AMENDMENTS

2006—Pub. L. 109–304 struck out subsec. (a) designation before ''An owner''.

§ 4703. Penalty for unlawful abandonment of barge

Thirty days after the notification procedures under section 4704(a)(1) are completed, the Secretary may assess a civil penalty of not more than $1,000 for each day of the violation against an owner or operator that violates section 4702. A vessel with respect to which a penalty is assessed under this chapter is liable in rem for the penalty.

(Added Pub. L. 102–587, title V, § 5302, Nov. 4, 1992, 106 Stat. 5082.)

§ 4704. Removal of abandoned barges

(a)(1) The Secretary may remove a barge that is abandoned after complying with the following procedures:

(A) If the identity of the owner or operator can be determined, the Secretary shall notify the owner or operator by certified mail—

(i) that if the barge is not removed it will be removed at the owner's or operator's expense; and

(ii) of the penalty under section 4703.

(B) If the identity of the owner or operator cannot be determined, the Secretary shall publish an announcement in—

(i) a notice to mariners; and

(ii) an official journal of the county in which the barge is located

that if the barge is not removed it will be removed at the owner's or operator's expense.

(2) The United States, and any officer or employee of the United States is not liable to an owner or operator for damages resulting from removal of an abandoned barge under this chapter.

(b) The owner or operator of an abandoned barge is liable, and an abandoned barge is liable in rem, for all expenses that the United States incurs in removing an abandoned barge under this chapter.

(c)(1) The Secretary may, after providing notice under subsection (a)(1), solicit by public advertisement sealed bids for the removal of an abandoned barge.

(2) After solicitation under paragraph (1) the Secretary may award a contract. The contract—

(A) may be subject to the condition that the barge and all property on the barge is the property of the barge removal contractor; and

(B) must require the barge removal contractor to submit to the Secretary a plan for the removal.

(3) Removal of an abandoned barge may begin thirty days after the Secretary completes the procedures under subsection (a)(1).

(Added Pub. L. 102–587, title V, § 5302, Nov. 4, 1992, 106 Stat. 5082.)

§ 4705. Liability of barge removal contractors

(a) A barge removal contractor and its subcontractor are not liable for damages that result from actions taken or omitted to be taken in the course of removing a barge under this chapter.

(b) Subsection (a) does not apply—

(1) with respect to personal injury or wrongful death; or

(2) if the contractor or subcontractor is grossly negligent or engages in willful misconduct.

(Added Pub. L. 102–587, title V, § 5302, Nov. 4, 1992, 106 Stat. 5083; amended Pub. L. 109–304, § 15(19), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1703.)

AMENDMENTS

2006—Pub. L. 109–304 in subsec. (a) struck out par. (1) designation before ''A barge removal'' and substituted ''subcontractor are not'' for ''subcontractor not'', redesignated par. (2) as subsec. (b) and subpars. (A) and (B) of former par. (2) as pars. (1) and (2) of subsec. (b), respectively, and substituted ''Subsection (a)'' for ''Paragraph (1)''.

PART C—LOAD LINES OF VESSELS

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Part C contains provisions that apply to load lines. A load line is a mark drawn on a vessel that indicates whether a vessel is overloaded. Load line requirements for international voyages are based not only on domestic law but also the 1966 International Load Line Convention.

CHAPTER 51—LOAD LINES

Sec.
5101. Definitions.
5102. Application.
5103. Load line requirements.
5104. Assignment of load lines.
5105. Load line surveys.
5106. Load line certificate.
5107. Delegation of authority.
5108. Special exemptions.
5109. Reciprocity for foreign vessels.
5110. Submersible vessels.
5111. Providing loading information.
5112. Loading restrictions.
5113. Detention of vessels.
5114. Use of Customs Service officers and employees for enforcement.
[5115. Repealed.]
5116. Penalties.

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Chapter 51 provides for the assignment of load lines and issuance of load line certificates to vessels, and requires that certain classes of vessels be marked with load lines.

AMENDMENTS

1990—Pub. L. 101–595, title VI, § 603(5)(B), Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 2993, struck out item 5115 ''Regulations''.

§ 5101. Definitions

In this chapter—

(1) ''domestic voyage'' means movement of a vessel between places in, or subject to the jurisdiction of, the United States, except movement between—

(A) a place in a territory or possession of the United States or the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands; and

(B) a place outside that territory, possession, or Trust Territory.

(2) ''economic benefit of the overloading'' means the amount obtained by multiplying

the weight of the overload (in tons) by the lesser of—

(A) the average freight rate value of a ton of the vessel's cargo for the voyage; or

(B) $50.

