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INFO COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON

DC//CG-5/CG-531/CG-54/CG-543/CG-54-TI/CG-522//

COMPACAREA COGARD ALAMEDA CA//PAC-3//

COMLANTAREA COGARD PORTSMOUTH VA//LANT-54//

COGARD TVNCOE PADUCAH KY

COGARD TRACEN YORKTOWN VA

BT

UNCLAS //N16710//

SUBJ: COAST GUARD TOWING VESSEL BRIDGING PROGRAM (TVBP), UPDATE 3

A. COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC 121639Z JUNE 09

B. TOWING VESSEL BRIDGING PROGRAM POLICY MEMO, DATED 12JUN09.

C. COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC 021725Z JULY 10

D. TOWING VESSEL BRIDGING PROGRAM PHASE 2 POLICY MEMO, DATED 20JUL11

E. COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC 111824Z AUG 11

F. FEDERAL REGISTER VOL. 76, NO.155 THURSDAY AUGUST 11, 2011

1. THIS MESSAGE PROVIDES AN UPDATE ON THE TOWING VESSEL BRIDGING

PROGRAM (TVBP) AS INTRODUCED AND UPDATED IN REFERENCES (A) THROUGH

(E).

2. PHASE 1. SINCE THE START OF PHASE 1 IN JUNE 2009, WE HAVE TRAINED AND QUALIFIED OVER 285 MARINE INSPECTORS AND TOWING VESSEL EXAMINERS TO CONDUCT UTV EXAMINATIONS. TO DATE WE HAVE CONDUCTED OVER 4200 INDUSTRY INITIATED EXAMINATIONS (IIE) AND ISSUED OVER 3200 DECALS ON A NATIONWIDE TOWING VESSEL FLEET OF RESPONSIBILITY (FOR) OF APPROXIMATELY 5800 VESSELS ABOVE 26 FEET IN LENGTH.

3. DECALS. IN CY12 OVER 250 DECALS WILL EXPIRE FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER 1300 IN CY13. WHILE THERE IS NO REQUIREMENT FOR THESE DECALS TO REMAIN VALID, SOME COMPANIES HAVE EXPRESSED THE DESIRE TO MAINTAIN VALID DECALS ON THEIR VESSELS. UNITS SHOULD WORK WITH THESE COMPANIES SO THEY UNDERSTAND THE LOCAL REQUIREMENTS TO SCHEDULE ANOTHER IIE SO THEY MAY BE ISSUED ANOTHER DECAL VALID FOR 3 YEARS. ALTHOUGH THE SCOPE OF A REEXAMINATION IS THE SAME AS THE INITIAL IIE, EXAMINERS SHOULD BE ABLE TO CONDUCT THESE REEXAMINATIONS IN A SHORTER TIMEFRAME (MUCH LIKE ANNUAL EXAMS ON INSPECTED VESSELS) UNLESS EXPANDING THE EXAM IS WARRANTED. NEW DECALS ISSUED WITHIN 90 DAYS OF THE EXPIRATION OF THE OLD DECAL SHOULD BE ISSUED FOR 3 YRS FROM THE EXPIRATION DATE OF THE OLD DECAL.

4. SUBCHAPTER M. THE NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING ANNOUNCED IN REF (F) WAS A CRUCIAL MILESTONE AS WE MOVE CLOSER TOWARDS CERTIFICATION OF TOWING VESSELS. CG-5222, OFFICE OF VESSEL AND FACILITY OPERATING STANDARDS, IS LEADING THE COAST GUARD REGULATORY TEAM WHICH IS

REVIEWING THE COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND PREPARING TO REPLY AND MAKE NECESSARY AMENDMENTS AND MODIFICATIONS AS APPROPRIATE TO THE PROPOSED RULES. UNITS ARE REMINDED THESE ARE ONLY PROPOSED RULES AND THEREFORE COULD CHANGE SIGNIFICANTLY BEFORE A FINAL RULE IS PUBLISHED. MARINE INSPECTORS AND TOWING VESSEL EXAMINERS ARE NOT TO REQUIRE TOWING VESSELS TO COMPLY WITH WHAT ARE ONLY PROPOSED RULES.

