

**APPENDIX T**

**USCG Interim Vessel Speed Guidance**

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Z0/021083

O 152002Z AUG 96 ZDK ZUI ASN-D00228000464  
FM COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC//G-OP/G-OCU/G-OCS/G-OPN//  
TO D3/COMLANTAREA COGARD PORTSMOUTH VA//A//  
INFO D1/CCGDONE BOSTON MA//D//  
D7/CCGDSEVEN MIAMI FL//D//

BT

UNCLAS FOUO //N03120//

SUBJ: COAST GUARD VESSEL SPEED GUIDANCE

1. THE COAST GUARD HAS PREPARED A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (DEIS) TO ASSIST IN THE PROCESS OF DECIDING THE APPROPRIATE METHODS FOR THE COAST GUARD TO IMPROVE THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF MARINE SPECIES AND THEIR HABITATS ON THE ATLANTIC COAST WHILE CONTINUING TO PERFORM OUR MISSIONS. THE DEIS WAS COMPLETED ON 31 JULY 1996 AND SENT OUT FOR PUBLIC COMMENT. THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ENDS 16 SEPTEMBER 1996.

2. IN CONSULTATION WITH THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE (NMFS), ONE OF THE REASONABLE AND PRUDENT ALTERNATIVES IN THE BIOLOGICAL OPINION DATED 22 JUL 96, WHICH IS CONTAINED WITHIN THE DEIS, CONCERNED THE ISSUANCE OF SPEED GUIDANCE TO COAST GUARD VESSELS DURING NON-EMERGENCY TRANSITS. THE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE CONCERNING COAST GUARD VESSEL OPERATIONS HAS BEEN APPROVED BY NMFS AND SHALL BE IMMEDIATELY INCORPORATED IN AREA AND DISTRICT OPERATING DIRECTIVES AND PROVIDED TO ALL BOATS AND CUTTERS: TO AVOID A COLLISION WITH A WHALE DURING THE COURSE OF NORMAL OPERATIONS, COAST GUARD VESSELS TRANSITING CRITICAL HABITAT, MIGRATORY ROUTES AND HIGH-USE AREAS SHALL USE EXTREME CAUTION, BE ALERT, AND REDUCE SPEEDS, AS APPROPRIATE. APPROPRIATE REDUCED SPEEDS SHOULD BE BASED ON THE FACTORS IDENTIFIED IN RULE 6 (SAFE SPEED) OF THE INTERNATIONAL/INLAND NAVIGATION RULES (COMDTINST M16672.2C). ADDITIONAL REDUCTIONS IN SPEED SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHEN A WHALE IS SIGHTED OR KNOWN TO BE IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OR WITHIN FIVE NAUTICAL MILES OF THE VESSEL. IN THESE SITUATIONS, VESSELS SHALL USE THOSE COURSES AND SPEEDS AS APPROPRIATE, YET NAVIGATIONALY PRUDENT, TO AVOID A COLLISION WITH A WHALE, AND, IF NECESSARY, REDUCE SPEED TO THE MINIMUM AT WHICH THE VESSEL CAN BE KEPT ON COURSE OR COME TO ALL STOP.

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