

(Pub. L. 100-688, title IV, § 4202, Nov. 18, 1988, 102 Stat. 4159.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972, referred to in subsec. (a), is Pub. L. 92-532, Oct. 23, 1972, 86 Stat. 1052, as amended, which is classified generally to chapters 27 (§ 1401 et seq.) and 41 (§ 2801 et seq.) of this title and chapters 32 (§ 1431 et seq.) and 32A (§ 1447 et seq.) of Title 16, Conservation. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1401 of this title and Tables.

The Solid Waste Disposal Act, referred to in subsec. (a), is title II of Pub. L. 89-272, Oct. 20, 1965, 79 Stat. 997, as amended generally by Pub. L. 94-580, § 2, Oct. 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2795, which is classified generally to chapter 82 (§ 6901 et seq.) of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 6901 of Title 42 and Tables.

§ 2623. Authorization of appropriations

There are authorized to be appropriated \$1,500,000 for each of the fiscal years 1989 and 1990, to carry out this chapter.

(Pub. L. 100-688, title IV, § 4203, Nov. 18, 1988, 102 Stat. 4160.)

CHAPTER 40—OIL POLLUTION

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SUBCHAPTER I—OIL POLLUTION LIABILITY AND COMPENSATION

§ 2701. Definitions

For the purposes of this Act, the term—

(1) “act of God” means an unanticipated grave natural disaster or other natural phenomenon of an exceptional, inevitable, and irresistible character the effects of which could not have been prevented or avoided by the exercise of due care or foresight;

(2) “barrel” means 42 United States gallons at 60 degrees fahrenheit;

(3) “claim” means a request, made in writing for a sum certain, for compensation for damages or removal costs resulting from an incident;

(4) “claimant” means any person or government who presents a claim for compensation under this subchapter;

(5) “damages” means damages specified in section 2702(b) of this title, and includes the cost of assessing these damages;

(6) “deepwater port” is a facility licensed under the Deepwater Port Act of 1974 (33 U.S.C. 1501-1524);

(7) “discharge” means any emission (other than natural seepage), intentional or unintentional, and includes, but is not limited to, spilling, leaking, pumping, pouring, emitting, emptying, or dumping;

(8) “exclusive economic zone” means the zone established by Presidential Proclamation Numbered 5030, dated March 10, 1983, including the ocean waters of the areas referred to as “eastern special areas” in Article 3(1) of the Agreement between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Maritime Boundary, signed June 1, 1990;

(9) “facility” means any structure, group of structures, equipment, or device (other than a vessel) which is used for one or more of the following purposes: exploring for, drilling for, producing, storing, handling, transferring, processing, or transporting oil. This term includes any motor vehicle, rolling stock, or pipeline used for one or more of these purposes;

(10) “foreign offshore unit” means a facility which is located, in whole or in part, in the territorial sea or on the continental shelf of a foreign country and which is or was used for one or more of the following purposes: exploring for, drilling for, producing, storing, handling, transferring, processing, or transporting oil produced from the seabed beneath the foreign country’s territorial sea or from the foreign country’s continental shelf;

(11) “Fund” means the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, established by section 9509 of title 26;

(12) “gross ton” has the meaning given that term by the Secretary under part J of title 46;

(13) “guarantor” means any person, other than the responsible party, who provides evidence of financial responsibility for a responsible party under this Act;

(14) “incident” means any occurrence or series of occurrences having the same origin, involving one or more vessels, facilities, or any

combination thereof, resulting in the discharge or substantial threat of discharge of oil;

(15) "Indian tribe" means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, but not including any Alaska Native regional or village corporation, which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians and has governmental authority over lands belonging to or controlled by the tribe;

(16) "lessee" means a person holding a leasehold interest in an oil or gas lease on lands beneath navigable waters (as that term is defined in section 1301(a) of title 43) or on submerged lands of the Outer Continental Shelf, granted or maintained under applicable State law or the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.);

(17) "liable" or "liability" shall be construed to be the standard of liability which obtains under section 1321 of this title;

(18) "mobile offshore drilling unit" means a vessel (other than a self-elevating lift vessel) capable of use as an offshore facility;

(19) "National Contingency Plan" means the National Contingency Plan prepared and published under section 1321(d) of this title or revised under section 105 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 U.S.C. 9605);

(20) "natural resources" includes land, fish, wildlife, biota, air, water, ground water, drinking water supplies, and other such resources belonging to, managed by, held in trust by, appertaining to, or otherwise controlled by the United States (including the resources of the exclusive economic zone), any State or local government or Indian tribe, or any foreign government;

(21) "navigable waters" means the waters of the United States, including the territorial sea;

(22) "offshore facility" means any facility of any kind located in, on, or under any of the navigable waters of the United States, and any facility of any kind which is subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and is located in, on, or under any other waters, other than a vessel or a public vessel;

(23) "oil" means oil of any kind or in any form, including petroleum, fuel oil, sludge, oil refuse, and oil mixed with wastes other than dredged spoil, but does not include any substance which is specifically listed or designated as a hazardous substance under subparagraphs (A) through (F) of section 101(14) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 U.S.C. 9601) and which is subject to the provisions of that Act [42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.];

(24) "onshore facility" means any facility (including, but not limited to, motor vehicles and rolling stock) of any kind located in, on, or under, any land within the United States other than submerged land;

(25) the term "Outer Continental Shelf facility" means an offshore facility which is located, in whole or in part, on the Outer Continental Shelf and is or was used for one or

more of the following purposes: exploring for, drilling for, producing, storing, handling, transferring, processing, or transporting oil produced from the Outer Continental Shelf;

(26) "owner or operator"—

(A) means—

(i) in the case of a vessel, any person owning, operating, or chartering by demise, the vessel;

(ii) in the case of an onshore or offshore facility, any person owning or operating such facility;

(iii) in the case of any abandoned offshore facility, the person who owned or operated such facility immediately prior to such abandonment;

(iv) in the case of any facility, title or control of which was conveyed due to bankruptcy, foreclosure, tax delinquency, abandonment, or similar means to a unit of State or local government, any person who owned, operated, or otherwise controlled activities at such facility immediately beforehand;

(v) notwithstanding subparagraph (B)(i), and in the same manner and to the same extent, both procedurally and substantively, as any nongovernmental entity, including for purposes of liability under section 2702 of this title, any State or local government that has caused or contributed to a discharge or substantial threat of a discharge of oil from a vessel or facility ownership or control of which was acquired involuntarily through—

(I) seizure or otherwise in connection with law enforcement activity;

(II) bankruptcy;

(III) tax delinquency;

(IV) abandonment; or

(V) other circumstances in which the government involuntarily acquires title by virtue of its function as sovereign;

(vi) notwithstanding subparagraph (B)(ii), a person that is a lender and that holds indicia of ownership primarily to protect a security interest in a vessel or facility if, while the borrower is still in possession of the vessel or facility encumbered by the security interest, the person—

(I) exercises decision making control over the environmental compliance related to the vessel or facility, such that the person has undertaken responsibility for oil handling or disposal practices related to the vessel or facility; or

(II) exercises control at a level comparable to that of a manager of the vessel or facility, such that the person has assumed or manifested responsibility—

(aa) for the overall management of the vessel or facility encompassing day-to-day decision making with respect to environmental compliance; or

(bb) over all or substantially all of the operational functions (as distinguished from financial or administrative functions) of the vessel or facility other than the function of environmental compliance; and

(B) does not include—

(i) A unit of state or local government that acquired ownership or control of a vessel or facility involuntarily through—

- (I) seizure or otherwise in connection with law enforcement activity;
- (II) bankruptcy;
- (III) tax delinquency;
- (IV) abandonment; or
- (V) other circumstances in which the government involuntarily acquires title by virtue of its function as sovereign;

(ii) a person that is a lender that does not participate in management of a vessel or facility, but holds indicia of ownership primarily to protect the security interest of the person in the vessel or facility; or

(iii) a person that is a lender that did not participate in management of a vessel or facility prior to foreclosure, notwithstanding that the person—

- (I) forecloses on the vessel or facility; and
- (II) after foreclosure, sells, re-leases (in the case of a lease finance transaction), or liquidates the vessel or facility, maintains business activities, winds up operations, undertakes a removal action under section 1321(c) of this title or under the direction of an on-scene coordinator appointed under the National Contingency Plan, with respect to the vessel or facility, or takes any other measure to preserve, protect, or prepare the vessel or facility prior to sale or disposition,

if the person seeks to sell, re-lease (in the case of a lease finance transaction), or otherwise divest the person of the vessel or facility at the earliest practicable, commercially reasonable time, on commercially reasonable terms, taking into account market conditions and legal and regulatory requirements;

(27) “person” means an individual, corporation, partnership, association, State, municipality, commission, or political subdivision of a State, or any interstate body;

(28) “permittee” means a person holding an authorization, license, or permit for geological exploration issued under section 11 of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1340) or applicable State law;

(29) “public vessel” means a vessel owned or bareboat chartered and operated by the United States, or by a State or political subdivision thereof, or by a foreign nation, except when the vessel is engaged in commerce;

(30) “remove” or “removal” means containment and removal of oil or a hazardous substance from water and shorelines or the taking of other actions as may be necessary to minimize or mitigate damage to the public health or welfare, including, but not limited to, fish, shellfish, wildlife, and public and private property, shorelines, and beaches;

(31) “removal costs” means the costs of removal that are incurred after a discharge of oil has occurred or, in any case in which there is a substantial threat of a discharge of oil,

the costs to prevent, minimize, or mitigate oil pollution from such an incident;

(32) “responsible party” means the following:

(A) VESSELS.—In the case of a vessel, any person owning, operating, or demise chartering the vessel.

