

March 24, 1997

From: Captain of the Port Houston-Galveston

To: Distribution

Subj: COTP POLICY ON VESSEL ANCHORING CAPABILITY

Many vessels experience power losses, navigational irregularities or steering casualties while navigating the Captain of the Port Houston-Galveston zone each year. The standard and safe navigation practice, already followed by most vessels, is to set an anchor detail while the vessel is navigating in pilotage waters. The purpose of this notice is to remind mariners of federal safety requirements regarding vessels anchoring capabilities.

The Navigation Safety Regulations, Code of Federal Regulations Title 33, Subpart 164. 11 (require the owner, operator or person in charge of a vessel over 1600 gross tons to ensure that the anchors are immediately ready for letting go. In order to meet this requirement vessels greater than 1600 gross tons, navigating waters contained in the Captain of the Port Houston-Galveston zone where a federal or state pilot is required shall comply with the following:

1. The vessel's foredeck shall be manned with sufficient, qualified personnel to quickly release and control both anchors on command;
2. Effective communications shall be provided between the bridge and the foredeck;
3. Anchors, anchor tackle, anchor gear, and capstans shall be maintained such that both anchors are ready for quick release;
4. If anchors will not freefall from a position within the hawsepipe, then both anchors shall be walked out of the hawsepipe and be maintained in a position ready for quick release;
5. Vessels conducting long transits should schedule appropriate personnel reliefs in accordance with section A-VIII of STCW 78/95 standards.

33 CFR 164-11(o) was issued under the authority of the Ports and Water Ways Safety Act, Title 33, Chapter 25, United States Code (42 Federal Register 5956, Jan 31, 1977). An owner, operator, or person in charge of a vessel that is recruited to set an anchor detail but fails to ensure that anchors are immediately ready for letting go is subject to a civil penalty of up to \$25,000. If that person knowingly and willingly violates this regulation, he is subject to a criminal class D felony conviction, including a fine of up to \$50,000 and 5 years confinement.

Questions concerning this requirement may be referred to the Port Waterways Management Branch, Marine Safety office Houston - Galveston. If any of the above conditions cannot be met, the vessel's master or agent shall immediately notify the Captain of the Port at Marine Safety Office Houston-Galveston, (713) 671-5100.

K. J. ELDRIDGE  
Captain, U. S. Coast Guard  
Captain of the Port Houston-Galveston