

reasonably should have known that the recreational vessel or associated equipment does not so conform.

(g) Compliance with this chapter or standards, regulations, or orders prescribed under this chapter does not relieve a person from liability at common law or under State law.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 534; Pub. L. 98-557, §8(b), (c), Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2862; Pub. L. 101-650, title III, §321, Dec. 1, 1990, 104 Stat. 5117; Pub. L. 108-293, title IV, §406, Aug. 9, 2004, 118 Stat. 1043; Pub. L. 109-241, title IX, §901(e), July 11, 2006, 120 Stat. 564.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section	Source section (U.S. Code)
4311(a)	46:1483
4311(b)	46:1484(a)
4311(c)	46:1484(b)
4311(d)	46:1484(d)
4311(e)	46:1485
4311(f)	46:1461(b)
4311(g)	46:1489

Section 4311 provides penalties for violating any of the provisions of this chapter or a regulation prescribed under this chapter. For a willful violation the penalty is a criminal fine; all other penalties are civil in nature.

A person violating any of the prohibited acts specified in section 4307(a)(1) is subject to a maximum civil penalty that can go as high as a \$100,000 for a related series of violations. However, the section provides for no liability for good faith reliance on certifications of compliance by others within the chain of responsibility and for defects that are not within an individual's responsibility or control.

This section also contains an alternate procedure for the collection of a civil penalty of not more than \$200 through a U.S. magistrate in lieu of the civil penalty procedures of the Coast Guard. It also directs the district courts of the United States to restrain the sale, offer for sale, introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce, or importation of a recreational vessel or associated equipment that does not conform to applicable safety standards. Finally, compliance with this chapter or standards, regulations, or orders does not relieve a person from liability at common law or under State law.

AMENDMENTS

2006—Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 109-241 inserted a space after “4307(a)”.

2004—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 108-293 amended subsec. (b) generally. Prior to amendment, subsec. (b) read as follows: “A person violating section 4307(a)(1) of this title is liable to the United States Government for a civil penalty of not more than \$2,000, except that the maximum civil penalty may be not more than \$100,000 for a related series of violations. When a corporation violates section 4307(a)(1), any director, officer, or executive employee of the corporation who knowingly and willfully ordered, or knowingly and willfully authorized, a violation is individually liable to the Government for the penalty, in addition to the corporation. However, the director, officer, or executive employee is not liable individually under this subsection if the director, officer, or executive employee can demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence that—

“(1) the order or authorization was issued on the basis of a decision, in exercising reasonable and prudent judgment, that the defect or the nonconformity with standards and regulations constituting the violation would not cause or constitute a substantial risk of personal injury to the public; and

“(2) at the time of the order or authorization, the director, officer, or executive employee advised the

Secretary in writing of acting under this clause and clause (1) of this subsection.”

1984—Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 98-557, §8(b), inserted “defect or the” before “nonconformity”.

Subsec. (f)(1). Pub. L. 98-557, §8(c), inserted provisions relating to advice by the Secretary or manufacturer of the vessel, equipment or component respecting defects creating substantial risk of personal injury to the public.

CHANGE OF NAME

“United States magistrate judge” substituted for “United States magistrate” in subsec. (d) pursuant to section 321 of Pub. L. 101-650, set out as a note under section 631 of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.

CHAPTER 45—UNINSPECTED COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY VESSELS

- Sec. 4501. Application.
- 4502. Safety standards.
- 4503. Fishing, fish tender, and fish processing vessel certification.
- 4504. Prohibited acts.
- 4505. Termination of unsafe operations.
- 4506. Exemptions.
- 4507. Penalties.
- 4508. Commercial Fishing Safety Advisory Committee.

AMENDMENTS

2010—Pub. L. 111-281, title VI, §604(c)(4), (e)(2), Oct. 15, 2010, 124 Stat. 2965, 2966, substituted “Fishing, fish tender, and fish processing vessel certification” for “Fish processing vessel certification” in item 4503 and “Commercial Fishing Safety Advisory Committee” for “Commercial Fishing Industry Vessel Safety Advisory Committee” in item 4508.

2002—Pub. L. 107-295, title III, §331(b), Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2105, inserted “Safety” before “Advisory Committee” in item 4508.

1988—Pub. L. 100-424, §2(a), Sept. 9, 1988, 102 Stat. 1585, in chapter heading substituted “UNINSPECTED COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY VESSELS” for “FISH PROCESSING VESSELS”, substituted “Safety standards” for “Regulations” in item 4502, “Fish processing vessel certification” for “Equivalency” in item 4503, “Prohibited acts” for “Penalties” in item 4504, and added items 4505 to 4508.

§ 4501. Application

(a) This chapter applies to an uninspected vessel which is a fishing vessel, fish processing vessel, or fish tender vessel.

(b) This chapter does not apply to the carriage of bulk dangerous cargoes regulated under chapter 37 of this title.

(Added Pub. L. 98-364, title IV, §402(7)(C), July 17, 1984, 98 Stat. 446; amended Pub. L. 100-424, §2(a), Sept. 9, 1988, 102 Stat. 1585.)

