

May 23, 1997

From: Captain of the Port Houston-Galveston  
To: Distribution

Subj: COTP POLICY ON TEMPORARY SHUTDOWN OF TRANSFER OPERATIONS

The August 8, 1996 Federal Register (Vol. 61, No. 154, Pgs 414S241462) changed 33 CFR 154.105 to clearly define when a regulated transfer operation begins and ends. It did not, however, address procedures for temporarily shutting down the transfer for reasons such as personnel breaks, equipment problems, delays caused by severe weather or other unforeseen circumstances. With respect to this policy, the following definition of "temporary shutdown" applies:

A temporary shutdown is defined as a transfer stoppage of less than two (2) hours duration that can be restarted without updating and/or resigning the Declaration of Inspection.

Acknowledging the need for such temporary shutdowns, and to provide consistent policy, the following conditions must be met for a transfer to be considered in a "temporary shutdown" status:

1. The vessel or facility transfer pump is secured.
2. The first vessel and facility valves on either side of the transfer hose (or loading arm) are completely closed.
3. All hatches, ullages and gauging openings are aboard the vessel are closed and secure.
4. Both the tankerman and the facility person in charge (PIC) remain in close proximity to the vessel, hose, moorings, and the facility loading valves and are capable of immediately responding to changing conditions which may endanger the vessel, facility, or the marine environment. The vessel must comply at all times with the tank vessel security and surveillance provisions of 46 CFR, Subchapters D and O.
5. The tankerman and the facility PIC must maintain communications at all times.
6. The tankerman and facility PIC must remain on duty. Either of these individuals is relieved, then all information on the DOI must be verified and the document must be signed by both PICs prior to restarting the transfer operation.
7. Prior to restarting the transfer operation following a temporary shutdown, the tankerman and facility PIC hold a conference to verify the conditions of the transfer DOI.

If any of the above conditions can not be met, the transfer shall be considered to be in progress and all requirements of 33 CFR Parts 154 and 156 apply.

This policy applies only to single vessel transfers conducted in the Captain of the Port Houston-Galveston zone. It is strongly encouraged to schedule a relief tankerman for transfer operations which last longer than (08) hours.

For further information regarding this policy, contact the Captain of the Port Houston-Galveston at (713) 671-5105 or the Marine Safety Unit Galveston at (409) 766-3715.

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