(3) ''existing vessel'' means—

(A) a vessel on a domestic voyage, the keel of which was laid, or that was at a similar stage of construction, before January 1, 1986; and

(B) a vessel on a foreign voyage, the keel of which was laid, or that was at a similar stage of construction, before July 21, 1968.

(4) ''freeboard'' means the distance from the mark of the load line assigned under this chapter to the freeboard deck.

(5) ''freeboard deck'' means the deck or other structure the Secretary prescribes by regulation.

(6) ''minimum safe freeboard'' means the freeboard that the Secretary decides cannot be reduced safely without limiting the operation of the vessel.

(7) ''weight of the overload'' means the amount obtained by multiplying the number of inches that the vessel is submerged below the applicable assigned freeboard by the tons-an-inch immersion factor for the vessel at the assigned minimum safe freeboard.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1913.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5101

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86a.

Section 5101 contains definitions that are limited to Chapter 51—Load Lines. Existing Section 46 App. U.S.C. 86a (which defines only the terms ''new ship'' and ''existing ship'') will be replaced by section 5101. Definitions of technical terms (''freeboard'', ''freeboard deck'', and ''minimum safe freeboard'') have been added for clarity. The definition of the term ''new ship'' has been deleted because the term is not used in Chapter 51. The definition of ''domestic voyage'' includes the phrase ''places in or subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.'' ''Places subject to the jurisdiction of the United States'' include deep water ports, production platforms, mining sites outside of territorial waters of the United States but within the United States' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) that was established by Presidential Proclamation 5030, dated March 10, 1983, or on the outer continental shelf. The phrases ''economic benefit of overloading'' and ''weight of the overload'' have been defined for purposes of establishing a standard method of determining the value of the cargo with which a vessel is overloaded. The value of the cargo will in turn affect the maximum penalty assessed for overloading the vessel. The definition of ''freeboard deck'' provides the Secretary with the authority to designate as the freeboard deck either the actual deck (on standard vessels) or another structure (on non-standard vessels). Non-standard vessels, for which this regulatory flexibility is necessary, include shelter deck vessels, semi-submersible multi-hull units, container ships, surface effect vessels, and commercial submarines.

TERMINATION OF TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

For termination of Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, see note set out preceding section 1681 of Title 48, Territories and Insular Possessions.

§ 5102. Application

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, this chapter applies to the following:

(1) a vessel of the United States.

(2) a vessel on the navigable waters of the United States.

(3) a vessel—

(A) owned by a citizen of the United States or a corporation established by or under the laws of the United States or a State; and

(B) not registered in a foreign country.

(4) a public vessel of the United States.

(5) a vessel otherwise subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

(b) This chapter does not apply to the following:

(1) a vessel of war.

(2) a recreational vessel when operated only for pleasure.

(3) a fishing vessel.

(4) a fish processing vessel of not more than 5,000 gross tons as measured under section 14502 of this title, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of this title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of this title that—

(A)(i) was constructed as a fish processing vessel before August 16, 1974; or

(ii) was converted for use as a fish processing vessel before January 1, 1983; and

(B) is not on a foreign voyage.

(5) a fish tender vessel of not more than 500 gross tons as measured under section 14502 of this title, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of this title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of this title that—

(A)(i) was constructed, under construction, or under contract to be constructed as a fish tender vessel before January 1, 1980; or

(ii) was converted for use as a fish tender vessel before January 1, 1983; and

(B)(i) is not on a foreign voyage; or

(ii) is not engaged in the Aleutian trade (except a vessel in that trade assigned a load line at any time before June 1, 1992).

(6) a vessel of the United States on a domestic voyage that does not cross the Boundary Line, except a voyage on the Great Lakes.

(7) a vessel of less than 24 meters (79 feet) overall in length.

(8) a public vessel of the United States on a domestic voyage.

(9) a vessel excluded from the application of this chapter by an international agreement to which the United States Government is a party.

(10) an existing vessel of not more than 150 gross tons as measured under section 14502 of this title, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of this title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of this title that is on a domestic voyage.

(11) a small passenger vessel on a domestic voyage.

(12) a vessel of the working fleet of the Panama Canal Commission not on a foreign voyage.

(c) On application by the owner and after a survey under section 5105 of this title, the Secretary may assign load lines for a vessel excluded from the application of this chapter

under subsection (b) of this section. A vessel assigned load lines under this subsection is subject to this chapter until the surrender of its load line certificate and the removal of its load line marks.

(d) This chapter does not affect an international agreement to which the Government is a party that is not in conflict with the International Convention on Load Lines currently in force for the United States.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1914; Pub. L. 101–595, title VI, § 602(d), Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 2991; Pub. L. 104–324, title VII, § 719, Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3938; Pub. L. 107–295, title IV, § 436(a), Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2129.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5102

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86b, 86c, 88.

