

Section 5108(a) authorizes the Secretary to exempt a vessel from load line requirements if the vessel is entitled to an exemption under an international agreement to which the United States is a party. It also provides the Secretary with the new authority to exempt a vessel from load line requirements if the Secretary finds that there is good reason for granting the exemption. A specific exemption from load line requirements was authorized in Public Law 98-557 for barges operating close to shore between Calumet Harbor, Illinois and Burns Harbor, Indiana, because the geographic area and type of operation in this case did not warrant a requirement for load lines. Additional exemptions currently must be made by an Act of Congress. Section 5108(a) authorizes the Secretary to make such exemptions through regulation, and the Committee expects the Secretary to continue the exemption under this provision for vessels operating close to shore between Calumet Harbor, Illinois and Burns Harbor, Indiana.

Section 5108(b) authorizes the Secretary to issue a certificate of exemption when an exemption is granted.

Section 5108(c) requires that the certificate of exemption be maintained as required by the Secretary in a similar manner as under section 5106(b).

§ 5109. Reciprocity for foreign vessels

(a) When the Secretary finds that the laws and regulations of a foreign country related to load lines are similar to those of this chapter and the regulations prescribed under this chapter, or when a foreign country is a party to an international load line agreement to which the United States Government is a party, the Secretary shall accept the load line marks and certificate of a vessel of that foreign country as complying with this chapter and the regulations prescribed under this chapter. The Secretary may control the vessel as provided for in the applicable international agreement.

(b) Subsection (a) of this section does not apply to a vessel of a foreign country that does not recognize load lines assigned under this chapter.

(Pub. L. 99-509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1917.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5109

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86f, 88d.

Section 5109(a) requires the Secretary to accept the load line mark and load line certificate of a vessel of a foreign country if the Secretary finds that the load line laws and regulations of that country are similar to those of this chapter, or if that country is a party to an international load line agreement to which the United States is a party.

§ 5110. Submersible vessels

Notwithstanding sections 5103-5105 of this title, the Secretary may prescribe regulations for submersible vessels to provide a minimum level of safety. In developing the regulations, the Secretary shall consider factors relevant to submersible vessels, including the structure, stability, and watertight integrity of those vessels.

(Pub. L. 99-509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1917.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5110

Section 5110 authorizes the Secretary to prescribe regulations for the marking of load lines of submersible

vessels. This general authority has been included in anticipation of the commercial development of submersibles.

§ 5111. Providing loading information

The Secretary may prescribe regulations requiring the owner, charterer, managing operator, and agent of a vessel to provide loading information (including information on loading distribution, stability, and margin of strength) to the master or individual in charge of the vessel in a language the master or individual understands.

(Pub. L. 99-509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1917.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Section 5111 authorizes the Secretary to prescribe regulations requiring that the master of a vessel be provided with loading and stability information for the vessel that the master understands.

§ 5112. Loading restrictions

(a) A vessel may not be loaded in a way that submerges the assigned load line or the place at which the load line is required to be marked on the vessel.

(b) If the loading or stability conditions of a vessel change, the master or individual in charge of the vessel, before moving the vessel, shall record in the official logbook or other permanent record of the vessel—

- (1) the position of the assigned load line relative to the water surface; and
- (2) the draft of the vessel fore and aft.

(c) A vessel may be operated only if the loading distribution, stability, and margin of strength are adequate for the voyage or movement intended.

(d) Subsections (a) and (b) of this section do not apply to a submersible vessel.

(Pub. L. 99-509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1917.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5112

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86g, 88c, 88e.

Section 5112(a) prohibits a vessel from being loaded in a manner that submerges its load line.

Section 5112(b) requires that whenever the loading or stability conditions of a vessel change, the master or individual in charge of the vessel must record in the official logbook the position of the load line and the draft of the vessel.

Section 5112(c) is a new provision that provides that a vessel may be operated only if the loading distribution, stability, and margin of strength are adequate for the intended voyage or movement.

Section 5112(d) provides that subsections (a) and (b) do not apply to a submersible vessel.

§ 5113. Detention of vessels

(a) When the Secretary believes that a vessel is about to leave a place in the United States in violation of this chapter or a regulation prescribed under this chapter, the Secretary may detain the vessel by giving notice to the owner, charterer, managing operator, agent, master, or individual in charge of the vessel.

