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To Distribution

Subj: GUIDELINES FOR ACCEPTANCE OF PERKO NAVIGATIONAL LIGHT FIXTURES ON UNINSPECTED COMMERICAL VESSELS

Ref: (a) Title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, Subchapter C, 25.10
(b) COMDTINST M16672.2(series), Navigation Rules
(c) 33 CFR 83.22, Inland Navigation Rules, Rule 22
(d) 33 CFR 83.38, Inland Navigation Rules, Rule 38

1. Purpose. This policy letter provides guidelines for acceptance of the installation of Perko navigation lights on uninspected commercial vessels of less than 20 meters in length, operating on inland waters of the United States. Continued use of these light fixtures on towing vessels will likely be affected by pending regulatory changes for the inspection of towing vessels.

2. Directives Affected. None.

3. Action. Sector Commanders and Officers in Charge, Marine Inspection (OCMIs) shall direct their Marine Inspectors and Vessel Examiners to use this policy when examining Perko navigation light fixtures uninspected commercial vessels.

4. Background.

a. On May 17, 2010, the Inland Navigation Rules (NAV Rules) were relocated from the United States Code to Title 33 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Reference (b) went into effect December 24, 1981 and still provides illustrations and guidance on the NAV Rules now found in 33 CFR.

b. Reference (c) gives range requirements for various navigation lights. Annex I of the NAV Rules, codified at 33 CFR part 84, gives the positioning and technical details for these lights.

c. Reference (d) provides for certain exemptions based on vessel build date and length. This Rule states "Any vessel or class of vessels, the keel of which is laid or which is at a corresponding stage of construction before December 24, 1980, provided that she complies with the requirements of - (d) Sections 3, 4, and 5 of the Act of April 25, 1940 (54 Stat. 163), as amended (46 U.S.C. 526b, c, and d) for motorboats navigating the waters subject to that statute; shall be exempted from compliance with the technical Annexes to these Rules as follows:

> The installation of lights with ranges prescribed in Rule 22 [range of visibility], until 4 years after the effective date of the Inland Navigational Rules Act of 1980 (Pub. L. 96-591), except that vessels of less than 20 meters (65') in length are permanently exempt."

5. Discussion.

a. While there are several manufacturers of navigation lights, many lights in use on vessels of less than 20 meters are manufactured by Perko. Perko acknowledges they made navigation lights with medium screw base sockets until 1979 when they changed from a screw base socket to a pre-focused bayonet type socket. These lights are known as their "vintage" and "interim acceptance" lights, respectively.

b. "Vintage" lights were fitted with medium screw base or mogul screw sockets but did not use "ordinary household" bulbs. Perko never allowed "ordinary household" bulbs to be used in these navigational light fixtures; however, many towing companies are using "ordinary household" bulbs or have modified Perko navigation light fixtures to accept them.

c. With the publication of the new 72 COLREGS, Perko worked with Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL) to design navigation lights that would meet Rule 22 and the technical details of Annex I. During this timeframe Perko modified their "vintage" lights to utilize T-10 C-8 filament medium screw base long clear tubular bulbs of various wattages (depending on usage) to meet certain optical requirements of the 72 COLREGS; these lights are known as "interim acceptance" lights and were accompanied by a certificate from Perko.

d. On September 30, 1982, the Coast Guard recognized and accepted the Perko lights that had completed the UL testing under UL Card, ME20. These lights are considered "final acceptance" lights under the UL testing Standard 1104. These "final acceptance" lights meet the UL standards as required by 46 CFR 111.75-17, are accepted by the Coast Guard, and meet the current NAV Rules.

e. Correspondence from that era between the Coast Guard and Perko, as Perko began to manufacture "final acceptance" navigation lights and phase out the "vintage" and "interim acceptance" lights, never made it clear if the Coast Guard would allow the continued use of these "vintage" and "interim acceptance" lights.

f. As required by reference (a), after November 7, 2002 dealers, distributors, and manufacturers of uninspected commercial vessels are required to supply navigation lights that are certified by a testing laboratory listed by the Coast Guard to the Standards of ABYC A-16 and approved under 33 CFR 183.810.

g. Utilization of lights that have been tested and certified by a Coast Guard accepted independent laboratory to UL 1104 or ABYC A-16 constitutes the objective evidence needed to assure these lights meet Rule 22 and the technical details of the NAV Rules. If "vintage" or "interim acceptance" lights are continued are used, the bulbs specified in the below guidance must be used.

6. Policy. Until superseded by future regulations or policy, uninspected vessels that are 20 meters or less in length operating on inland waters of the U.S. may continue to use Perko "vintage" and "interim acceptance" lights subject to the conditions in (a) and (b) below. Also, other vessels may continue to use Perko "final acceptance" lights, subject to the conditions in (c) below:

a. "Vintage" lights may continue to be used on uninspected commercial vessels of less than 20 meters in length, operating on inland waters of the U.S., and built before July 15, 1977 as long as the bulbs Perko specifies below are used, and the navigation light fixture remain in serviceable condition. Perko specifies a 100 watt clear medium screw bulb, size A-19, with

a Light Center Length (LCL) of 3-1/8 inch (3.125) for these fixtures [except for the stern and all-round bulbs, which are 60 watts].

b. "Interim acceptance" lights may continue to be used on uninspected commercial vessels of less than 20 meters in length operating on inland waters of the U.S. as long as the accompanying Perko certificate is available, the bulbs Perko specifies on the certificate for those particular lights are utilized, and the navigation light fixture remain in serviceable condition.

c. Uninspected vessels built or purchased after November 7, 2002 are required to have ABYC certified lights; however, lights that meet the inspected vessel standards (UL 1104) may also be accepted. Perko "final acceptance" lights meet UL 1104. Perko "final acceptance" lights, therefore may be used on any size vessel, uninspected or inspected, no matter when built, as long as they are not modified and meet the design characteristics for that particular size of vessel.

7. Disclaimer. This guidance is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it itself a rule. It is not intended to nor does it impose legally-binding requirements on any party. It represents the Coast Guard's current thinking on this topic and may assist industry, mariners, the general public, and the Coast Guard, as well as other federal and state regulators, in applying statutory and regulatory requirements. You can use an alternative approach for complying with these requirements if the approach satisfies the requirements of the applicable statutes and regulations. If you want to discuss an alternative approach (you are not required to do so), you may contact Mr. Patrick Lee at patrick.j.lee@uscg.mil or 202-372-1135 who is responsible for implementing this guidance.

8. Questions. Questions concerning this policy should be directed to Mr. Patrick Lee at patrick.j.lee@uscg.mil or 202-372-1135. This policy is posted on Homeport at http://homeport.uscg.mil/USvsls.

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