The delineation of the vessels that will be subject to load line requirements is made in section 5102 as follows: subsection (a) is an all-inclusive list of vessels subject to load line requirements, followed by subsection (b) which specifically exempts those vessels to which the requirements do not apply.

Section 5102(a) lists five categories of vessels which are subject to load line requirements. They are as follows:

Clause (1) regarding ''a vessel of the United States'' includes all vessels documented under Chapter 121 of title 46 or numbered under Chapter 123 of title 46.

Clause (2) regarding ''a vessel on the navigable waters of the United States'' includes all domestic or foreign vessels found in or on the navigable waters of the United States.

Clause (3) regarding ''a vessel owned by a citizen of the United States or a corporation established by or under the laws of the United States or a State, and not registered in a foreign country'' includes all vessels owned by citizens of the United States (as defined in 5107(7)) [sic] and not registered under the laws of a foreign country, wherever the vessels may be located.

Clause (4) regarding ''a public vessel of the United States'' includes all United States public vessels.

Clause (5) regarding ''a vessel otherwise subject to the jurisdiction of the United States'' includes foreign vessels that are subject to United States jurisdiction as a result of bilateral agreements, licenses, customary international law or other means, including those using deepwater port or outer continental shelf or EEZ facilities located in areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

Section 5102(b) lists the specific exemptions from load line requirements. The specific exemptions may be grouped as follows:

(a) Vessel type (ships of war, pleasure vessels, fishing vessels, small passenger vessels on domestic voyages);

(b) Area of operation (rivers, harbors, bays, sounds, etc.);

(c) Minimum size (length); and

(d) Treaty exclusions.

Clause (1) exempts vessels of war from load line requirements.

Clause (2) exempts recreational vessels operated only for pleasure from load line requirements.

Clause (3) exempts fishing vessels from load line requirements.

Clauses (4) and (5) exempt certain existing fish processing and fish tender vessels not on a foreign voyage from load line requirements. The exception is limited to those vessels not on international voyages to ensure compliance with United States obligations under the International Load Line Convention.

Clause (6) exempts from load line requirements all U.S. vessels operating on domestic voyages within the Boundary Line, as defined in section 2101 of this title, except vessels operating on the Great Lakes.

Clause (7) exempts all vessels that are less than 24 meters (79 feet) in length from load line requirements whether on international or domestic voyages.

Clause (8) exempts from load line requirements those public vessels that are on domestic voyages.

Clause (9) exempts from load line requirements those vessels which have been excluded from the requirements ''by specific action of a treaty of the United States.'' The only current treaty which excludes vessels from load line requirements is the Convention Between the United States of America and the Dominion of Canada Concerning Load Lines (49 Stat. 2685), which entered into force on August 11, 1934.

Clause (10) exempts from load line requirements existing U.S. vessels that are under 150 gross tons while engaged on a domestic voyage. This is a grandfather provision, continuing the existing exemption for these vessels. Vessels built after January 1, 1986 must be marked with a load line, however, if they are over 79 feet long and do not qualify for any other exemption.

Clause (11) exempts small passenger vessels engaged on domestic voyages from load line requirements. Small passenger vessels are inspected under Subchapter T of Title 46 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Under Subchapter T, the Coast Guard regulates these vessels with regard to safety; the requirements are based on the number of passengers, length, and gross tonnage of the vessel. Safety-related requirements in Subchapter T regulations include hull structure and watertightness, stability, weathertight integrity, and safe movement of persons on deck, the principal safety features covered by load line regulations. This specific exemption from load line requirements for small passenger vessels is consistent with existing law and does not alter in any way the Coast Guard's authority to regulate small passenger vessels under Subchapter T.

Clause (12) exempts vessels of the working voyages from the requirement to have load lines.

Section 5102(c) authorizes the Secretary to assign load lines for any vessel exempted from load line requirements by subsection (b) upon the request of the owner. It also provides that any exempted vessel for which load lines are assigned will remain subject to the load line requirements until its load line certificate is surrendered and the load line marks are removed.

Section 5102(d) provides that this chapter shall not be construed as abrogating the provisions of other treaties and conventions to which the United States is a party, which are not in conflict with the International Convention on Load Lines.

AMENDMENTS

2002—Subsec. (b)(5)(B)(ii). Pub. L. 107–295 inserted ''is not'' after ''(ii)''.