(B) ONSHORE FACILITIES.—In the case of an onshore facility (other than a pipeline), any person owning or operating the facility, except a Federal agency, State, municipality, commission, or political subdivision of a State, or any interstate body, that as the owner transfers possession and right to use the property to another person by lease, assignment, or permit.

(C) OFFSHORE FACILITIES.—In the case of an offshore facility (other than a pipeline or a deepwater port licensed under the Deepwater Port Act of 1974 (33 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.)), the lessee or permittee of the area in which the facility is located or the holder of a right of use and easement granted under applicable State law or the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1301–1356) for the area in which the facility is located (if the holder is a different person than the lessee or permittee), except a Federal agency, State, municipality, commission, or political subdivision of a State, or any interstate body, that as owner transfers possession and right to use the property to another person by lease, assignment, or permit.

(D) DEEPWATER PORTS.—In the case of a deepwater port licensed under the Deepwater Port Act of 1974 (33 U.S.C. 1501–1524), the licensee.

(E) PIPELINES.—In the case of a pipeline, any person owning or operating the pipeline.

(F) ABANDONMENT.—In the case of an abandoned vessel, onshore facility, deepwater port, pipeline, or offshore facility, the persons who would have been responsible parties immediately prior to the abandonment of the vessel or facility.

(33) “Secretary” means the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating;

(34) “tank vessel” means a vessel that is constructed or adapted to carry, or that carries, oil or hazardous material in bulk as cargo or cargo residue, and that—

(A) is a vessel of the United States;

(B) operates on the navigable waters; or

(C) transfers oil or hazardous material in a place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States;

(35) “territorial seas” means the belt of the seas measured from the line of ordinary low water along that portion of the coast which is in direct contact with the open sea and the line marking the seaward limit of inland waters, and extending seaward a distance of 3 miles;

(36) “United States” and “State” mean the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, and any other territory or possession of the United States;

(37) “vessel” means every description of watercraft or other artificial contrivance used, or capable of being used, as a means of transportation on water, other than a public vessel;

(38) “participate in management”—

(A)(i) means actually participating in the management or operational affairs of a vessel or facility; and

(ii) does not include merely having the capacity to influence, or the unexercised right to control, vessel or facility operations; and

(B) does not include—

(i) performing an act or failing to act prior to the time at which a security interest is created in a vessel or facility;

(ii) holding a security interest or abandoning or releasing a security interest;

(iii) including in the terms of an extension of credit, or in a contract or security agreement relating to the extension, a covenant, warranty, or other term or condition that relates to environmental compliance;

(iv) monitoring or enforcing the terms and conditions of the extension of credit or security interest;

(v) monitoring or undertaking one or more inspections of the vessel or facility;

(vi) requiring a removal action or other lawful means of addressing a discharge or substantial threat of a discharge of oil in connection with the vessel or facility prior to, during, or on the expiration of the term of the extension of credit;

(vii) providing financial or other advice or counseling in an effort to mitigate, prevent, or cure default or diminution in the value of the vessel or facility;

(viii) restructuring, renegotiating, or otherwise agreeing to alter the terms and conditions of the extension of credit or security interest, exercising forbearance;

(ix) exercising other remedies that may be available under applicable law for the breach of a term or condition of the extension of credit or security agreement; or

(x) conducting a removal action under section 1321(c) of this title or under the direction of an on-scene coordinator appointed under the National Contingency Plan,

if such actions do not rise to the level of participating in management under subparagraph (A) of this paragraph and paragraph (26)(A)(vi);

(39) “extension of credit” has the meaning provided in section 101(20)(G)(i) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601(20)(G)(i));

(40) “financial or administrative function” has the meaning provided in section 101(20)(G)(ii) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601(20)(G)(ii));

(41) “foreclosure” and “foreclose” each has the meaning provided in section 101(20)(G)(iii) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601(20)(G)(iii));

(42) “lender” has the meaning provided in section 101(20)(G)(iv) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601(20)(G)(iv));

(43) “operational function” has the meaning provided in section 101(20)(G)(v) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601(20)(G)(v)); and

(44) “security interest” has the meaning provided in section 101(20)(G)(vi) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601(20)(G)(vi)).

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1001, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 486; Pub. L. 105-383, title III, §307(a), Nov. 13, 1998, 112 Stat. 3421; Pub. L. 108-293, title VII, §703(a), (b), Aug. 9, 2004, 118 Stat. 1069, 1071.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in text, is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out below and Tables.

The Deepwater Port Act of 1974, referred to in pars. (6) and (32)(C), (D), is Pub. L. 93-627, Jan. 3, 1975, 88 Stat. 2126, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 29 (§1501 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1501 of this title and Tables.

Presidential Proclamation Numbered 5030, referred to in par. (8), is Proc. No. 5030, Mar. 10, 1983, 48 F.R. 10605, which is set out as a note under section 1453 of Title 16, Conservation.

The Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, referred to in pars. (16) and (32)(C), is act Aug. 7, 1953, ch. 345, 67 Stat. 462, as amended, which is classified generally to subchapter III (§1331 et seq.) of chapter 29 of Title 43, Public Lands. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1331 of Title 43 and Tables.

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, referred to in par. (23), probably means the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, Pub. L. 96-510, Dec. 11, 1980, 94 Stat. 2767, as amended, which is classified principally to chapter 103 (§9601 et seq.) of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 9601 of Title 42 and Tables.

#### AMENDMENTS

2004—Par. (26). Pub. L. 108-293, §703(a), amended par. (26) generally. Prior to amendment, par. (26) read as follows: “‘owner or operator’ means (A) in the case of a vessel, any person owning, operating, or chartering by demise, the vessel, and (B) in the case of an onshore facility, and an offshore facility, any person owning or operating such onshore facility or offshore facility, and (C) in the case of any abandoned offshore facility, the person who owned or operated such facility immediately prior to such abandonment;”.

Pars. (38) to (44). Pub. L. 108-293, §703(b), added pars. (38) to (44).

1998—Par. (23). Pub. L. 105-383 amended par. (23) generally. Prior to amendment, par. (23) read as follows: “‘oil’ means oil of any kind or in any form, including, but not limited to, petroleum, fuel oil, sludge, oil refuse, and oil mixed with wastes other than dredged spoil, but does not include petroleum, including crude oil or any fraction thereof, which is specifically listed or designated as a hazardous substance under subparagraphs (A) through (F) of section 101(14) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 U.S.C. 9601) and which is subject to the provisions of that Act;”.

## EFFECTIVE DATE

Section 1020 of title I of Pub. L. 101-380 provided that: “This Act [see Short Title of 1990 Amendments note below for classification] shall apply to an incident occurring after the date of the enactment of this Act [Aug. 18, 1990].”

## SHORT TITLE OF 2006 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 109-241, title VI, § 601, July 11, 2006, 120 Stat. 553, provided that: “This title [enacting sections 1232b and 2762 of this title, amending sections 1321, 2704, and 2761 of this title, and enacting provisions set out as notes under section 2704 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Delaware River Protection Act of 2006.’”

## SHORT TITLE OF 1995 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 104-55, § 1, Nov. 20, 1995, 109 Stat. 546, provided that: “This Act [enacting section 2720 of this title and amending sections 2704 and 2716 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Edible Oil Regulatory Reform Act.’”

## SHORT TITLE OF 1990 AMENDMENTS

Pub. L. 101-537, title II, § 2001, Nov. 8, 1990, 104 Stat. 2375, and Pub. L. 101-646, title IV, § 4001, Nov. 29, 1990, 104 Stat. 4788, as amended by Pub. L. 104-332, § 2(h)(1), Oct. 26, 1996, 110 Stat. 4091, provided that: “This title [amending section 2761 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Great Lakes Oil Pollution Research and Development Act.’”

## SHORT TITLE

Section 1 of Pub. L. 101-380 provided that: “This Act [enacting this chapter, sections 1642 and 1656 of Title 43, Public Lands, sections 3703a and 7505 of Title 46, Shipping, and section 1274a of the Appendix to Title 46, amending sections 1223, 1228, 1232, 1236, 1319, 1321, 1481, 1486, 1503, 1514, and 1908 of this title, section 3145 of Title 16, Conservation, sections 4612 and 9509 of Title 26, Internal Revenue Code, sections 1334, 1350, and 1653 of Title 43, sections 2101, 2302, 3318, 3715, 3718, 5116, 6101, 7101, 7106, 7107, 7109, 7302, 7502, 7503, 7701 to 7703, 8101, 8104, 8502, 8503, 8702, 9101, 9102, 9302, 9308, and 12106 of Title 46, and section 1274 of the Appendix to Title 46, repealing section 1517 of this title and sections 1811 and 1812 to 1824 of Title 43, enacting provisions set out as notes under this section, sections 1203, 1223, and 1321, of this title, section 92 of Title 14, Coast Guard, section 9509 of Title 26, sections 1334, 1651, and 1653 of Title 43, sections 3703, 3703a, and 7106 of Title 46, and section 1295 of the Appendix to Title 46, amending provisions set out as a note under section 401 of Title 23, Highways, and repealing provisions set out as a note under section 1811 of Title 43] may be cited as the ‘Oil Pollution Act of 1990.’”

## TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

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.

**§ 2702. Elements of liability****(a) In general**

Notwithstanding any other provision or rule of law, and subject to the provisions of this Act, each responsible party for a vessel or a facility from which oil is discharged, or which poses the substantial threat of a discharge of oil, into or upon the navigable waters or adjoining shorelines or the exclusive economic zone is liable for the removal costs and damages specified in sub-

section (b) of this section that result from such incident.

