

1974—Pub. L. 93-283 struck out “on fixed structures” after “maritime navigation” in section catchline and in text substituted “fixed and floating structures in or over waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and in the high seas for structures owned or operated by persons subject to the jurisdiction of the United States” for “fixed structures in or over navigable waters of the United States”.

1956—Act June 4, 1956, amended section generally, vesting in Secretary rule-making authority, for the protection of maritime navigation, relative to the establishment, maintenance, and operation of lights and other signals on fixed structures in or over navigable waters of the United States, and excluding agencies of United States from its provisions.

### § 86. Marking of obstructions

The Secretary may mark for the protection of navigation any sunken vessel or other obstruction existing on the navigable waters or waters above the continental shelf of the United States in such manner and for so long as, in his judgment, the needs of maritime navigation require. The owner of such an obstruction shall be liable to the United States for the cost of such marking until such time as the obstruction is removed or its abandonment legally established or until such earlier time as the Secretary may determine. All moneys received by the United States from the owners of obstructions, in accordance with this section, shall be covered into the Treasury of the United States as miscellaneous receipts. This section shall not be construed so as to relieve the owner of any such obstruction from the duty and responsibility suitably to mark the same and remove it as required by law.

(Aug. 4, 1949, ch. 393, 63 Stat. 501; Pub. L. 89-191, Sept. 17, 1965, 79 Stat. 822; Pub. L. 93-283, §1(3), May 14, 1974, 88 Stat. 139.)

#### HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 33, U.S.C., 1946 ed., §736 (R.S. 4676; June 17, 1910, ch. 301, §6, 36 Stat. 538; Aug. 16, 1937, ch. 665, §1, 50 Stat. 666; 1939 Reorg. Plan No. II, §2(a), eff. July 1, 1939, 4 F.R. 2731, 53 Stat. 1432).

Changes were made in phraseology. 81st Congress, House Report No. 557.

#### AMENDMENTS

1974—Pub. L. 93-283 substituted “the navigable waters or waters above the continental shelf of the United States” for “any navigable waters of the United States”.

1965—Pub. L. 89-191 vested sole responsibility for wreck marking in the Coast Guard by giving the Secretary discretionary authority to mark wrecks or other similar obstructions for as long as in his judgment the needs of maritime navigation may require, by removing reference to responsibility of the Department of the Army to mark wrecks, after abandonment and before removal, and by giving the Secretary the authority to terminate an owner's liability to pay the cost of marking a wreck.

### § 87. Icebreaking in polar regions

The President shall facilitate planning for the design, procurement, maintenance, deployment, and operation of icebreakers as needed to support the statutory missions of the Coast Guard in the polar regions by allocating all funds to support icebreaking operations in such regions, except for recurring incremental costs associated with specific projects, to the Coast Guard.

(Added Pub. L. 113-281, title V, §506(a), Dec. 18, 2014, 128 Stat. 3060.)

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 87, act Aug. 4, 1949, ch. 393, §1, 63 Stat. 501, related to color and numbering of buoys along coast, or in bays, harbors, sounds, or channels, as indicating whether such buoys were to be passed on the starboard or port hand and prescribed the coloring for buoys in channel ways, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 94-546, §1(6), (7), Oct. 18, 1976, 90 Stat. 2519.

### § 88. Saving life and property

(a) In order to render aid to distressed persons, vessels, and aircraft on and under the high seas and on and under the waters over which the United States has jurisdiction and in order to render aid to persons and property imperiled by flood, the Coast Guard may:

(1) perform any and all acts necessary to rescue and aid persons and protect and save property;

(2) take charge of and protect all property saved from marine or aircraft disasters, or floods, at which the Coast Guard is present, until such property is claimed by persons legally authorized to receive it or until otherwise disposed of in accordance with law or applicable regulations, and care for bodies of those who may have perished in such catastrophes;

(3) furnish clothing, food, lodging, medicines, and other necessary supplies and services to persons succored by the Coast Guard; and

(4) destroy or tow into port sunken or floating dangers to navigation.

(b)(1) Subject to paragraph (2), the Coast Guard may render aid to persons and protect and save property at any time and at any place at which Coast Guard facilities and personnel are available and can be effectively utilized.

(2) The Commandant shall make full use of all available and qualified resources, including the Coast Guard Auxiliary and individuals licensed by the Secretary pursuant to section 8904(b) of title 46, United States Code, in rendering aid under this subsection in nonemergency cases.

(c) An individual who knowingly and willfully communicates a false distress message to the Coast Guard or causes the Coast Guard to attempt to save lives and property when no help is needed is—

(1) guilty of a class D felony;

(2) subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000; and

(3) liable for all costs the Coast Guard incurs as a result of the individual's action.

(d) The Secretary shall establish a helicopter rescue swimming program for the purpose of training selected Coast Guard personnel in rescue swimming skills, which may include rescue diver training.

(e) An individual who knowingly and willfully operates a device with the intention of interfering with the broadcast or reception of a radio, microwave, or other signal (including a signal from a global positioning system) transmitted, retransmitted, or augmented by the Coast Guard for the purpose of maritime safety is—

(1) guilty of a class E felony; and