1996—Subsec. (b)(4). Pub. L. 104–324, § 719(1), inserted ''as measured under section 14502 of this title, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of this title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of this title'' after ''5,000 gross tons'' in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (b)(5). Pub. L. 104–324, § 719(2), inserted ''as measured under section 14502 of this title, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of this title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of this title'' after ''500 gross tons'' in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (b)(10). Pub. L. 104–324, § 719(3), inserted ''as measured under section 14502 of this title, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of this title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of this title'' after ''150 gross tons''.

1990—Subsec. (b)(5)(B). Pub. L. 101–595 amended subpar. (B) generally. Prior to amendment, subpar. (B) read as follows: ''is not on a foreign voyage.''

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1990 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 101–595 effective Nov. 16, 1990, with provision that before Jan. 1, 2003, a fish tender

vessel is exempt from this chapter when engaged in Aleutian trade if the vessel either operated in that trade before Sept. 8, 1990, or was purchased before that date to be used in such trade and entered into service in that trade before June 1, 1992, did not undergo a major conversion, and did not have a load line assigned at any time before Nov. 16, 1990, see section 602(f) of Pub. L. 101–595, set out as a note under section 4502 of this title.

FISH TENDER VESSELS IN ALEUTIAN TRADE

Pub. L. 107–295, title IV, § 436(b), (c), Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2129, provided that:

''(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—Except as provided in subsection (c), a fish tender vessel that before January 1, 2003, transported cargo (not including fishery related products) in the Aleutian trade is subject to chapter 51 of title 46, United States Code (as amended by subsection (a) of this section [amending this section]).

''(c) EXCEPTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Before December 31, 2006, the BOWFIN (United States official number 604231) is exempt from chapter 51 of title 46, United States Code (as amended by subsection (a) of this section) when engaged in the Aleutian trade, if the vessel does not undergo a major conversion.

''(2) ENSURING SAFETY.—Before the date referred to in paragraph (1), a Coast Guard official who has reason to believe that the vessel referred to in paragraph (1) operating under this subsection is in a condition or is operated in a manner that creates an immediate threat to life or the environment or is operated in a manner that is inconsistent with section 3302 of title 46, United States Code, may direct the master or individual in charge to take immediate and reasonable steps to safeguard life and the environment, including directing the vessel to a port or other refuge.''

[For transfer of authorities, functions, personnel, and assets of the Coast Guard, including the authorities and functions of the Secretary of Transportation relating thereto, to the Department of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 468(b), 551(d), 552(d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6.]

§ 5103. Load line requirements

(a) A vessel may be operated only if the vessel has been assigned load lines.

(b) The owner, charterer, managing operator, agent, master, and individual in charge of a vessel shall mark and maintain the load lines permanently and conspicuously in the way prescribed by the Secretary.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1915.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5103

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86c, 88b.

Section 5103(a) prohibits a vessel that is subject to load line requirements from operating, unless it has load lines assigned by the Secretary.

Section 5103(b) requires that load lines be permanently and conspicuously maintained in the manner prescribed by the Secretary.

§ 5104. Assignment of load lines

(a) The Secretary shall assign load lines for a vessel so that they indicate the minimum safe freeboard to which the vessel may be loaded. However, if the owner requests, the Secretary may assign load lines that result in greater freeboard than the minimum safe freeboard.

(b) In assigning load lines for a vessel, the Secretary shall consider—

(1) the service, type, and character of the vessel;

(2) the geographic area in which the vessel will operate; and

(3) applicable international agreements to which the United States Government is a party.

(c) An existing vessel may retain its load lines assigned before January 1, 1986, unless the Secretary decides that a substantial change in the vessel after those load lines were assigned requires that new load lines be assigned under this chapter.

(d) The minimum freeboard of an existing vessel may be reduced only if the vessel complies with every applicable provision of this chapter.

(e) The Secretary may designate by regulation specific geographic areas that have less severe weather or sea conditions and from which there is adequate time to return to available safe harbors. The Secretary may reduce the minimum freeboard of a vessel operating in these areas.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1915.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5104

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86c, 88a.

Section 5104(a) requires the Secretary to assign load lines indicating the minimum safe freeboard to which a vessel may be loaded. It also authorizes the Secretary to assign a load line that results in a freeboard that is greater than the minimum freeboard, if the owner requests.

Section 5104(b) sets forth guidelines that the Secretary must consider when assigning load lines on vessels.

Section 5104(c) allows an existing vessel to retain its load line assigned before January 1, 1986, unless the Secretary decides that a change made in the vessel requires the assignment of a new load line.

Section 5104(d) is a new provision that requires that a vessel comply with all the provisions of this chapter before the Secretary will consider a reduction in its minimum freeboard. This provision is similar to Article 4(4) of the International Convention on Load Lines.

