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PART D—MARINE CASUALTIES

CHAPTER 61—REPORTING MARINE CASUALTIES

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HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Chapter 61 provides for the reporting of marine casualties and incidents involving all United States flag vessels occurring anywhere in the world and any foreign flag vessel operating on waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

1988—Pub. L. 100-424, § 4(c), Sept. 9, 1988, 102 Stat. 1591, added item 6104.

§ 6101. Marine casualties and reporting

(a) The Secretary shall prescribe regulations on the marine casualties to be reported and the manner of reporting. The regulations shall require reporting the following marine casualties:

- (1) death of an individual.
- (2) serious injury to an individual.
- (3) material loss of property.
- (4) material damage affecting the seaworthiness or efficiency of the vessel.
- (5) significant harm to the environment.

(b) A marine casualty shall be reported within 5 days as provided in this part and regulations prescribed under this part. Each report filed under this section shall include information as to whether the use of alcohol contributed to the casualty.

(c) NOTICE TO STATE AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS.—Not later than 24 hours after receiving a notice of a major marine casualty under this section, the Secretary shall notify each State or federally recognized Indian tribe that is, or may reasonably be expected to be, affected by such marine casualty.

(d)(1) This part applies to a foreign vessel when involved in a marine casualty on the navigable waters of the United States.

(2) This part applies, to the extent consistent with generally recognized principles of international law, to a foreign vessel constructed or adapted to carry, or that carries, oil in bulk as cargo or cargo residue involved in a marine casualty described under subsection (a)(4) or (5) in waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, including the Exclusive Economic Zone.

(e) A marine casualty not resulting in the death of an individual shall be classified according to the gravity of the casualty, as prescribed by regulation, giving consideration to the extent of injuries to individuals, the extent of property damage, the dangers that the casualty creates, and the size, occupation, and means of propulsion of each vessel involved.

(f)(1) This chapter applies to a marine casualty involving a United States citizen on a foreign

passenger vessel operating south of 75 degrees north latitude, west of 35 degrees west longitude, and east of the International Date Line; or operating in the area south of 60 degrees south latitude that—

(A) embarks or disembarks passengers in the United States; or

(B) transports passengers traveling under any form of air and sea ticket package marketed in the United States.

(2) When there is a marine casualty described in paragraph (1) of this subsection and an investigation is conducted, the Secretary shall ensure that the investigation—

(A) is thorough and timely; and

(B) produces findings and recommendations to improve safety on passenger vessels.

(3) When there is a marine casualty described in paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Secretary may—

(A) seek a multinational investigation of the casualty under auspices of the International Maritime Organization; or

(B) conduct an investigation of the casualty under chapter 63 of this title.

(g) To the extent consistent with generally recognized practices and procedures of international law, this part applies to a foreign vessel involved in a marine casualty or incident, as defined in the International Maritime Organization Code for the Investigation of Marine Casualties and Incidents, where the United States is a Substantially Interested State and is, or has the consent of, the Lead Investigating State under the Code.

(h) The Secretary shall publish all major marine casualty reports prepared in accordance with this section in an electronic form, and shall provide information electronically regarding how other marine casualty reports can be obtained.

(i) For purposes of this section, the term “major marine casualty” means a casualty involving a vessel, other than a public vessel, that results in—

- (1) the loss of 6 or more lives;
- (2) the loss of a mechanically propelled vessel of 100 or more gross tons;
- (3) property damage initially estimated at \$2,000,000 or more; or
- (4) serious threat, as determined by the Commandant with concurrence by the Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, to life, property, or the environment by hazardous materials.

(j) The Secretary shall publish all marine casualty reports prepared in accordance with this section in an electronic form.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 536; Pub. L. 98-498, title II, § 212(b)(1), Oct. 19, 1984, 98 Stat. 2306; Pub. L. 98-557, § 7(b)(1), Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2862; Pub. L. 101-380, title IV, § 4106(b), Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 513; Pub. L. 102-241, § 33, Dec. 19, 1991, 105 Stat. 2222; Pub. L. 107-295, title IV, §§ 423, 442(a), Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2125, 2132; Pub. L. 109-241, title IX, § 901(o), July 11, 2006, 120 Stat. 565; Pub. L. 109-304, § 15(21), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1704; Pub. L. 110-181, div. C, title XXXV, § 3529(c)(1), Jan. 28, 2008, 122 Stat. 603; Pub. L.