**(b) Covered removal costs and damages****(1) Removal costs**

The removal costs referred to in subsection (a) of this section are—

(A) all removal costs incurred by the United States, a State, or an Indian tribe under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (l) of section 1321 of this title, under the Intervention on the High Seas Act (33 U.S.C. 1471 et seq.), or under State law; and

(B) any removal costs incurred by any person for acts taken by the person which are consistent with the National Contingency Plan.

**(2) Damages**

The damages referred to in subsection (a) of this section are the following:

**(A) Natural resources**

Damages for injury to, destruction of, loss of, or loss of use of, natural resources, including the reasonable costs of assessing the damage, which shall be recoverable by a United States trustee, a State trustee, an Indian tribe trustee, or a foreign trustee.

**(B) Real or personal property**

Damages for injury to, or economic losses resulting from destruction of, real or personal property, which shall be recoverable by a claimant who owns or leases that property.

**(C) Subsistence use**

Damages for loss of subsistence use of natural resources, which shall be recoverable by any claimant who so uses natural resources which have been injured, destroyed, or lost, without regard to the ownership or management of the resources.

**(D) Revenues**

Damages equal to the net loss of taxes, royalties, rents, fees, or net profit shares due to the injury, destruction, or loss of real property, personal property, or natural resources, which shall be recoverable by the Government of the United States, a State, or a political subdivision thereof.

**(E) Profits and earning capacity**

Damages equal to the loss of profits or impairment of earning capacity due to the injury, destruction, or loss of real property, personal property, or natural resources, which shall be recoverable by any claimant.

**(F) Public services**

Damages for net costs of providing increased or additional public services during or after removal activities, including protection from fire, safety, or health hazards, caused by a discharge of oil, which shall be recoverable by a State, or a political subdivision of a State.

**(c) Excluded discharges**

This subchapter does not apply to any discharge—

(1) permitted by a permit issued under Federal, State, or local law;

(2) from a public vessel; or

(3) from an onshore facility which is subject to the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act (43 U.S.C. 1651 et seq.).

**(d) Liability of third parties**

**(1) In general**

**(A) Third party treated as responsible party**

Except as provided in subparagraph (B), in any case in which a responsible party establishes that a discharge or threat of a discharge and the resulting removal costs and damages were caused solely by an act or omission of one or more third parties described in section 2703(a)(3) of this title (or solely by such an act or omission in combination with an act of God or an act of war), the third party or parties shall be treated as the responsible party or parties for purposes of determining liability under this subchapter.

**(B) Subrogation of responsible party**

If the responsible party alleges that the discharge or threat of a discharge was caused solely by an act or omission of a third party, the responsible party—

(i) in accordance with section 2713 of this title, shall pay removal costs and damages to any claimant; and

(ii) shall be entitled by subrogation to all rights of the United States Government and the claimant to recover removal costs or damages from the third party or the Fund paid under this subsection.

**(2) Limitation applied**

**(A) Owner or operator of vessel or facility**

If the act or omission of a third party that causes an incident occurs in connection with a vessel or facility owned or operated by the third party, the liability of the third party shall be subject to the limits provided in section 2704 of this title as applied with respect to the vessel or facility.

**(B) Other cases**

In any other case, the liability of a third party or parties shall not exceed the limitation which would have been applicable to the responsible party of the vessel or facility from which the discharge actually occurred if the responsible party were liable.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1002, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 489.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in subsec. (a), is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

The Intervention on the High Seas Act, referred to in subsec. (b)(1)(A), is Pub. L. 93-248, Feb. 5, 1974, 88 Stat. 8, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 28 (§1471 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1471 of this title and Tables.

The Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act, referred to in subsec. (c)(3), is title II of Pub. L. 93-153, Nov. 16, 1973, 87 Stat. 584, which is classified generally to chapter 34 (§1651 et seq.) of Title 43, Public Lands.

For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1651 of Title 43 and Tables.

**§ 2703. Defenses to liability**

**(a) Complete defenses**

A responsible party is not liable for removal costs or damages under section 2702 of this title if the responsible party establishes, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the discharge or substantial threat of a discharge of oil and the resulting damages or removal costs were caused solely by—

(1) an act of God;

(2) an act of war;

(3) an act or omission of a third party, other than an employee or agent of the responsible party or a third party whose act or omission occurs in connection with any contractual relationship with the responsible party (except where the sole contractual arrangement arises in connection with carriage by a common carrier by rail), if the responsible party establishes, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the responsible party—

(A) exercised due care with respect to the oil concerned, taking into consideration the characteristics of the oil and in light of all relevant facts and circumstances; and

(B) took precautions against foreseeable acts or omissions of any such third party and the foreseeable consequences of those acts or omissions; or

(4) any combination of paragraphs (1), (2), and (3).

**(b) Defenses as to particular claimants**

A responsible party is not liable under section 2702 of this title to a claimant, to the extent that the incident is caused by the gross negligence or willful misconduct of the claimant.

**(c) Limitation on complete defense**

Subsection (a) of this section does not apply with respect to a responsible party who fails or refuses—

(1) to report the incident as required by law if the responsible party knows or has reason to know of the incident;

(2) to provide all reasonable cooperation and assistance requested by a responsible official in connection with removal activities; or

(3) without sufficient cause, to comply with an order issued under subsection (c) or (e) of section 1321 of this title or the Intervention on the High Seas Act (33 U.S.C. 1471 et seq.).

**(d) Definition of contractual relationship**

**(1) In general**

For purposes of subsection (a)(3) of this section the term “contractual relationship” includes, but is not limited to, land contracts, deeds, easements, leases, or other instruments transferring title or possession, unless—

(A) the real property on which the facility concerned is located was acquired by the responsible party after the placement of the oil on, in, or at the real property on which the facility concerned is located;

(B) one or more of the circumstances described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of

paragraph (2) is established by the responsible party by a preponderance of the evidence; and

(C) the responsible party complies with paragraph (3).

**(2) Required circumstance**

The circumstances referred to in paragraph (1)(B) are the following:

(A) At the time the responsible party acquired the real property on which the facility is located the responsible party did not know and had no reason to know that oil that is the subject of the discharge or substantial threat of discharge was located on, in, or at the facility.

(B) The responsible party is a government entity that acquired the facility—

- (i) by escheat;
- (ii) through any other involuntary transfer or acquisition; or
- (iii) through the exercise of eminent domain authority by purchase or condemnation.

(C) The responsible party acquired the facility by inheritance or bequest.

**(3) Additional requirements**

For purposes of paragraph (1)(C), the responsible party must establish by a preponderance of the evidence that the responsible party—

(A) has satisfied the requirements of subsection (a)(3)(A) and (B) of this section;

(B) has provided full cooperation, assistance, and facility access to the persons that are authorized to conduct removal actions, including the cooperation and access necessary for the installation, integrity, operation, and maintenance of any complete or partial removal action;

(C) is in compliance with any land use restrictions established or relied on in connection with the removal action; and

(D) has not impeded the effectiveness or integrity of any institutional control employed in connection with the removal action.

**(4) Reason to know**

**(A) Appropriate inquiries**

To establish that the responsible party had no reason to know of the matter described in paragraph (2)(A), the responsible party must demonstrate to a court that—

- (i) on or before the date on which the responsible party acquired the real property on which the facility is located, the responsible party carried out all appropriate inquiries, as provided in subparagraphs (B) and (D), into the previous ownership and uses of the real property on which the facility is located in accordance with generally accepted good commercial and customary standards and practices; and
- (ii) the responsible party took reasonable steps to—

- (I) stop any continuing discharge;
- (II) prevent any substantial threat of discharge; and
- (III) prevent or limit any human, environmental, or natural resource exposure to any previously discharged oil.

**(B) Regulations establishing standards and practices**

Not later than 2 years after August 9, 2004, the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall by regulation establish standards and practices for the purpose of satisfying the requirement to carry out all appropriate inquiries under subparagraph (A).

**(C) Criteria**

In promulgating regulations that establish the standards and practices referred to in subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall include in such standards and practices provisions regarding each of the following:

(i) The results of an inquiry by an environmental professional.

(ii) Interviews with past and present owners, operators, and occupants of the facility and the real property on which the facility is located for the purpose of gathering information regarding the potential for oil at the facility and on the real property on which the facility is located.

(iii) Reviews of historical sources, such as chain of title documents, aerial photographs, building department records, and land use records, to determine previous uses and occupancies of the real property on which the facility is located since the property was first developed.

(iv) Searches for recorded environmental cleanup liens against the facility and the real property on which the facility is located that are filed under Federal, State, or local law.

(v) Reviews of Federal, State, and local government records, waste disposal records, underground storage tank records, and waste handling, generation, treatment, disposal, and spill records, concerning oil at or near the facility and on the real property on which the facility is located.

(vi) Visual inspections of the facility, the real property on which the facility is located, and adjoining properties.

(vii) Specialized knowledge or experience on the part of the responsible party.

(viii) The relationship of the purchase price to the value of the facility and the real property on which the facility is located, if oil was not at the facility or on the real property.

(ix) Commonly known or reasonably ascertainable information about the facility and the real property on which the facility is located.

(x) The degree of obviousness of the presence or likely presence of oil at the facility and on the real property on which the facility is located, and the ability to detect the oil by appropriate investigation.

**(D) Interim standards and practices**

**(i) Real property purchased before May 31, 1997**

With respect to real property purchased before May 31, 1997, in making a deter-

mination with respect to a responsible party described in subparagraph (A), a court shall take into account—

(I) any specialized knowledge or experience on the part of the responsible party;

(II) the relationship of the purchase price to the value of the facility and the real property on which the facility is located, if the oil was not at the facility or on the real property;

(III) commonly known or reasonably ascertainable information about the facility and the real property on which the facility is located;

(IV) the obviousness of the presence or likely presence of oil at the facility and on the real property on which the facility is located; and

(V) the ability of the responsible party to detect oil by appropriate inspection.