Section 5104(e) is a new provision that authorized the Secretary to designate specific geographic areas having relatively non-severe weather or sea conditions and from which there is adequate time to return to safe harbors. Section 5104(e) also authorizes the Secretary to reduce the minimum freeboard of vessels operating in these areas. Regulations that have been issued under this authority (46 C.F.R. 44) authorize special service load lines for vessels operating not more than 20 nautical miles offshore or between islands in a group.

§ 5105. Load line surveys

(a) The Secretary may provide for annual, renewal, and other load line surveys.

(b) In conducting a load line survey, the Secretary shall consider whether—

(1) the hull and fittings of the vessel—

(A) are adequate to protect the vessel from the sea; and

(B) meet other requirements the Secretary may prescribe by regulation;

(2) the strength of the hull is adequate for all loading conditions;

(3) the stability of the vessel is adequate for all loading conditions;

(4) the topsides of the vessel are arranged and constructed to allow rapid overboard drainage of deck water in heavy weather; and

(5) the topsides of the vessel are adequate in design, arrangement, and equipment to protect crewmembers performing outside tasks necessary for safe operation of the vessel.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1916.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5105

Section 5105 authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to provide for load line surveys and requires that while conducting a load line survey, the Secretary must consider various strength, stability, design, and construction features of the vessel.

§ 5106. Load line certificate

(a) On finding that a load line survey of a vessel under this chapter is satisfactory and that the vessel's load lines are marked correctly, the Secretary shall issue the vessel a load line certificate and deliver it to the owner, master, or individual in charge of the vessel.

(b) The certificate shall be maintained as required by the Secretary.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1916.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5106

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86c.

Section 5106(a) requires the Secretary to issue a load line certificate upon finding that a vessel has received a satisfactory load line survey and that the vessel's load line is marked correctly.

Section 5106(b) requires that the load line certificate be maintained as required by the Secretary of Transportation. It is expected that the Secretary will require in most cases that the certificate be carried on board the vessel. However, certain types of vessels such as barges do not have facilities for the carriage of certificates. In this case, this provision would give the Secretary the discretion to require that the certificates for the barges be carried on the towing vessels.

§ 5107. Delegation of authority

(a) The Secretary shall delegate to the American Bureau of Shipping or other similarly qualified organizations the authority to assign load lines, survey vessels, determine that load lines are marked correctly, and issue load line certificates under this chapter.

(b) Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, a decision of an organization delegated authority under subsection (a) of this section related to the assignment of a load line may be appealed to the Secretary.

(c) For a vessel intended to be engaged on a foreign voyage, the Secretary may delegate to another country that is a party to the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, the authority to assign load lines, survey vessels, determine that the load lines are marked correctly, and issue an International Load Line Certificate (1966).

(d) The Secretary may terminate a delegation made under this section after giving written notice to the organization.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1916.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5107

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86d, 88b.

Section 5107(a) requires the Secretary to delegate the performance of various load line functions to the American Bureau of Shipping or other similarly qualified organizations. In providing for the delegation to a ''similarly qualified organization,'' the Committee expects that the Secretary will ensure that that organization complies with the same stringent standards and requirements for conducting business that apply to the American Bureau of Shipping.

Section 5107(b) permits an appeal to the Secretary of a decision by an organization that has received delegated authority. This ensures that the Secretary has full oversight of the delegated load line functions.

Section 5107(c) permits the Secretary to delegate various load line functions to another country for vessels that are engaged on a foreign voyage, provided that the country is a party to the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966.

Section 5107(d) clarifies the Secretary's authority to revoke a delegation at any time without cause. This authority is given so that no delay occurs administratively in revoking a delegation whenever the Secretary decides a revocation is warranted.

§ 5108. Special exemptions

(a) The Secretary may exempt a vessel from any part of this chapter when—

(1) the vessel is entitled to an exemption under an international agreement to which the United States Government is a party; or

(2) under regulations (including regulations on special operations conditions) prescribed by the Secretary, the Secretary finds that good cause exists for granting an exemption.

(b) When the Secretary grants an exemption under this section, the Secretary may issue a certificate of exemption stating the extent of the exemption.

(c) A certificate of exemption issued under subsection (b) of this section shall be maintained as required by the Secretary.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1916.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5108

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86e, 88a.

Section 5108(a) authorizes the Secretary to exempt a vessel from load line requirements if the vessel is entitled to an exemption under an international agreement to which the United States is a party. It also provides the Secretary with the new authority to exempt a vessel from load line requirements if the Secretary finds that there is good reason for granting the exemption. A specific exemption from load line requirements was authorized in Public Law 98–557 for barges operating close to shore between Calumet Harbor, Illinois and Burns Harbor, Indiana, because the geographic area and type of operation in this case did not warrant a requirement for load lines. Additional exemptions currently must be made by an Act of Congress. Section 5108(a) authorizes the Secretary to make such exemptions through regulation, and the Committee expects the Secretary to continue the exemption under this provision for vessels operating close to shore between Calumet Harbor, Illinois and Burns Harbor, Indiana.