AMENDMENTS

1988—Pub. L. 100-424 amended section generally, in subsec. (a) substituting provisions which related to uninspected fish processing vessel entered into service after Dec. 31, 1987, having more than 16 individuals on board primarily employed in preparation of fish on navigable waters of United States or owned in United States and operating on high seas, for provisions which related to uninspected fishing vessel, fish processing vessel, or fish tender vessel, and in subsec. (b) substituting “carriage of bulk” for “carriage of liquid bulk”.

FOREIGN BUILT VESSELS, EQUIVALENT COMPLIANCE UNTIL JULY 28, 1990

Pub. L. 100-424, §7, Sept. 9, 1988, 102 Stat. 1592, provided that: “Until July 28, 1990, a foreign built fish

processing vessel subject to chapter 45 of title 46, United States Code, is deemed to comply with the requirements of that chapter if—

- “(1) it has an unexpired certificate of inspection issued by a foreign country that is a party to an International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea to which the United States Government is a party; and
 “(2) it is in compliance with the safety requirements of that foreign country that apply to that vessel.”

§ 4502. Safety standards

(a) The Secretary shall prescribe regulations which require that each vessel to which this chapter applies shall be equipped with—

- (1) readily accessible fire extinguishers capable of promptly and effectively extinguishing a flammable or combustible liquid fuel fire;
- (2) at least one readily accessible life preserver or other lifesaving device for each individual on board;
- (3) an efficient flame arrestor, backfire trap, or other similar device on the carburetors of each inboard engine which uses gasoline as fuel;
- (4) the means to properly and efficiently ventilate enclosed spaces, including engine and fuel tank compartments, so as to remove explosive or flammable gases;
- (5) visual distress signals;
- (6) other equipment required to minimize the risk of injury to the crew during vessel operations, if the Secretary determines that a risk of serious injury exists that can be eliminated or mitigated by that equipment; and
- (7) a placard as required by regulations prescribed under section 10603(b) of this title.

(b)(1) In addition to the requirements of subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary shall prescribe regulations requiring the installation, maintenance, and use of the equipment in paragraph (2) of this subsection for vessels to which this chapter applies that—

- (A) operate beyond 3 nautical miles from the baseline from which the territorial sea of the United States is measured or beyond 3 nautical miles from the coastline of the Great Lakes;
 - (B) operate with more than 16 individuals on board; or
 - (C) in the case of a fish tender vessel, engage in the Aleutian trade.
- (2) The equipment to be required is as follows:
- (A) alerting and locating equipment, including emergency position indicating radio beacons;
 - (B) a survival craft that ensures that no part of an individual is immersed in water sufficient to accommodate all individuals on board;
 - (C) at least one readily accessible immersion suit for each individual on board that vessel when operating on the waters described in section 3102 of this title;
 - (D) marine radio communications equipment sufficient to effectively communicate with land-based search and rescue facilities;
 - (E) navigation equipment, including compasses, nautical charts, and publications;
 - (F) first aid equipment and medical supplies sufficient for the size and area of operation of the vessel; and

(G) ground tackle sufficient for the vessel.

(c)(1) In addition to the requirements described in subsections (a) and (b) of this section, the Secretary may prescribe regulations establishing the standards in paragraph (2) of this subsection for vessels to which this chapter applies that—

- (A)(i) were built after December 31, 1988, or undergo a major conversion completed after that date; and
 - (ii) operate with more than 16 individuals on board; or
 - (B) in the case of a fish tender vessel, engage in the Aleutian trade.
- (2) The standards shall be minimum safety standards, including standards relating to—
- (A) navigation equipment, including radars and fathometers;
 - (B) lifesaving equipment, immersion suits, signaling devices, bilge pumps, bilge alarms, life rails, and grab rails;
 - (C) fire protection and firefighting equipment, including fire alarms and portable and semiportable fire extinguishing equipment;
 - (D) use and installation of insulation material;
 - (E) storage methods for flammable or combustible material; and
 - (F) fuel, ventilation, and electrical systems.

(d)(1) The Secretary shall prescribe regulations for the operating stability of a vessel to which this chapter applies—

- (A) that was built after December 31, 1989; or
- (B) the physical characteristics of which are substantially altered after December 31, 1989, in a manner that affects the vessel's operating stability.

(2) The Secretary may accept, as evidence of compliance with this subsection, a certification of compliance issued by the person providing insurance for the vessel or by another qualified person approved by the Secretary.

(e) In prescribing regulations under this chapter, the Secretary—

- (1) shall consider the specialized nature and economics of the operations and the character, design, and construction of the vessel; and
- (2) may not require the alteration of a vessel or associated equipment that was constructed or manufactured before the effective date of the regulation.

(f) To ensure compliance with the requirements of this chapter, the Secretary—

- (1) shall require the individual in charge of a vessel described in subsection (b) to keep a record of equipment maintenance, and required instruction and drills;
- (2) shall examine at dockside a vessel described in subsection (b) at least once every 5 years, and shall issue a certificate of compliance to a vessel meeting the requirements of this chapter; and
- (3) shall complete the first dockside examination of a vessel under this subsection not later than October 15, 2015.

(g)(1) The individual in charge of a vessel described in subsection (b) must pass a training program approved by the Secretary that meets