(b) A detained vessel may be cleared under section 60105 of this title only after the violation

has been corrected. If the vessel was cleared before being detained, the clearance shall be withdrawn.

(c) Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, the owner, charterer, managing operator, agent, master, or individual in charge of a detained vessel may petition the Secretary to review the detention order.

(d) After reviewing a petition, the Secretary may affirm, withdraw, or change the detention order. Before acting on the petition, the Secretary may require any independent survey that may be necessary to determine the condition of the vessel.

(e) The owner of a vessel is liable for the cost incident to a petition for review and any required survey if the vessel is found to be in violation of this chapter or a regulation prescribed under this chapter.

(Pub. L. 99-509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1918; Pub. L. 109-304, § 15(20), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1703.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5113

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86h, 88f.

Section 5113 authorizes the Secretary to detain a vessel if the Secretary believes that the vessel is in violation of the load line requirements, and describes the process through which a vessel may be cleared. It also states that a vessel owner is liable for certain costs resulting from a petition for review and load line survey that is made pursuant to a violation of load line requirements.

AMENDMENTS

2006—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 109-304 substituted “section 60105 of this title” for “section 4197 of the Revised Statutes (46 App. U.S.C. 91)”.

§ 5114. Use of Customs Service officers and employees for enforcement

(a) With the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary may use an officer or employee of the United States Customs Service to enforce this chapter and the regulations prescribed under this chapter.

(b) The Secretary shall consult with the Secretary of the Treasury before prescribing a regulation that affects the enforcement responsibilities of an officer or employee of the Customs Service.

(Pub. L. 99-509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1918; Pub. L. 101-595, title VI, § 603(4), Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 2993.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5114

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86

Section 5114(a) authorizes the Secretary to use a Customs Service officer or employee to enforce load line requirements. The expected role of a Customs Service officer or employee in this regard is to ensure that a vessel is carrying a load line certificate and that the load line is not submerged.

Section 5114(b) requires the Secretary to consult with the Secretary of the Treasury before prescribing a regulation that affects the enforcement responsibilities of a Customs Service officer or employee.

AMENDMENTS

1990—Pub. L. 101-595 substituted “officers and employees” for “officers employees” in section catchline.

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of functions, personnel, assets, and liabilities of the United States Customs Service of the Department of the Treasury, including functions of the Secretary of the Treasury relating thereto, to the Secretary of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 203(1), 551(d), 552(d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6.

[§ 5115. Repealed. Pub. L. 101-595, title VI, § 603(5)(A), Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 2993]

Section, Pub. L. 99-509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1918, authorized Secretary to prescribe regulations to carry out this chapter.

§ 5116. Penalties

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the owner, charterer, managing operator, agent, master, and individual in charge of a vessel violating this chapter or a regulation prescribed under this chapter are each liable to the United States Government for a civil penalty of not more than \$5,000. Each day of a continuing violation is a separate violation. The vessel also is liable in rem for the penalty.

(b) The owner, charterer, managing operator, agent, master, and individual in charge of a vessel allowing, causing, attempting to cause, or failing to take reasonable care to prevent a violation of section 5112(a) of this title are each liable to the Government for a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000 plus an additional amount equal to twice the economic benefit of the overloading. The vessel also is liable in rem for the penalty.

(c) The master or individual in charge of a vessel violating section 5112(b) of this title is liable to the Government for a civil penalty of not more than \$5,000. The vessel also is liable in rem for the penalty.

(d) A person causing or allowing the departure of a vessel from a place within the jurisdiction of the United States in violation of a detention order issued under section 5113 of this title commits a class A misdemeanor.

(e) A person causing or allowing the alteration, concealment, or removal of a mark placed on a vessel under section 5103(b) of this title and the regulations prescribed under this chapter, except to make a lawful change or to escape enemy capture in time of war, commits a class A misdemeanor.

(Pub. L. 99-509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1918; Pub. L. 101-380, title IV, § 4302(d), Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 538.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5116

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86i, 88g.

Section 5116 provides penalties for violations of load line requirements. The penalties are raised substantially from existing law to provide a sufficient deterrence against violations of the load line requirements and to conform with the level of penalties throughout the subtitle. The monetary penalties have not been changed since the 1930's.

Section 5116(a) raises from \$1,000 to \$5,000 the maximum penalty for violation of a load line provision under this chapter or a regulation promulgated under this chapter.