Section 5108(b) authorizes the Secretary to issue a certificate of exemption when an exemption is granted.

Section 5108(c) requires that the certificate of exemption be maintained as required by the Secretary in a similar manner as under section 5106(b).

§ 5109. Reciprocity for foreign vessels

(a) When the Secretary finds that the laws and regulations of a foreign country related to load

lines are similar to those of this chapter and the regulations prescribed under this chapter, or when a foreign country is a party to an international load line agreement to which the United States Government is a party, the Secretary shall accept the load line marks and certificate of a vessel of that foreign country as complying with this chapter and the regulations prescribed under this chapter. The Secretary may control the vessel as provided for in the applicable international agreement.

(b) Subsection (a) of this section does not apply to a vessel of a foreign country that does not recognize load lines assigned under this chapter.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1917.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5109

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86f, 88d.

Section 5109(a) requires the Secretary to accept the load line mark and load line certificate of a vessel of a foreign country if the Secretary finds that the load line laws and regulations of that country are similar to those of this chapter, or if that country is a party to an international load line agreement to which the United States is a party.

§ 5110. Submersible vessels

Notwithstanding sections 5103–5105 of this title, the Secretary may prescribe regulations for submersible vessels to provide a minimum level of safety. In developing the regulations, the Secretary shall consider factors relevant to submersible vessels, including the structure, stability, and watertight integrity of those vessels.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1917.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5110

Section 5110 authorizes the Secretary to prescribe regulations for the marking of load lines of submersible vessels. This general authority has been included in anticipation of the commercial development of submersibles.

§ 5111. Providing loading information

The Secretary may prescribe regulations requiring the owner, charterer, managing operator, and agent of a vessel to provide loading information (including information on loading distribution, stability, and margin of strength) to the master or individual in charge of the vessel in a language the master or individual understands.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1917.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Section 5111 authorizes the Secretary to prescribe regulations requiring that the master of a vessel be provided with loading and stability information for the vessel that the master understands.

§ 5112. Loading restrictions

(a) A vessel may not be loaded in a way that submerges the assigned load line or the place at which the load line is required to be marked on the vessel.

(b) If the loading or stability conditions of a vessel change, the master or individual in charge of the vessel, before moving the vessel, shall record in the official logbook or other permanent record of the vessel—

(1) the position of the assigned load line relative to the water surface; and

(2) the draft of the vessel fore and aft.

(c) A vessel may be operated only if the loading distribution, stability, and margin of strength are adequate for the voyage or movement intended.

(d) Subsections (a) and (b) of this section do not apply to a submersible vessel.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1917.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5112

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86g, 88c, 88e.

Section 5112(a) prohibits a vessel from being loaded in a manner that submerges its load line.

Section 5112(b) requires that whenever the loading or stability conditions of a vessel change, the master or individual in charge of the vessel must record in the official logbook the position of the load line and the draft of the vessel.

Section 5112(c) is a new provision that provides that a vessel may be operated only if the loading distribution, stability, and margin of strength are adequate for the intended voyage or movement.

Section 5112(d) provides that subsections (a) and (b) do not apply to a submersible vessel.

§ 5113. Detention of vessels

(a) When the Secretary believes that a vessel is about to leave a place in the United States in violation of this chapter or a regulation prescribed under this chapter, the Secretary may detain the vessel by giving notice to the owner, charterer, managing operator, agent, master, or individual in charge of the vessel.

(b) A detained vessel may be cleared under section 60105 of this title only after the violation has been corrected. If the vessel was cleared before being detained, the clearance shall be withdrawn.

(c) Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, the owner, charterer, managing operator, agent, master, or individual in charge of a detained vessel may petition the Secretary to review the detention order.

(d) After reviewing a petition, the Secretary may affirm, withdraw, or change the detention order. Before acting on the petition, the Secretary may require any independent survey that may be necessary to determine the condition of the vessel.

(e) The owner of a vessel is liable for the cost incident to a petition for review and any required survey if the vessel is found to be in violation of this chapter or a regulation prescribed under this chapter.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1918; Pub. L. 109–304, § 15(20), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1703.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5113

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86h, 88f.

Section 5113 authorizes the Secretary to detain a vessel if the Secretary believes that the vessel is in violation of the load line requirements, and describes the process through which a vessel may be cleared. It also states that a vessel owner is liable for certain costs resulting from a petition for review and load line survey that is made pursuant to a violation of load line requirements.

