

a party in interest but does not necessarily determine who is to be considered a party in interest. Clause (4) states that these rights are to be afforded to “any other person whose conduct is under investigation” (emphasis added). This implies that clauses (1) through (3) apply to individuals whose conduct is under investigation. If any individual does not qualify for these rights under clauses (1) through (4), that individual can still be entitled to these rights under clause (5), if designated as a party in interest. Since parties in interest are not clearly set out by statute, the Secretary has the authority to do this by regulation under section 6301. Thus the rights of these parties as presently provided for in existing law have been retained.

§ 6304. Subpena authority

(a) In an investigation under this chapter, the attendance and testimony of witnesses, including parties in interest, and the production of any evidence may be compelled by subpena. The subpena authority granted by this section is co-extensive with that of a district court of the United States, in civil matters, for the district in which the investigation is conducted.

(b) When a person fails to obey a subpena issued under this section, the district court of the United States for the district in which the investigation is conducted or in which the person failing to obey is found, shall on proper application issue an order directing that person to comply with the subpena. The court may punish as contempt any disobedience of its order.

(c) A witness complying with a subpena issued under this section may be paid for actual travel and attendance at the rate provided for witnesses in the district courts of the United States.

(d) An official designated to conduct an investigation under this part may issue subpoenas as provided in this section and administer oaths to witnesses.

(Pub. L. 98–89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 538.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
6304	46:239(e) 46:239(f)

Section 6304 provides an officer investigating a marine casualty with the necessary subpena authority to require the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of evidence. It also authorizes a district court of the United States to direct compliance with a subpena.

§ 6305. Reports of investigations

(a) The Secretary shall prescribe regulations about the form and manner of reports of investigations conducted under this part.

(b) Reports of investigations conducted under this part shall be made available to the public. This subsection does not require the release of information described by section 552(b) of title 5 or protected from disclosure by another law of the United States.

(Pub. L. 98–89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 538; Pub. L. 105–383, title III, §305, Nov. 13, 1998, 112 Stat. 3420.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
6305	46:239(g) 46:239(k)

Section 6305 requires the Secretary to prescribe regulations about the form and manner of reports of investigations of marine casualties. It also provides that the reports shall be available to the public, except for any information they contain related to national security.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

1998—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 105–383 substituted “. This subsection does not require the release of information described by section 552(b) of title 5 or protected from disclosure by another law of the United States.” for “, except to the extent that they contain information related to the national security.”

§ 6306. Penalty

A person attempting to coerce a witness, or to induce a witness, to testify falsely in connection with a marine casualty, or to induce a witness to leave the jurisdiction of the United States, shall be fined \$5,000, imprisoned for one year, or both.

(Pub. L. 98–89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 538.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
6306	46:239(i)

Section 6306 provides for a \$5,000 criminal penalty for anyone attempting to coerce or to induce a witness to a marine casualty investigation to testify falsely or to leave the jurisdiction of the United States.

§ 6307. Notifications to Congress

(a) The Secretary shall notify the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives of any hearing, before the hearing occurs, investigating a major marine casualty involving a death under section 6301 of this title.

(b) The Secretary shall submit to a committee referred to in subsection (a) of this section information on a major marine casualty that is requested by that committee or the chairman of the committee if the submission of that information is not prohibited by a law of the United States.

(c) The Secretary shall submit annually to Congress a summary of the marine casualties reported during the prior fiscal year, together with a brief statement of action taken concerning those casualties.

(Pub. L. 98–89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 538; Pub. L. 107–295, title IV, §408(c)(1), Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2117.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
6307	46:239(j) 33:366

Subsection (a) requires the Secretary to notify the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee and the

Senate Commerce Committee in advance of any hearing concerning a major marine accident (as defined by regulation) where there has been a loss of life.

Subsection (b) requires the Coast Guard to supply the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee and the Senate Commerce Committee with any requested marine casualty information, if its release is not specifically prohibited by law.

Subsection (c) requires the Secretary to submit an annual report to Congress summarizing the marine casualties reported during the prior fiscal year, with a brief statement of action taken concerning those casualties.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2002—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 107-295 substituted “Transportation and Infrastructure” for “Merchant Marine and Fisheries”.

§ 6308. Information barred in legal proceedings

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no part of a report of a marine casualty investigation conducted under section 6301 of this title, including findings of fact, opinions, recommendations, deliberations, or conclusions, shall be admissible as evidence or subject to discovery in any civil or administrative proceedings, other than an administrative proceeding initiated by the United States.

