

Section 4304 requires the regulation and control of the importation of nonconforming recreational vessels and associated equipment. This is to assure United States manufacturers that foreign imports comply with those regulations and standards in effect for United States products so that all manufacturers will be on this same competitive footing. This is being done in lieu of providing a specific prohibition against the importation of these vessels and equipment that might be considered an imposition of a non-tariff barrier to trade.

§ 4305. Exemptions

If the Secretary considers that recreational vessel safety will not be adversely affected, the Secretary may issue an exemption from this chapter or a regulation prescribed under this chapter.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 531.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
4305	46:1458

Section 4305 permits the Secretary to grant appropriate exemptions from the requirements of this chapter when recreational vessel safety will not be adversely affected.

§ 4306. Federal preemption

Unless permitted by the Secretary under section 4305 of this title, a State or political subdivision of a State may not establish, continue in effect, or enforce a law or regulation establishing a recreational vessel or associated equipment performance or other safety standard or imposing a requirement for associated equipment (except insofar as the State or political subdivision may, in the absence of the Secretary's disapproval, regulate the carrying or use of marine safety articles to meet uniquely hazardous conditions or circumstances within the State) that is not identical to a regulation prescribed under section 4302 of this title.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 531.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
4306	46:1459 46:1460

Section 4306 establishes the Federal preemption of recreational boating standards and requirements. A State or a political subdivision may not establish, continue, or enforce a law or regulation establishing a performance or other safety standard that is not identical to a Federal standard. The Secretary may grant an exemption to a State when the State requirement is one that is needed to meet uniquely hazardous conditions or circumstances within a State. This is to provide uniform standards without the imposition of excessive special requirements by individual States.

§ 4307. Prohibited acts

(a) A person may not—

(1) manufacture, construct, assemble, sell or offer for sale, introduce or deliver for introduction into interstate commerce, or import into the United States, a recreational vessel, associated equipment, or component of the vessel or equipment unless—

(A)(i) it conforms with this chapter or a regulation prescribed under this chapter; and

(ii) it does not contain a defect which has been identified, in any communication to such person by the Secretary or the manufacturer of that vessel, equipment or component, as creating a substantial risk of personal injury to the public; or

(B) it is intended only for export and is so labeled, tagged, or marked on the recreational vessel or equipment, including any markings on the outside of the container in which it is to be exported;

(2) affix, attach, or display a seal, document, label, plate, insignia, or other device indicating or suggesting compliance with standards of the United States Government on, in, or in connection with, a recreational vessel or item of associated equipment that is false or misleading; or

(3) fail to provide a notification as required by this chapter or fail to exercise reasonable diligence in carrying out the notification and reporting requirements of this chapter.

(b) A person may not operate a vessel in violation of this chapter or a regulation prescribed under this chapter.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 531; Pub. L. 98-557, §8(a), Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2862.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
4307(a)	46:1461(a)
4307(b)	46:1461(c)

Section 4307 prohibits certain acts in the manufacture and operation of recreational vessels.

AMENDMENTS

1984—Subsec. (a)(1)(A). Pub. L. 98-557 designated existing provisions as cl. (i), substituted “and” for “or”, and added cl. (ii).

§ 4308. Termination of unsafe operation

If an official charged with the enforcement of this chapter observes a recreational vessel being operated without sufficient lifesaving or fire-fighting devices or in an overloaded or other unsafe condition (as defined in regulations prescribed under this chapter) and, in the judgment of the official, the operation creates an especially hazardous condition, the official may direct the individual in charge of the recreational vessel to take immediate and reasonable steps necessary for the safety of individuals on board the vessel, including directing the individual in charge to return to a mooring and to remain there until the situation creating the hazard is corrected or ended.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 532; Pub. L. 99-307, §1(9), May 19, 1986, 100 Stat. 445.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
4308	46:1462

Section 4308 authorizes an appropriate official to terminate the unsafe operation of recreational vessels. If

the official observes the vessel being operated without sufficient lifesaving or firefighting devices or in an overloaded or other unsafe condition (as defined in regulations) and believes the operation creates an especially hazardous condition, the operator may be directed to take immediate and reasonable steps necessary for safety, including returning to a mooring and remaining there until the hazard is corrected or ended. This does not prevent the assessment of any applicable civil penalties nor the pursuing of appropriate criminal action.