**(ii) Real property purchased on or after May 31, 1997**

With respect to real property purchased on or after May 31, 1997, until the Secretary promulgates the regulations described in clause (ii), the procedures of the American Society for Testing and Materials, including the document known as “Standard E1527-97”, entitled “Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessment: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Process”, shall satisfy the requirements in subparagraph (A).

**(E) Site inspection and title search**

In the case of real property for residential use or other similar use purchased by a non-governmental or noncommercial entity, inspection and title search of the facility and the real property on which the facility is located that reveal no basis for further investigation shall be considered to satisfy the requirements of this paragraph.

**(5) Previous owner or operator**

Nothing in this paragraph or in subsection (a)(3) of this section shall diminish the liability of any previous owner or operator of such facility who would otherwise be liable under this Act. Notwithstanding this paragraph, if a responsible party obtained actual knowledge of the discharge or substantial threat of discharge of oil at such facility when the responsible party owned the facility and then subsequently transferred ownership of the facility or the real property on which the facility is located to another person without disclosing such knowledge, the responsible party shall be treated as liable under 2702(a)<sup>1</sup> of this title and no defense under subsection (a) of this section shall be available to such responsible party.

**(6) Limitation on defense**

Nothing in this paragraph shall affect the liability under this Act of a responsible party who, by any act or omission, caused or contributed to the discharge or substantial threat

of discharge of oil which is the subject of the action relating to the facility.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1003, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 491; Pub. L. 108-293, title VII, §703(c), Aug. 9, 2004, 118 Stat. 1072.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Intervention on the High Seas Act, referred to in subsec. (c)(3), is Pub. L. 93-248, Feb. 5, 1974, 88 Stat. 8, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 28 (§1471 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1471 of this title and Tables.

This Act, referred to in subsec. (d)(5), (6), is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2004—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 108-293 added subsec. (d).

**§ 2704. Limits on liability**

**(a) General rule**

Except as otherwise provided in this section, the total of the liability of a responsible party under section 2702 of this title and any removal costs incurred by, or on behalf of, the responsible party, with respect to each incident shall not exceed—

(1) for a tank vessel the greater of—

(A) with respect to a single-hull vessel, including a single-hull vessel fitted with double sides only or a double bottom only, \$3,000 per gross ton;

(B) with respect to a vessel other than a vessel referred to in subparagraph (A), \$1,900 per gross ton; or

(C)(i) with respect to a vessel greater than 3,000 gross tons that is—

(I) a vessel described in subparagraph (A), \$22,000,000; or

(II) a vessel described in subparagraph (B), \$16,000,000; or

(ii) with respect to a vessel of 3,000 gross tons or less that is—

(I) a vessel described in subparagraph (A), \$6,000,000; or

(II) a vessel described in subparagraph (B), \$4,000,000;

(2) for any other vessel, \$950 per gross ton or \$800,000,<sup>1</sup> whichever is greater;

(3) for an offshore facility except a deepwater port, the total of all removal costs plus \$75,000,000; and

(4) for any onshore facility and a deepwater port, \$350,000,000.

**(b) Division of liability for mobile offshore drilling units**

**(1) Treated first as tank vessel**

For purposes of determining the responsible party and applying this Act and except as provided in paragraph (2), a mobile offshore drilling unit which is being used as an offshore facility is deemed to be a tank vessel with respect to the discharge, or the substantial

<sup>1</sup> So in original. Probably should be preceded by “section”.

<sup>1</sup> So in original. The second comma probably should not appear.

threat of a discharge, of oil on or above the surface of the water.

**(2) Treated as facility for excess liability**

To the extent that removal costs and damages from any incident described in paragraph (1) exceed the amount for which a responsible party is liable (as that amount may be limited under subsection (a)(1) of this section), the mobile offshore drilling unit is deemed to be an offshore facility. For purposes of applying subsection (a)(3) of this section, the amount specified in that subsection shall be reduced by the amount for which the responsible party is liable under paragraph (1).

**(c) Exceptions**

**(1) Acts of responsible party**

Subsection (a) of this section does not apply if the incident was proximately caused by—

- (A) gross negligence or willful misconduct of, or
- (B) the violation of an applicable Federal safety, construction, or operating regulation by,

the responsible party, an agent or employee of the responsible party, or a person acting pursuant to a contractual relationship with the responsible party (except where the sole contractual arrangement arises in connection with carriage by a common carrier by rail).

**(2) Failure or refusal of responsible party**

Subsection (a) of this section does not apply if the responsible party fails or refuses—

- (A) to report the incident as required by law and the responsible party knows or has reason to know of the incident;
- (B) to provide all reasonable cooperation and assistance requested by a responsible official in connection with removal activities; or
- (C) without sufficient cause, to comply with an order issued under subsection (c) or (e) of section 1321 of this title or the Intervention on the High Seas Act (33 U.S.C. 1471 et seq.).

**(3) OCS facility or vessel**

Notwithstanding the limitations established under subsection (a) of this section and the defenses of section 2703 of this title, all removal costs incurred by the United States Government or any State or local official or agency in connection with a discharge or substantial threat of a discharge of oil from any Outer Continental Shelf facility or a vessel carrying oil as cargo from such a facility shall be borne by the owner or operator of such facility or vessel.

**(4) Certain tank vessels**

Subsection (a)(1) of this section shall not apply to—

- (A) a tank vessel on which the only oil carried as cargo is an animal fat or vegetable oil, as those terms are used in section 2720 of this title; and
- (B) a tank vessel that is designated in its certificate of inspection as an oil spill response vessel (as that term is defined in section 2101 of title 46) and that is used solely for removal.

**(d) Adjusting limits of liability**

**(1) Onshore facilities**

Subject to paragraph (2), the President may establish by regulation, with respect to any class or category of onshore facility, a limit of liability under this section of less than \$350,000,000, but not less than \$8,000,000, taking into account size, storage capacity, oil throughput, proximity to sensitive areas, type of oil handled, history of discharges, and other factors relevant to risks posed by the class or category of facility.

**(2) Deepwater ports and associated vessels**

**(A) Study**

The Secretary shall conduct a study of the relative operational and environmental risks posed by the transportation of oil by vessel to deepwater ports (as defined in section 1502 of this title) versus the transportation of oil by vessel to other ports. The study shall include a review and analysis of offshore lightering practices used in connection with that transportation, an analysis of the volume of oil transported by vessel using those practices, and an analysis of the frequency and volume of oil discharges which occur in connection with the use of those practices.

**(B) Report**

Not later than 1 year after August 18, 1990, the Secretary shall submit to the Congress a report on the results of the study conducted under subparagraph (A).

**(C) Rulemaking proceeding**

If the Secretary determines, based on the results of the study conducted under this<sup>2</sup> subparagraph (A), that the use of deepwater ports in connection with the transportation of oil by vessel results in a lower operational or environmental risk than the use of other ports, the Secretary shall initiate, not later than the 180th day following the date of submission of the report to the Congress under subparagraph (B), a rulemaking proceeding to lower the limits of liability under this section for deepwater ports as the Secretary determines appropriate. The Secretary may establish a limit of liability of less than \$350,000,000, but not less than \$50,000,000, in accordance with paragraph (1).

**(3) Periodic reports**

The President shall, within 6 months after August 18, 1990, and from time to time thereafter, report to the Congress on the desirability of adjusting the limits of liability specified in subsection (a) of this section.

**(4) Adjustment to reflect Consumer Price Index**

The President, by regulations issued not later than 3 years after July 11, 2006, and not less than every 3 years thereafter, shall adjust the limits on liability specified in subsection (a) to reflect significant increases in the Consumer Price Index.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1004, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 491; Pub. L. 104-55, §2(d)(1), Nov. 20, 1995,

<sup>2</sup>So in original. The word "this" probably should not appear.

109 Stat. 546; Pub. L. 105-383, title IV, § 406, Nov. 13, 1998, 112 Stat. 3429; Pub. L. 109-241, title VI, § 603(a)(1), (2), (b), July 11, 2006, 120 Stat. 553, 554.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in subsec. (b)(1), is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

The Intervention on the High Seas Act, referred to in subsec. (c)(2)(C), is Pub. L. 93-248, Feb. 5, 1974, 88 Stat. 8, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 28 (§ 1471 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1471 of this title and Tables.

#### AMENDMENTS

2006—Subsec. (a)(1)(A) to (C). Pub. L. 109-241, § 603(a)(1), added subpars. (A) to (C) and struck out former subpars. (A) and (B), which read as follows:

“(A) \$1,200 per gross ton; or

“(B)(i) in the case of a vessel greater than 3,000 gross tons, \$10,000,000; or

“(ii) in the case of a vessel of 3,000 gross tons or less, \$2,000,000;”.

Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 109-241, § 603(a)(2), substituted “\$950 per gross ton” for “\$600 per gross ton” and “\$800,000,” for “\$500,000”.

Subsec. (d)(4). Pub. L. 109-241, § 603(b), amended heading and text of par. (4) generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “The President shall, by regulations issued not less often than every 3 years, adjust the limits of liability specified in subsection (a) of this section to reflect significant increases in the Consumer Price Index.”

1998—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 105-383, § 406(1), substituted comma for “(except a tank vessel on which the only oil carried as cargo is an animal fat or vegetable oil, as those terms are used in section 2720 of this title)” after “tank vessel”.

