-248, §5, Feb. 5, 1974, 88 Stat. 9.)

§ 1475. Consultation procedure

Before taking any measure under section 1474 of this title, the Secretary shall—

(1) consult, through the Secretary of State, with other countries affected by the marine casualty, and particularly with the flag country of any ship involved;

(2) notify without delay the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and any other persons known to the Secretary, or of whom he later becomes aware, who have interests which can reasonably be expected to be affected by any proposed measures; and

(3) consider any views submitted in response to the consultation or notification required by subsections (1) and (2) of this section.

(Pub. L. 93-248, §6, Feb. 5, 1974, 88 Stat. 9.)

§ 1476. Emergencies

In cases of extreme urgency requiring measures to be taken immediately, the Secretary may take those measures rendered necessary by the urgency of the situation without the prior consultation or notification as required by section 1475 of this title or without the continuation of consultations already begun.

(Pub. L. 93-248, §7, Feb. 5, 1974, 88 Stat. 9.)

§ 1477. Reasonable measures; considerations

(a) Measures directed or conducted under this chapter shall be proportionate to the damage, actual or threatened, to the coastline or related interests of the United States and may not go beyond what is reasonably necessary to prevent, mitigate, or eliminate that damage.

(b) In considering whether measures are proportionate to the damage the Secretary shall, among other things, consider—

(1) the extent and probability of imminent damage if those measures are not taken;

(2) the likelihood of effectiveness of those measures; and

(3) the extent of the damage which may be caused by those measures.

(Pub. L. 93-248, §8, Feb. 5, 1974, 88 Stat. 9.)