5. PHASE 2. REFERENCE (D) (ATTACHED TO THIS MESSAGE) PROMULGATED POLICY FOR PHASE 2 INCLUDING THE CONDUCT OF PRIORITIZED EXAMS. IN NOVEMBER 2011, PAC AND LANT AREA ISSUED WARNING ORDERS GIVING DISTRICTS UNTIL 30JUN12 TO COMPLETE THE TRAINING, EDUCATION, OUTREACH, AND PRIORITIZATION OF FLEETS OF RESPONSIBILITY BEFORE PHASE 2 COMMENCES. AREAS HAVE REPORTED THEIR DISTRICTS WILL BE READY TO COMMENCE PHASE 2 ACTIVITIES IMMEDIATELY AFTER THIS DATE. BASED ON THE CURRENT LEVEL OF IIE ACTIVITIES BEING COMPLETED AND INPUT FROM THE FIELD I HAVE DETERMINED PHASE 2 WILL START ON 01JUL12 NATIONWIDE. AREAS WILL ISSUE EXECUTION ORDERS TO START PHASE 2 CONCURRENTLY ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

6. MANNING. UTVS ON INTERNATIONAL VOYAGES CONTINUE TO BE DETAINED PRIMARILY DUE TO INADEQUATE OR UNCLEAR MANNING PROVISIONS. UTVS OVER 500 GT ITC ARE REQUIRED BY SOLAS TO HAVE A SAFE MANNING DOCUMENT

(SMD). UTVS OF A SIZE THAT ARE NOT REQUIRED TO HAVE AN SMD, BUT INTEND TO MAKE INTERNATIONAL VOYAGES, COULD BENEFIT BY HAVING A SAFE MANNING LETTER (SML). WHILE THERE IS NO REQUIREMENT TO HAVE A SML, EXPERIENCE HAS FOUND THAT PSC AUTHORITIES RECOGNIZE VESSELS WITH A SMD OR SML AS HAVING APPROPRIATE MANNING ASSIGNED. OCMIS SHOULD WORK WITH UTVS THAT HAVE THE ABILITY TO CONDUCT INTERNATIONAL VOYAGES AND ISSUE AN SMD OR SML (AS APPROPRIATE), PRIOR TO THE UTV CONDUCTING SUCH A VOYAGE. CG-543 IS DEVELOPING POLICY REGARDING SMD AND SML ISSUANCE, TO INCLUDE SAMPLE DOCUMENTS, WHICH WILL AUGMENT CURRENT POLICY AND GUIDANCE.

7. TRAINING. A PILOT UTV COURSE WAS HELD AT YORKTOWN LAST SEPTEMBER AND HAS REPLACED THE JUST IN TIME ORIENTATION CURRICULUM AS AN OFFICIAL C SCHOOL COURSE (UTV 502234). THE UTV C SCHOOL IS A RESIDENT COURSE OF TRACEN YORKTOWN, ON OCCASION IT MAY CONVENE AT THE TOWING VESSEL NATIONAL CENTER OF EXPERTISE (TVNCOE). ONCE THE CONTENT OF SUBCHAPTER M HAS BEEN FINALIZED, TRAINING CENTER YORKTOWN AND TVNCOE STAFFS WILL BEGIN THE DEVELOPMENT ON NEW PQS, JOB AIDS, AND COURSE CURRICULUM TO REFLECT NEW REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS AND TRAINING NEEDS. AS A MEANS TO ADDRESS REGIONAL NEEDS, THE TVNCOE IS EQUIPPED TO FACILITATE AND DELIVER TAILORED TRAINING IN PADUCAH, KY AND EXPORTABLE TRAINING TO VARIOUS LOCATIONS (PENDING LOCAL RESOURCES) AND AS NATIONAL VERIFICATION OFFICERS, SIGN OFF INDIVIDUALS PQS.

8. MORE INFO ON TVBP MAY BE FOUND ON THE TVNCOE WEBSITE:

[HTTP://WWW.USCG.MIL/TVNCOE/](http://www.uscg.mil/tvncoe/) THE POINT OF CONTACT FOR THE TOWING VESSEL BRIDGING PROGRAM IS MR. PATRICK LEE. HE MAY BE REACHED AT PATRICK.J.LEE(AT)USCG.MIL OR (202) 372-1135.

9. CAPT ERIC CHRISTENSEN, CHIEF, OFFICE OF VESSEL ACTIVITIES, SENDS.

10. INTERNET RELEASE IS AUTHORIZED.

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