Subsec. (c)(4). Pub. L. 105-383, § 406(2), added par. (4).

1995—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 104-55 substituted “for a tank vessel (except a tank vessel on which the only oil carried as cargo is an animal fat or vegetable oil, as those terms are used in section 2720 of this title)” for “for a tank vessel.”

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2006 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 109-241, title VI, § 603(a)(3), July 11, 2006, 120 Stat. 554, provided that: “In the case of an incident occurring before the 90th day following the date of enactment of this Act [July 11, 2006], section 1004(a)(1) of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (33 U.S.C. 2704(a)(1)) shall apply as in effect immediately before the effective date of this subsection [July 11, 2006].”

#### DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Specific functions of President under subsec. (d) of this section delegated to Administrator of Environmental Protection Agency, Secretary of Transportation, and Secretary of the Interior by section 4 of Ex. Ord. No. 12777, Oct. 18, 1991, 56 F.R. 54763, set out as a note under section 1321 of this title.

#### REPORT

Pub. L. 109-241, title VI, § 603(c), July 11, 2006, 120 Stat. 554, provided that:

“(1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 45 days after the date of enactment of this Act [July 11, 2006], the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall submit a report on liability limits described in paragraph (2) to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The report shall include, at a minimum, the following:

“(A) An analysis of the extent to which oil discharges from vessels and nonvessel sources have or are likely to result in removal costs and damages (as defined in section 1001 of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (33 U.S.C. 2701)) for which no defense to liability exists under section 1003 of such Act [33 U.S.C. 2703] and that exceed the liability limits established in section 1004 of such Act [33 U.S.C. 2704], as amended by this section.

“(B) An analysis of the impacts that claims against the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund for amounts exceeding such liability limits will have on the Fund.

“(C) Based on analyses under this paragraph and taking into account other factors impacting the Fund, recommendations on whether the liability limits need to be adjusted in order to prevent the principal of the Fund from declining to levels that are likely to be insufficient to cover expected claims.

“(3) ANNUAL UPDATES.—The Secretary shall provide an update of the report to the Committees referred to in paragraph (1) on an annual basis.”

### § 2705. Interest; partial payment of claims

#### (a) General rule

The responsible party or the responsible party's guarantor is liable to a claimant for interest on the amount paid in satisfaction of a claim under this Act for the period described in subsection (b) of this section. The responsible party shall establish a procedure for the payment or settlement of claims for interim, short-term damages. Payment or settlement of a claim for interim, short-term damages representing less than the full amount of damages to which the claimant ultimately may be entitled shall not preclude recovery by the claimant for damages not reflected in the paid or settled partial claim.

#### (b) Period

##### (1) In general

Except as provided in paragraph (2), the period for which interest shall be paid is the period beginning on the 30th day following the date on which the claim is presented to the responsible party or guarantor and ending on the date on which the claim is paid.

##### (2) Exclusion of period due to offer by guarantor

If the guarantor offers to the claimant an amount equal to or greater than that finally paid in satisfaction of the claim, the period described in paragraph (1) does not include the period beginning on the date the offer is made and ending on the date the offer is accepted. If the offer is made within 60 days after the date on which the claim is presented under section 2713(a) of this title, the period described in paragraph (1) does not include any period before the offer is accepted.

##### (3) Exclusion of periods in interests of justice

If in any period a claimant is not paid due to reasons beyond the control of the responsible party or because it would not serve the interests of justice, no interest shall accrue under this section during that period.

##### (4) Calculation of interest

The interest paid under this section shall be calculated at the average of the highest rate for commercial and finance company paper of maturities of 180 days or less obtaining on each of the days included within the period for

which interest must be paid to the claimant, as published in the Federal Reserve Bulletin.

**(5) Interest not subject to liability limits**

**(A) In general**

Interest (including prejudgment interest) under this paragraph is in addition to damages and removal costs for which claims may be asserted under section 2702 of this title and shall be paid without regard to any limitation of liability under section 2704 of this title.

**(B) Payment by guarantor**

The payment of interest under this subsection by a guarantor is subject to section 2716(g) of this title.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1005, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 493; Pub. L. 104-324, title XI, §1142(a), Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3991.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in subsec. (a), is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

1996—Pub. L. 104-324, §1142(a)(1), inserted “; partial payment of claims” after “Interest” in section catchline.

Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 104-324, §1142(a)(2), inserted at end “The responsible party shall establish a procedure for the payment or settlement of claims for interim, short-term damages. Payment or settlement of a claim for interim, short-term damages representing less than the full amount of damages to which the claimant ultimately may be entitled shall not preclude recovery by the claimant for damages not reflected in the paid or settled partial claim.”

**§ 2706. Natural resources**

**(a) Liability**

In the case of natural resource damages under section 2702(b)(2)(A) of this title, liability shall be—

(1) to the United States Government for natural resources belonging to, managed by, controlled by, or appertaining to the United States;

(2) to any State for natural resources belonging to, managed by, controlled by, or appertaining to such State or political subdivision thereof;

(3) to any Indian tribe for natural resources belonging to, managed by, controlled by, or appertaining to such Indian tribe; and

(4) in any case in which section 2707 of this title applies, to the government of a foreign country for natural resources belonging to, managed by, controlled by, or appertaining to such country.

**(b) Designation of trustees**

**(1) In general**

The President, or the authorized representative of any State, Indian tribe, or foreign government, shall act on behalf of the public, Indian tribe, or foreign country as trustee of natural resources to present a claim for and to recover damages to the natural resources.

**(2) Federal trustees**

The President shall designate the Federal officials who shall act on behalf of the public as trustees for natural resources under this Act.

**(3) State trustees**

The Governor of each State shall designate State and local officials who may act on behalf of the public as trustee for natural resources under this Act and shall notify the President of the designation.

**(4) Indian tribe trustees**

The governing body of any Indian tribe shall designate tribal officials who may act on behalf of the tribe or its members as trustee for natural resources under this Act and shall notify the President of the designation.

**(5) Foreign trustees**

The head of any foreign government may designate the trustee who shall act on behalf of that government as trustee for natural resources under this Act.

**(c) Functions of trustees**

**(1) Federal trustees**

The Federal officials designated under subsection (b)(2) of this section—

(A) shall assess natural resource damages under section 2702(b)(2)(A) of this title for the natural resources under their trusteeship;

(B) may, upon request of and reimbursement from a State or Indian tribe and at the Federal officials' discretion, assess damages for the natural resources under the State's or tribe's trusteeship; and

(C) shall develop and implement a plan for the restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, or acquisition of the equivalent, of the natural resources under their trusteeship.

**(2) State trustees**

The State and local officials designated under subsection (b)(3) of this section—

(A) shall assess natural resource damages under section 2702(b)(2)(A) of this title for the purposes of this Act for the natural resources under their trusteeship; and

(B) shall develop and implement a plan for the restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, or acquisition of the equivalent, of the natural resources under their trusteeship.

**(3) Indian tribe trustees**

The tribal officials designated under subsection (b)(4) of this section—

(A) shall assess natural resource damages under section 2702(b)(2)(A) of this title for the purposes of this Act for the natural resources under their trusteeship; and

(B) shall develop and implement a plan for the restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, or acquisition of the equivalent, of the natural resources under their trusteeship.

**(4) Foreign trustees**

The trustees designated under subsection (b)(5) of this section—

(A) shall assess natural resource damages under section 2702(b)(2)(A) of this title for the purposes of this Act for the natural resources under their trusteeship; and

(B) shall develop and implement a plan for the restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, or acquisition of the equivalent, of the natural resources under their trusteeship.

**(5) Notice and opportunity to be heard**

Plans shall be developed and implemented under this section only after adequate public notice, opportunity for a hearing, and consideration of all public comment.

**(d) Measure of damages**

**(1) In general**

The measure of natural resource damages under section 2702(b)(2)(A) of this title is—

(A) the cost of restoring, rehabilitating, replacing, or acquiring the equivalent of, the damaged natural resources;

(B) the diminution in value of those natural resources pending restoration; plus

(C) the reasonable cost of assessing those damages.

**(2) Determine costs with respect to plans**

Costs shall be determined under paragraph (1) with respect to plans adopted under subsection (c) of this section.

**(3) No double recovery**

There shall be no double recovery under this Act for natural resource damages, including with respect to the costs of damage assessment or restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, or acquisition for the same incident and natural resource.

**(e) Damage assessment regulations**

**(1) Regulations**

The President, acting through the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the heads of other affected agencies, not later than 2 years after August 18, 1990, shall promulgate regulations for the assessment of natural resource damages under section 2702(b)(2)(A) of this title resulting from a discharge of oil for the purpose of this Act.

**(2) Rebuttable presumption**

Any determination or assessment of damages to natural resources for the purposes of this Act made under subsection (d) of this section by a Federal, State, or Indian trustee in accordance with the regulations promulgated under paragraph (1) shall have the force and effect of a rebuttable presumption on behalf of the trustee in any administrative or judicial proceeding under this Act.

**(f) Use of recovered sums**

Sums recovered under this Act by a Federal, State, Indian, or foreign trustee for natural resource damages under section 2702(b)(2)(A) of this title shall be retained by the trustee in a revolving trust account, without further appropriation, for use only to reimburse or pay costs incurred by the trustee under subsection (c) of this section with respect to the damaged natural resources. Any amounts in excess of those required for these reimbursements and costs shall be deposited in the Fund.