(b) Any member or employee of the Coast Guard investigating a marine casualty pursuant to section 6301 of this title shall not be subject to deposition or other discovery, or otherwise testify in such proceedings relevant to a marine casualty investigation, without the permission of the Secretary. The Secretary shall not withhold permission for such employee or member to testify, either orally or upon written questions, on solely factual matters at a time and place and in a manner acceptable to the Secretary if the information is not available elsewhere or is not obtainable by other means.

(c) Nothing in this section prohibits the United States from calling the employee or member as an expert witness to testify on its behalf. Further, nothing in this section prohibits the employee or member from being called as a fact witness in any case in which the United States is a party. If the employee or member is called as an expert or fact witness, the applicable Federal Rules of Civil Procedure govern discovery. If the employee or member is called as a witness, the report of a marine casualty investigation conducted under section 6301 of this title shall not be admissible, as provided in subsections (a) and (b), and shall not be considered the report of an expert under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

(d) The information referred to in subsections (a), (b), and (c) of this section shall not be considered an admission of liability by the United States or by any person referred to in those conclusions and statements.

(Added Pub. L. 104-324, title III, § 313(a), Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3921; amended Pub. L. 109-241, title IX, § 902(e)(2), formerly § 902(e)(2)-(4), July 11, 2006, 120 Stat. 567, renumbered § 902(e)(2) and amended Pub. L. 111-281, title IX, § 903(a)(5)(B)-(7), Oct. 15, 2010, 124 Stat. 3010.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, referred to in subsec. (c), are set out in the Appendix to Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.

AMENDMENTS

2010—Subsecs. (c), (d). Pub. L. 111-281 made technical amendment to directory language of Pub. L. 109-241, § 902(e). See 2006 Amendment notes below.

2006—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 109-241, § 902(e)(2)(B), added subsec. (a) and struck out former subsec. (a) which read as follows: “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no part of a report of a marine casualty investigation conducted under section 6301 of this title, including findings of fact, opinions, recommendations, deliberations, or conclusions, shall be admissible as evidence or subject to discovery in any civil or administrative proceedings, other than an administrative proceeding initiated by the United States. Any employee of the Department of Transportation, and any member of the Coast Guard, investigating a marine casualty pursuant to section 6301 of this title, shall not be subject to deposition or other discovery, or otherwise testify in such proceedings relevant to a marine casualty investigation, without the permission of the Secretary of Transportation. The Secretary shall not withhold permission for such employee or member to testify, either orally or upon written questions, on solely factual matters at a time and place and in a manner acceptable to the Secretary if the information is not available elsewhere or is not obtainable by other means.”

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 109-241, § 902(e)(2)(B), added subsec. (b). Former subsec. (b) redesignated (c).

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 109-241, § 902(e)(2)(A), (C), formerly § 902(e)(2)(A), (3), renumbered § 902(e)(2)(A), (C) and amended Pub. L. 111-281, § 903(a)(5)(B), (C), (6), redesignated subsec. (b) as (c) and substituted “subsections (a) and (b)” for “subsection (a)”. Former subsec. (c) redesignated (d).

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 109-241, § 902(e)(2)(A), (D), formerly § 902(e)(2)(A), (4), renumbered § 902(e)(2)(A), (D) and amended Pub. L. 111-281, § 903(a)(5)-(7), redesignated subsec. (c) as (d) and substituted “subsections (a), (b), and (c)” for “subsections (a) and (b)”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2010 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 111-281, title IX, § 903(a), Oct. 15, 2010, 124 Stat. 3010, provided that the amendment by section 903(a)(5)(B)-(7), is effective with enactment of Pub. L. 109-241.

§ 6309. Voyage data recorder access

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Coast Guard shall have full, concurrent, and timely access to and ability to use voyage data recorder data and audio held by any Federal agency in all marine casualty investigations, regardless of which agency is the investigative lead.

(Added Pub. L. 115-265, title II, § 207(a), Oct. 11, 2018, 132 Stat. 3747.)

PART E—MERCHANT SEAMEN LICENSES, CERTIFICATES, AND DOCUMENTS

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Part E establishes the authority for the Coast Guard to issue, suspend, and revoke licenses, certificates of registry, and merchant mariner's documents for individuals who are to be engaged on vessels of the United States.