AMENDMENTS

1986—Pub. L. 99-307 substituted “individual in charge” for “operator” in two places.

§ 4309. Investigation and reporting

(a) A recreational vessel manufacturer to whom this chapter applies shall establish and maintain records and reports and provide information the Secretary may require to enable the Secretary to decide whether the manufacturer has acted or is acting in compliance with this chapter and regulations prescribed under this chapter. On request of an officer, employee, or agent authorized by the Secretary, a recreational vessel manufacturer shall permit the officer, employee, or agent to inspect, at reasonable times, factories or other facilities, and records related to deciding whether the manufacturer has acted or is acting in compliance with this chapter and regulations prescribed under this chapter.

(b) Information reported to or otherwise obtained by the Secretary or the representative of the Secretary under this section containing or related to a trade secret or other matter referred to in section 1905 of title 18, or authorized to be exempt from public disclosure by section 552(b) of title 5, is confidential under section 1905. However, on approval of the Secretary, the information may be disclosed to other officers, employees, or agents concerned with carrying out this chapter or when it is relevant in a proceeding under this chapter.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 532.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
4309	46:1463

Section 4309 requires the establishment and maintenance of certain records by manufacturers, and the inspection and access to these records by the Secretary, at reasonable times, so as to assure Federal enforcement officials that the manufacturer has acted or is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. It also provides protection for matters related to trade secrets and exemptions from public disclosure.

§ 4310. Repair and replacement of defects

(a) In this section, “associated equipment” includes only items or classes of associated equipment that the Secretary shall prescribe by regulation after deciding that the application of the requirements of this section to those items or classes of associated equipment is reasonable and in furtherance of this chapter.

(b) If a recreational vessel or associated equipment has left the place of manufacture and the recreational vessel manufacturer discovers or acquires information that the manufacturer de-

cides, in the exercise of reasonable and prudent judgment, indicates that a recreational vessel or associated equipment subject to an applicable regulation prescribed under section 4302 of this title either fails to comply with the regulation, or contains a defect that creates a substantial risk of personal injury to the public, the manufacturer shall provide notification of the defect or failure of compliance as provided by subsections (c) and (d) of this section within a reasonable time after the manufacturer has discovered the defect.

(c)(1) The notification required by subsection (b) of this section shall be given to the following persons in the following manner:

(A) by first class mail or by certified mail to the first purchaser for other than resale, except that the requirement for notification of the first purchaser shall be satisfied if the recreational vessel manufacturer exercises reasonable diligence in establishing and maintaining a list of those purchasers and their current addresses, and sends the required notice to each person on that list at the address appearing on the list.

(B) by first class mail or by certified mail to subsequent purchasers if known to the manufacturer.

(C) by first class mail or by certified mail or other more expeditious means to the dealers and distributors of the recreational vessels or associated equipment.

(2) The notification required by subsection (b) of this section is required to be given only for a defect or failure of compliance discovered by the recreational vessel manufacturer within a reasonable time after the manufacturer has discovered the defect or failure, except that the manufacturer’s duty of notification under paragraph (1)(A) and (B) of this subsection applies only to a defect or failure of compliance discovered by the manufacturer within one of the following appropriate periods:

(A) if a recreational vessel or associated equipment required by regulation to have a date of certification affixed, 10 years from the date of certification.

(B) if a recreational vessel or associated equipment not required by regulation to have a date of certification affixed, 10 years from the date of manufacture.

(d) The notification required by subsection (b) of this section shall contain a clear description of the defect or failure to comply, an evaluation of the hazard reasonably related to the defect or failure, a statement of the measures to correct the defect or failure, and an undertaking by the recreational vessel manufacturer to take those measures only at the manufacturer’s cost and expense.

(e) Each recreational vessel manufacturer shall provide the Secretary with a copy of all notices, bulletins, and other communications to dealers and distributors of that manufacturer, and to purchasers of recreational vessels or associated equipment of that manufacturer, about a defect related to safety in the recreational vessels or associated equipment, and any failure to comply with the regulation or order applicable to the recreational vessels or associated