**(g) Compliance**

Review of actions by any Federal official where there is alleged to be a failure of that official to perform a duty under this section that is not discretionary with that official may be had by any person in the district court in which the person resides or in which the alleged damage to natural resources occurred. The court may award costs of litigation (including reasonable attorney and expert witness fees) to any prevailing or substantially prevailing party. Nothing in this subsection shall restrict any right which any person may have to seek relief under any other provision of law.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, § 1006, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 494.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in subsecs. (b)(2)–(5), (c)(2)(A), (3)(A), (4)(A), (d)(3), (e), and (f), is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Functions of President under subsec. (b)(3) and (4) of this section delegated to Administrator of Environmental Protection Agency by section 8(c) of Ex. Ord. No. 12777, Oct. 18, 1991, 56 F.R. 54768, set out as a note under section 1321 of this title.

NOAA OIL AND HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE SPILL COST REIMBURSEMENT

Pub. L. 102-567, title II, § 205, Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4282, provided that:

“(a) TREATMENT OF AMOUNTS RECEIVED AS REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, amounts received by the United States as reimbursement of expenses related to oil or hazardous substance spill response activities, or natural resource damage assessment, restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, or acquisition activities, conducted (or to be conducted) by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—

“(1) shall be deposited into the Fund;

“(2) shall be available, without fiscal year limitation and without apportionment, for use in accordance with the law under which the activities are conducted; and

“(3) shall not be considered to be an augmentation of appropriations.

“(b) APPLICATION.—Subsection (a) shall apply to amounts described in subsection (a) that are received—

“(1) after the date of the enactment of this Act [Oct. 29, 1992]; or

“(2) with respect to the oil spill associated with the grounding of the EXXON VALDEZ.

“(c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section—

“(1) the term ‘Fund’ means the Damage Assessment and Restoration Revolving Fund of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration referred to in title I of Public Law 101-515 under the heading ‘National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’ (104 Stat. 2105) [set out as a note below]; and

“(2) the term ‘expenses’ includes incremental and base salaries, ships, aircraft, and associated indirect costs, except the term does not include base salaries and benefits of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Support Coordinators.”

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT AND RESTORATION REVOLVING FUND; DEPOSITS; AVAILABILITY; TRANSFER

Pub. L. 101-515, title I, Nov. 5, 1990, 104 Stat. 2105, provided that: “For contingency planning, response and

natural resource damage assessment and restoration activities, pursuant to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation[,] and Liability Act [of 1980], as amended [42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.], the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended [33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.], the Marine Protection, Research[,] and Sanctuaries Act [of 1972], as amended [16 U.S.C. 1431 et seq., 1447 et seq.; 33 U.S.C. 1401 et seq., 2801 et seq.], and the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 [33 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.], \$5,000,000 to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, in fiscal year 1991 and thereafter, sums provided by any party or governmental entity for natural resource damage assessment, response or restoration activities conducted or to be conducted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as a result of any injury to the marine environment and/or resources for which the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration acts as trustee of said marine environment and/or resources, shall be deposited in the Damage Assessment and Restoration Revolving Fund and said funds so deposited shall remain available until expended: *Provided further*, That for purposes of obligation and expenditure in fiscal year 1991 and thereafter, sums available in the Damage Assessment and Restoration Revolving Fund may be transferred, upon the approval of the Secretary of Commerce or his delegate, to the Operations, Research, and Facilities appropriation of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.”

### § 2707. Recovery by foreign claimants

#### (a) Required showing by foreign claimants

##### (1) In general

In addition to satisfying the other requirements of this Act, to recover removal costs or damages resulting from an incident a foreign claimant shall demonstrate that—

(A) the claimant has not been otherwise compensated for the removal costs or damages; and

(B) recovery is authorized by a treaty or executive agreement between the United States and the claimant's country, or the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Attorney General and other appropriate officials, has certified that the claimant's country provides a comparable remedy for United States claimants.

##### (2) Exceptions

Paragraph (1)(B) shall not apply with respect to recovery by a resident of Canada in the case of an incident described in subsection (b)(4) of this section.

#### (b) Discharges in foreign countries

A foreign claimant may make a claim for removal costs and damages resulting from a discharge, or substantial threat of a discharge, of oil in or on the territorial sea, internal waters, or adjacent shoreline of a foreign country, only if the discharge is from—

(1) an Outer Continental Shelf facility or a deepwater port;

(2) a vessel in the navigable waters;

(3) a vessel carrying oil as cargo between 2 places in the United States; or

(4) a tanker that received the oil at the terminal of the pipeline constructed under the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act (43 U.S.C. 1651 et seq.), for transportation to a place in the United States, and the discharge or threat occurs prior to delivery of the oil to that place.

#### (c) “Foreign claimant” defined

In this section, the term “foreign claimant” means—

(1) a person residing in a foreign country;

(2) the government of a foreign country; and

(3) an agency or political subdivision of a foreign country.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1007, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 496.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in subsec. (a)(1), is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

The Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act, referred to in subsec. (b)(4), is title II of Pub. L. 93-153, Nov. 16, 1973, 87 Stat. 584, which is classified generally to chapter 34 (§1651 et seq.) of Title 43, Public Lands. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1651 of Title 43 and Tables.

### § 2708. Recovery by responsible party

#### (a) In general

The responsible party for a vessel or facility from which oil is discharged, or which poses the substantial threat of a discharge of oil, may assert a claim for removal costs and damages under section 2713 of this title only if the responsible party demonstrates that—

(1) the responsible party is entitled to a defense to liability under section 2703 of this title; or

(2) the responsible party is entitled to a limitation of liability under section 2704 of this title.

#### (b) Extent of recovery

A responsible party who is entitled to a limitation of liability may assert a claim under section 2713 of this title only to the extent that the sum of the removal costs and damages incurred by the responsible party plus the amounts paid by the responsible party, or by the guarantor on behalf of the responsible party, for claims asserted under section 2713 of this title exceeds the amount to which the total of the liability under section 2702 of this title and removal costs and damages incurred by, or on behalf of, the responsible party is limited under section 2704 of this title.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1008, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 497.)

### § 2709. Contribution

A person may bring a civil action for contribution against any other person who is liable or potentially liable under this Act or another law. The action shall be brought in accordance with section 2717 of this title.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1009, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 497.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in text, is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this

chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

### § 2710. Indemnification agreements

#### (a) Agreements not prohibited

Nothing in this Act prohibits any agreement to insure, hold harmless, or indemnify a party to such agreement for any liability under this Act.

#### (b) Liability not transferred

No indemnification, hold harmless, or similar agreement or conveyance shall be effective to transfer liability imposed under this Act from a responsible party or from any person who may be liable for an incident under this Act to any other person.

#### (c) Relationship to other causes of action

Nothing in this Act, including the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, bars a cause of action that a responsible party subject to liability under this Act, or a guarantor, has or would have, by reason of subrogation or otherwise, against any person.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1010, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 498.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in text, is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

### § 2711. Consultation on removal actions

The President shall consult with the affected trustees designated under section 2706 of this title on the appropriate removal action to be taken in connection with any discharge of oil. For the purposes of the National Contingency Plan, removal with respect to any discharge shall be considered completed when so determined by the President in consultation with the Governor or Governors of the affected States. However, this determination shall not preclude additional removal actions under applicable State law.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1011, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 498.)

#### DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Functions of President under this section delegated to Administrator of Environmental Protection Agency for inland zone and to Secretary of Department in which Coast Guard is operating for coastal zone by section 3 of Ex. Ord. No. 12777, Oct. 18, 1991, 56 F.R. 54757, set out as a note under section 1321 of this title.

### § 2712. Uses of Fund

#### (a) Uses generally

The Fund shall be available to the President for—

(1) the payment of removal costs, including the costs of monitoring removal actions, determined by the President to be consistent with the National Contingency Plan—

(A) by Federal authorities; or

(B) by a Governor or designated State official under subsection (d) of this section;

(2) the payment of costs incurred by Federal, State, or Indian tribe trustees in carrying out their functions under section 2706 of this title for assessing natural resource damages and for developing and implementing plans for the restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, or acquisition of the equivalent of damaged resources determined by the President to be consistent with the National Contingency Plan;

(3) the payment of removal costs determined by the President to be consistent with the National Contingency Plan as a result of, and damages resulting from, a discharge, or a substantial threat of a discharge, of oil from a foreign offshore unit;

(4) the payment of claims in accordance with section 2713 of this title for uncompensated removal costs determined by the President to be consistent with the National Contingency Plan or uncompensated damages;

(5) the payment of Federal administrative, operational, and personnel costs and expenses reasonably necessary for and incidental to the implementation, administration, and enforcement of this Act (including, but not limited to, sections 1004(d)(2), 1006(e), 4107, 4110, 4111, 4112, 4117, 5006, 8103, and title VII) and subsections (b), (c), (d), (j), and (l) of section 1321 of this title with respect to prevention, removal, and enforcement related to oil discharges, provided that—

(A) not more than \$25,000,000 in each fiscal year shall be available to the Secretary for operating expenses incurred by the Coast Guard;

(B) not more than \$30,000,000 each year through the end of fiscal year 1992 shall be available to establish the National Response System under section 1321(j) of this title, including the purchase and prepositioning of oil spill removal equipment; and

(C) not more than \$27,250,000 in each fiscal year shall be available to carry out subchapter IV of this chapter; and

(6) the making of loans pursuant to the program established under section 2713(f) of this title.

#### (b) Defense to liability for Fund

The Fund shall not be available to pay any claim for removal costs or damages to a particular claimant, to the extent that the incident, removal costs, or damages are caused by the gross negligence or willful misconduct of that claimant.

#### (c) Obligation of Fund by Federal officials

The President may promulgate regulations designating one or more Federal officials who may obligate money in accordance with subsection (a) of this section.