AMENDMENTS

2006—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 109–304 substituted ''section 60105 of this title'' for ''section 4197 of the Revised Statutes (46 App. U.S.C. 91)''.

§ 5114. Use of Customs Service officers and employees for enforcement

(a) With the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary may use an officer or employee of the United States Customs Service to enforce this chapter and the regulations prescribed under this chapter.

(b) The Secretary shall consult with the Secretary of the Treasury before prescribing a regulation that affects the enforcement responsibilities of an officer or employee of the Customs Service.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1918; Pub. L. 101–595, title VI, § 603(4), Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 2993.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5114

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86

Section 5114(a) authorizes the Secretary to use a Customs Service officer or employee to enforce load line requirements. The expected role of a Customs Service officer or employee in this regard is to ensure that a vessel is carrying a load line certificate and that the load line is not submerged.

Section 5114(b) requires the Secretary to consult with the Secretary of the Treasury before prescribing a regulation that affects the enforcement responsibilities of a Customs Service officer or employee.

AMENDMENTS

1990—Pub. L. 101–595 substituted ''officers and employees'' for ''officers employees'' in section catchline.

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of functions, personnel, assets, and liabilities of the United States Customs Service of the Department of the Treasury, including functions of the Secretary of the Treasury relating thereto, to the Secretary of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 203(1), 551(d), 552(d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6.

[§ 5115. Repealed. Pub. L. 101–595, title VI, § 603(5)(A), Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 2993]

Section, Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1918, authorized Secretary to prescribe regulations to carry out this chapter.

§ 5116. Penalties

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the owner, charterer, managing operator, agent, master, and individual in charge of a vessel violating this chapter or a regulation prescribed under this chapter are each liable to the United States Government for a civil penalty of not more than $5,000. Each day of a continuing violation is a separate violation. The vessel also is liable in rem for the penalty.

(b) The owner, charterer, managing operator, agent, master, and individual in charge of a vessel allowing, causing, attempting to cause, or failing to take reasonable care to prevent a violation of section 5112(a) of this title are each liable to the Government for a civil penalty of not more than $10,000 plus an additional amount equal to twice the economic benefit of the overloading. The vessel also is liable in rem for the penalty.

(c) The master or individual in charge of a vessel violating section 5112(b) of this title is liable to the Government for a civil penalty of not more than $5,000. The vessel also is liable in rem for the penalty.

(d) A person causing or allowing the departure of a vessel from a place within the jurisdiction of the United States in violation of a detention order issued under section 5113 of this title commits a class A misdemeanor.

(e) A person causing or allowing the alteration, concealment, or removal of a mark placed on a vessel under section 5103(b) of this title and the regulations prescribed under this chapter, except to make a lawful change or to escape enemy capture in time of war, commits a class A misdemeanor.

(Pub. L. 99–509, title V, § 5101(2), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1918; Pub. L. 101–380, title IV, § 4302(d), Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 538.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised section 5116

Source: Section (U.S. Code) 46 App. U.S.C. 86i, 88g.

Section 5116 provides penalties for violations of load line requirements. The penalties are raised substantially from existing law to provide a sufficient deterrence against violations of the load line requirements and to conform with the level of penalties throughout the subtitle. The monetary penalties have not been changed since the 1930's.

Section 5116(a) raises from $1,000 to $5,000 the maximum penalty for violation of a load line provision under this chapter or a regulation promulgated under this chapter.

Section 5116(b) raises from $1,000 to $10,000 the maximum penalty for loading a vessel in such a way as to submerge the load line. In addition, a violator must pay up to two times the amount of the economic benefit of the overloading.

Section 5116(c) raises from $500 to $5,000 the maximum penalty for a violation of the requirement in section 5112(b) that the load line position and draft of a vessel be noted in the logbook.

Section 5116(a)–(c) also states that the vessel is liable in rem for the penalty.

Section 5116(d) raises from $1,000 to $10,000 the maximum penalty for a violation of a detention order and may also include imprisonment for up to one year.

Section 5116(e) raises from $2,000 to $10,000 the maximum penalty for the alteration, removal, or concealment of a load line mark and may also include imprisonment for two years.

AMENDMENTS

1990—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 101–380, § 4302(d)(1), substituted ''commits a class A misdemeanor'' for ''shall be fined not more than $10,000, imprisoned for not more than one year, or both''.

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 101–380, § 4302(d)(2), substituted ''commits a class A misdemeanor'' for ''shall be fined not more than $10,000, imprisoned for not more than 2 years, or both''.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1990 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 101–380 applicable to incidents occurring after Aug. 18, 1990, see section 1020 of Pub. L. 101–380, set out as an Effective Date note under section 2701 of Title 33, Navigation and Navigable Waters.

