

Commanding Officer
United States Coast Guard
Marine Safety Office Charleston

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PORT COMMUNITY INFORMATION BULLETIN

41-99

Navigation Bridge Visibility

It has been reported to the Captain of the Port that, occasionally, vessels are transiting the waters of Charleston Harbor with restricted or reduced navigational visibility due to overstacking containers.

Title 33, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 164.15 details what is the minimum acceptable bridge visibility. The regulations require an individual standing at the conning position on a vessel's bridge to have a view of the sea surface that is not obstructed by more than: (1) two ships lengths, or (2) 500 meters, whichever is less, from dead ahead to 10 degrees on either side of the vessel.

The Coast Guard has requested that when any Charleston Harbor Pilot encounters an obstructed or reduced bridge visibility situation on any vessel they immediately contact the Marine Safety Office Charleston for corrective action. Bridge visibility requirements will be strictly enforced; failure to comply may cause vessel delays and/or result in the assessment of civil penalties.

Loading any vessel in a manner that restricts bridge visibility is an unsafe practice that not only endangers the vessel but the port and any vessels that may be encountered during the transit. Marine operators are strongly urged to evaluate each vessel's loading plan with respect to bridge visibility to correct this problem.

For further information please contact LCDR Chuck Jennings at (843) 724-7684.

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F. J. STURM

Commander, U.S. Coast Guard
Captain of the Port
Charleston, SC