#### (d) Access to Fund by State officials

##### (1) Immediate removal

In accordance with regulations promulgated under this section, the President, upon the request of the Governor of a State or pursuant to an agreement with a State under paragraph (2), may obligate the Fund for payment in an amount not to exceed \$250,000 for removal costs consistent with the National Contingency Plan.

gency Plan required for the immediate removal of a discharge, or the mitigation or prevention of a substantial threat of a discharge, of oil.

**(2) Agreements**

**(A) In general**

The President shall enter into an agreement with the Governor of any interested State to establish procedures under which the Governor or a designated State official may receive payments from the Fund for removal costs pursuant to paragraph (1).

**(B) Terms**

Agreements under this paragraph—

(i) may include such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon by the President and the Governor of a State;

(ii) shall provide for political subdivisions of the State to receive payments for reasonable removal costs; and

(iii) may authorize advance payments from the Fund to facilitate removal efforts.

**(e) Regulations**

The President shall—

(1) not later than 6 months after August 18, 1990, publish proposed regulations detailing the manner in which the authority to obligate the Fund and to enter into agreements under this subsection shall be exercised; and

(2) not later than 3 months after the close of the comment period for such proposed regulations, promulgate final regulations for that purpose.

**(f) Rights of subrogation**

Payment of any claim or obligation by the Fund under this Act shall be subject to the United States Government acquiring by subrogation all rights of the claimant or State to recover from the responsible party.

**(g) Audits**

The Comptroller General shall audit all payments, obligations, reimbursements, and other uses of the Fund, to assure that the Fund is being properly administered and that claims are being appropriately and expeditiously considered. The Comptroller General shall submit to the Congress an interim report one year after August 18, 1990. The Comptroller General shall thereafter audit the Fund as is appropriate. Each Federal agency shall cooperate with the Comptroller General in carrying out this subsection.

**(h) Period of limitations for claims**

**(1) Removal costs**

No claim may be presented under this subchapter for recovery of removal costs for an incident unless the claim is presented within 6 years after the date of completion of all removal actions for that incident.

**(2) Damages**

No claim may be presented under this section for recovery of damages unless the claim is presented within 3 years after the date on which the injury and its connection with the discharge in question were reasonably discov-

erable with the exercise of due care, or in the case of natural resource damages under section 2702(b)(2)(A) of this title, if later, the date of completion of the natural resources damage assessment under section 2706(e) of this title.

**(3) Minors and incompetents**

The time limitations contained in this subsection shall not begin to run—

(A) against a minor until the earlier of the date when such minor reaches 18 years of age or the date on which a legal representative is duly appointed for the minor, or

(B) against an incompetent person until the earlier of the date on which such incompetent's incompetency ends or the date on which a legal representative is duly appointed for the incompetent.

**(i) Limitation on payment for same costs**

In any case in which the President has paid an amount from the Fund for any removal costs or damages specified under subsection (a) of this section, no other claim may be paid from the Fund for the same removal costs or damages.

**(j) Obligation in accordance with plan**

**(1) In general**

Except as provided in paragraph (2), amounts may be obligated from the Fund for the restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, or acquisition of natural resources only in accordance with a plan adopted under section 2706(c) of this title.

**(2) Exception**

Paragraph (1) shall not apply in a situation requiring action to avoid irreversible loss of natural resources or to prevent or reduce any continuing danger to natural resources or similar need for emergency action.

**(k) Preference for private persons in area affected by discharge**

**(1) In general**

In the expenditure of Federal funds for removal of oil, including for distribution of supplies, construction, and other reasonable and appropriate activities, under a contract or agreement with a private person, preference shall be given, to the extent feasible and practicable, to private persons residing or doing business primarily in the area affected by the discharge of oil.

**(2) Limitation**

This subsection shall not be considered to restrict the use of Department of Defense resources.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1012, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 498; Pub. L. 108-293, title VII, §708(b), Aug. 9, 2004, 118 Stat. 1077.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in subsecs. (a)(5) and (f), is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. Sections 1004(d)(2) and 1006(e) are classified to sections 2704(d)(2) and 2706(e), respectively, of this title. Section 4107 amended section 1223 of this title and enacted provisions set out as a note under section 1223 of this title. Sections 4110 and 4111 enacted provisions set out as a note and formerly set out as a

note under section 3703 of Title 46, Shipping. Section 4112 is not classified to the Code. Section 4117 enacted provisions set out as a note under section 1295 of the former Appendix to Title 46. Section 5006 is classified to section 2736 of this title. Section 8103 enacted provisions formerly set out as a note under section 1651 of Title 43, Public Lands. Title VII is classified to subchapter IV of this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

#### AMENDMENTS

2004—Subsec. (a)(6). Pub. L. 108–293 added par. (6).

#### TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

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.

#### DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Functions of President under subsecs. (a)(1), (3), (4), (d), and (e) of this section delegated to Secretary of Department in which Coast Guard is operating by section 7(a)(1)(A), (c)(1), (3) of Ex. Ord. No. 12777, Oct. 18, 1991, 56 F.R. 54766, 54767, set out as a note under section 1321 of this title.

Functions of President under subsec. (a)(2) of this section delegated to Federal trustees designated in National Contingency Plan by section 7(a)(2) of Ex. Ord. No. 12777.

Functions of President under subsecs. (a)(5) and (c) of this section delegated to each head of departments and agencies having responsibility for implementation, administration, and enforcement of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (Pub. L. 101–380, see Tables for classification) and section 1321(b), (c), (d), (j), (l) of this title by section 7(a)(3), (b) of Ex. Ord. No. 12777.

Memorandum of the President of the United States, Aug. 24, 1990, 55 F.R. 35291, which delegated to the Secretary of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating authority to make available from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund not to exceed \$50,000,000 in any fiscal year to remove discharged oil or hazardous substances from navigable waters, was revoked by Ex. Ord. No. 12777, §8(i), Oct. 18, 1991, 56 F.R. 54769, set out as a note under section 1321 of this title.

### § 2713. Claims procedure

#### (a) Presentation

Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, all claims for removal costs or damages shall be presented first to the responsible party or guarantor of the source designated under section 2714(a) of this title.

#### (b) Presentation to Fund

##### (1) In general

Claims for removal costs or damages may be presented first to the Fund—

(A) if the President has advertised or otherwise notified claimants in accordance with section 2714(c) of this title;

(B) by a responsible party who may assert a claim under section 2708 of this title;

(C) by the Governor of a State for removal costs incurred by that State; or

(D) by a United States claimant in a case where a foreign offshore unit has discharged oil causing damage for which the Fund is liable under section 2712(a) of this title.

#### (2) Limitation on presenting claim

No claim of a person against the Fund may be approved or certified during the pendency of an action by the person in court to recover costs which are the subject of the claim.

#### (c) Election

If a claim is presented in accordance with subsection (a) of this section and—

(1) each person to whom the claim is presented denies all liability for the claim, or

(2) the claim is not settled by any person by payment within 90 days after the date upon which (A) the claim was presented, or (B) advertising was begun pursuant to section 2714(b) of this title, whichever is later,

the claimant may elect to commence an action in court against the responsible party or guarantor or to present the claim to the Fund.

#### (d) Uncompensated damages

If a claim is presented in accordance with this section, including a claim for interim, short-term damages representing less than the full amount of damages to which the claimant ultimately may be entitled, and full and adequate compensation is unavailable, a claim for the uncompensated damages and removal costs may be presented to the Fund.

#### (e) Procedure for claims against Fund

The President shall promulgate, and may from time to time amend, regulations for the presentation, filing, processing, settlement, and adjudication of claims under this Act against the Fund.

#### (f) Loan program

##### (1) In general

The President shall establish a loan program under the Fund to provide interim assistance to fishermen and aquaculture producer claimants during the claims procedure.

##### (2) Eligibility for loan

A loan may be made under paragraph (1) only to a fisherman or aquaculture producer that—

(A) has incurred damages for which claims are authorized under section 2702 of this title;

(B) has made a claim pursuant to this section that is pending; and

(C) has not received an interim payment under section 2705(a) of this title for the amount of the claim, or part thereof, that is pending.

##### (3) Terms and conditions of loans

A loan awarded under paragraph (1)—

(A) shall have flexible terms, as determined by the President;

(B) shall be for a period ending on the later of—

(i) the date that is 5 years after the date on which the loan is made; or

(ii) the date on which the fisherman or aquaculture producer receives payment for the claim to which the loan relates under the procedure established by subsections (a) through (e) of this section; and

(C) shall be at a low interest rate, as determined by the President.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1013, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 501; Pub. L. 104-324, title XI, §1142(b), Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3991; Pub. L. 108-293, title VII, §708(a), Aug. 9, 2004, 118 Stat. 1077.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in subsec. (e), is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

#### AMENDMENTS

2004—Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 108-293 added subsec.(f).  
1996—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 104-324 substituted “section, including a claim for interim, short-term damages representing less than the full amount of damages to which the claimant ultimately may be entitled,” for “section”.

#### DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Functions of President under subsec. (e) of this section delegated to Secretary of Department in which Coast Guard is operating by section 7(c)(2) of Ex. Ord. No. 12777, Oct. 18, 1991, 56 F.R. 54767, set out as a note under section 1321 of this title.

### § 2714. Designation of source and advertisement

#### (a) Designation of source and notification

When the President receives information of an incident, the President shall, where possible and appropriate, designate the source or sources of the discharge or threat. If a designated source is a vessel or a facility, the President shall immediately notify the responsible party and the guarantor, if known, of that designation.