PART D—MARINE CASUALTIES

CHAPTER 61—REPORTING MARINE CASUALTIES

Sec.
6101. Marine casualties and reporting.
6102. State marine casualty reporting system.
6103. Penalty.
6104. Commercial fishing industry vessel casualty statistics.

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Chapter 61 provides for the reporting of marine casualties and incidents involving all United States flag vessels occurring anywhere in the world and any foreign flag vessel operating on waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

AMENDMENTS

1988—Pub. L. 100–424, § 4(c), Sept. 9, 1988, 102 Stat. 1591, added item 6104.

§ 6101. Marine casualties and reporting

(a) The Secretary shall prescribe regulations on the marine casualties to be reported and the manner of reporting. The regulations shall require reporting the following marine casualties:

(1) death of an individual.

(2) serious injury to an individual.

(3) material loss of property.

(4) material damage affecting the seaworthiness or efficiency of the vessel.

(5) significant harm to the environment.

(b) A marine casualty shall be reported within 5 days as provided in this part and regulations prescribed under this part. Each report filed under this section shall include information as to whether the use of alcohol contributed to the casualty.

[(c) Repealed. Pub. L. 98–498, title II, § 212(b)(1)(B), Oct. 19, 1984, 98 Stat. 2306.]

(d)(1) This part applies to a foreign vessel when involved in a marine casualty on the navigable waters of the United States.

(2) This part applies, to the extent consistent with generally recognized principles of international law, to a foreign vessel constructed or adapted to carry, or that carries, oil in bulk as cargo or cargo residue involved in a marine casualty described under subsection (a)(4) or (5) in waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, including the Exclusive Economic Zone.

(e) A marine casualty not resulting in the death of an individual shall be classified according to the gravity of the casualty, as prescribed by regulation, giving consideration to the extent of injuries to individuals, the extent of property damage, the dangers that the casualty creates, and the size, occupation, and means of propulsion of each vessel involved.

(f)(1) This chapter applies to a marine casualty involving a United States citizen on a foreign passenger vessel operating south of 75 degrees north latitude, west of 35 degrees west longitude, and east of the International Date Line; or operating in the area south of 60 degrees south latitude that—

(A) embarks or disembarks passengers in the United States; or

(B) transports passengers traveling under any form of air and sea ticket package marketed in the United States.

(2) When there is a marine casualty described in paragraph (1) of this subsection and an investigation is conducted, the Secretary shall ensure that the investigation—

(A) is thorough and timely; and

(B) produces findings and recommendations to improve safety on passenger vessels.

(3) When there is a marine casualty described in paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Secretary may—

(A) seek a multinational investigation of the casualty under auspices of the International Maritime Organization; or

(B) conduct an investigation of the casualty under chapter 63 of this title.

(g) To the extent consistent with generally recognized practices and procedures of international law, this part applies to a foreign vessel involved in a marine casualty or incident, as defined in the International Maritime Organization Code for the Investigation of Marine Casualties and Incidents, where the United States is a Substantially Interested State and is, or has the consent of, the Lead Investigating State under the Code.

(h)(1) The Secretary shall publish all major marine casualty reports prepared in accordance with this section in an electronic form, and shall provide information electronically regarding how other marine casualty reports can be obtained.

(2) For purposes of this paragraph, the term ''major marine casualty'' means a casualty involving a vessel, other than a public vessel, that results in—

(A) the loss of 6 or more lives;

(B) the loss of a mechanically propelled vessel of 100 or more gross tons;

(C) property damage initially estimated at $500,000 or more; or

(D) serious threat, as determined by the Commandant of the Coast Guard with concurrence by the Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, to life, property, or the environment by hazardous materials.

(i) The Secretary shall, as soon as possible, and no later than January 1, 2005, publish all marine casualty reports prepared in accordance with this section in an electronic form.

(Pub. L. 98–89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 536; Pub. L. 98–498, title II, § 212(b)(1), Oct. 19, 1984, 98 Stat. 2306; Pub. L. 98–557, § 7(b)(1), Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2862; Pub. L. 101–380, title IV, § 4106(b), Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 513; Pub. L. 102–241, § 33, Dec. 19, 1991, 105 Stat. 2222; Pub. L. 107–295, title IV, §§ 423, 442(a), Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2125, 2132; Pub. L. 109–241, title IX, § 901(*o*), July 11, 2006, 120 Stat. 565; Pub. L. 109–304, § 15(21), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1704; Pub. L. 110–181, div. C, title XXXV, § 3529(c)(1), Jan. 28, 2008, 122 Stat. 603.)