#### (b) Advertisement by responsible party or guarantor

(1) If a responsible party or guarantor fails to inform the President, within 5 days after receiving notification of a designation under subsection (a) of this section, of the party's or the guarantor's denial of the designation, such party or guarantor shall advertise the designation and the procedures by which claims may be presented, in accordance with regulations promulgated by the President. Advertisement under the preceding sentence shall begin no later than 15 days after the date of the designation made under subsection (a) of this section. If advertisement is not otherwise made in accordance with this subsection, the President shall promptly and at the expense of the responsible party or the guarantor involved, advertise the designation and the procedures by which claims may be presented to the responsible party or guarantor. Advertisement under this subsection shall continue for a period of no less than 30 days.

(2) An advertisement under paragraph (1) shall state that a claimant may present a claim for interim, short-term damages representing less than the full amount of damages to which the claimant ultimately may be entitled and that payment of such a claim shall not preclude recovery for damages not reflected in the paid or settled partial claim.

#### (c) Advertisement by President

If—

(1) the responsible party and the guarantor both deny a designation within 5 days after re-

ceiving notification of a designation under subsection (a) of this section,

(2) the source of the discharge or threat was a public vessel, or

(3) the President is unable to designate the source or sources of the discharge or threat under subsection (a) of this section,

the President shall advertise or otherwise notify potential claimants of the procedures by which claims may be presented to the Fund.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1014, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 501; Pub. L. 104-324, title XI, §1142(c), Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3991.)

#### AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 104-324 designated existing provisions as par. (1) and added par. (2).

#### DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Functions of President under this section delegated to Secretary of Department in which Coast Guard is operating by section 7(d)(2) of Ex. Ord. No. 12777, Oct. 18, 1991, 56 F.R. 54768, set out as a note under section 1321 of this title.

### § 2715. Subrogation

#### (a) In general

Any person, including the Fund, who pays compensation pursuant to this Act to any claimant for removal costs or damages shall be subrogated to all rights, claims, and causes of action that the claimant has under any other law.

#### (b) Interim damages

##### (1) In general

If a responsible party, a guarantor, or the Fund has made payment to a claimant for interim, short-term damages representing less than the full amount of damages to which the claimant ultimately may be entitled, subrogation under subsection (a) of this section shall apply only with respect to the portion of the claim reflected in the paid interim claim.

##### (2) Final damages

Payment of such a claim shall not foreclose a claimant's right to recovery of all damages to which the claimant otherwise is entitled under this Act or under any other law.

#### (c) Actions on behalf of Fund

At the request of the Secretary, the Attorney General shall commence an action on behalf of the Fund to recover any compensation paid by the Fund to any claimant pursuant to this Act, and all costs incurred by the Fund by reason of the claim, including interest (including prejudgment interest), administrative and adjudicative costs, and attorney's fees. Such an action may be commenced against any responsible party or (subject to section 2716 of this title) guarantor, or against any other person who is liable, pursuant to any law, to the compensated claimant or to the Fund, for the cost or damages for which the compensation was paid. Such an action shall be commenced against the responsible foreign government or other responsible party to recover any removal costs or damages paid from the Fund as the result of the discharge, or substantial threat of discharge, of oil from a foreign offshore unit.

**(d) Authority to settle**

The head of any department or agency responsible for recovering amounts for which a person is liable under this subchapter may consider, compromise, and settle a claim for such amounts, including such costs paid from the Fund, if the claim has not been referred to the Attorney General. In any case in which the total amount to be recovered may exceed \$500,000 (excluding interest), a claim may be compromised and settled under the preceding sentence only with the prior written approval of the Attorney General.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1015, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 502; Pub. L. 104-324, title XI, §1142(d), Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3991; Pub. L. 108-293, title VII, §706, Aug. 9, 2004, 118 Stat. 1076.)

## REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in text, is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

## AMENDMENTS

2004—Subsec. (d), Pub. L. 108-293 added subsec. (d).  
1996—Subsecs. (b), (c), Pub. L. 104-324 added subsec. (b) and redesignated former subsec. (b) as (c).

**§ 2716. Financial responsibility****(a) Requirement**

The responsible party for—

(1) any vessel over 300 gross tons (except a non-self-propelled vessel that does not carry oil as cargo or fuel) using any place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; or

(2) any vessel using the waters of the exclusive economic zone to transship or lighter oil destined for a place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States;

shall establish and maintain, in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary, evidence of financial responsibility sufficient to meet the maximum amount of liability to which the responsible party could be subjected under section 2704(a) or (d) of this title, in a case where the responsible party would be entitled to limit liability under that section. If the responsible party owns or operates more than one vessel, evidence of financial responsibility need be established only to meet the amount of the maximum liability applicable to the vessel having the greatest maximum liability.

**(b) Sanctions****(1) Withholding clearance**

The Secretary of the Treasury shall withhold or revoke the clearance required by section 60105 of title 46 of any vessel subject to this section that does not have the evidence of financial responsibility required for the vessel under this section.

**(2) Denying entry to or detaining vessels**

The Secretary may—

(A) deny entry to any vessel to any place in the United States, or to the navigable waters, or

(B) detain at the place,

any vessel that, upon request, does not produce the evidence of financial responsibility required for the vessel under this section.

**(3) Seizure of vessel**

Any vessel subject to the requirements of this section which is found in the navigable waters without the necessary evidence of financial responsibility for the vessel shall be subject to seizure by and forfeiture to the United States.

**(c) Offshore facilities****(1) In general****(A) Evidence of financial responsibility required**

Except as provided in paragraph (2), a responsible party with respect to an offshore facility that—

(i)(I) is located seaward of the line of ordinary low water along that portion of the coast that is in direct contact with the open sea and the line marking the seaward limit of inland waters; or

(II) is located in coastal inland waters, such as bays or estuaries, seaward of the line of ordinary low water along that portion of the coast that is not in direct contact with the open sea;

(ii) is used for exploring for, drilling for, producing, or transporting oil from facilities engaged in oil exploration, drilling, or production; and

(iii) has a worst-case oil spill discharge potential of more than 1,000 barrels of oil (or a lesser amount if the President determines that the risks posed by such facility justify it),

shall establish and maintain evidence of financial responsibility in the amount required under subparagraph (B) or (C), as applicable.

**(B) Amount required generally**

Except as provided in subparagraph (C), the amount of financial responsibility for offshore facilities that meet the criteria of subparagraph (A) is—

(i) \$35,000,000 for an offshore facility located seaward of the seaward boundary of a State; or

(ii) \$10,000,000 for an offshore facility located landward of the seaward boundary of a State.

**(C) Greater amount**

If the President determines that an amount of financial responsibility for a responsible party greater than the amount required by subparagraph (B) is justified based on the relative operational, environmental, human health, and other risks posed by the quantity or quality of oil that is explored for, drilled for, produced, or transported by the responsible party, the evidence of financial responsibility required shall be for an amount determined by the President not exceeding \$150,000,000.

**(D) Multiple facilities**

In a case in which a person is a responsible party for more than one facility subject to

this subsection, evidence of financial responsibility need be established only to meet the amount applicable to the facility having the greatest financial responsibility requirement under this subsection.

**(E) Definition**

For the purpose of this paragraph, the seaward boundary of a State shall be determined in accordance with section 1301(b) of title 43.

**(2) Deepwater ports**

Each responsible party with respect to a deepwater port shall establish and maintain evidence of financial responsibility sufficient to meet the maximum amount of liability to which the responsible party could be subjected under section 2704(a) of this title in a case where the responsible party would be entitled to limit liability under that section. If the Secretary exercises the authority under section 2704(d)(2) of this title to lower the limit of liability for deepwater ports, the responsible party shall establish and maintain evidence of financial responsibility sufficient to meet the maximum amount of liability so established. In a case in which a person is the responsible party for more than one deepwater port, evidence of financial responsibility need be established only to meet the maximum liability applicable to the deepwater port having the greatest maximum liability.

**(e)<sup>1</sup> Methods of financial responsibility**

Financial responsibility under this section may be established by any one, or by any combination, of the following methods which the Secretary (in the case of a vessel) or the President (in the case of a facility) determines to be acceptable: evidence of insurance, surety bond, guarantee, letter of credit, qualification as a self-insurer, or other evidence of financial responsibility. Any bond filed shall be issued by a bonding company authorized to do business in the United States. In promulgating requirements under this section, the Secretary or the President, as appropriate, may specify policy or other contractual terms, conditions, or defenses which are necessary, or which are unacceptable, in establishing evidence of financial responsibility to effectuate the purposes of this Act.

**(f) Claims against guarantor**

**(1) In general**

Subject to paragraph (2), a claim for which liability may be established under section 2702 of this title may be asserted directly against any guarantor providing evidence of financial responsibility for a responsible party liable under that section for removal costs and damages to which the claim pertains. In defending against such a claim, the guarantor may invoke—

(A) all rights and defenses which would be available to the responsible party under this Act;

(B) any defense authorized under subsection (e) of this section; and

(C) the defense that the incident was caused by the willful misconduct of the responsible party.

The guarantor may not invoke any other defense that might be available in proceedings brought by the responsible party against the guarantor.

**(2) Further requirement**

A claim may be asserted pursuant to paragraph (1) directly against a guarantor providing evidence of financial responsibility under subsection (c)(1) of this section with respect to an offshore facility only if—

(A) the responsible party for whom evidence of financial responsibility has been provided has denied or failed to pay a claim under this Act on the basis of being insolvent, as defined under section 101(32) of title 11, and applying generally accepted accounting principles;

(B) the responsible party for whom evidence of financial responsibility has been provided has filed a petition for bankruptcy under title 11; or

(C) the claim is asserted by the United States for removal costs and damages or for compensation paid by the Fund under this Act, including costs incurred by the Fund for processing compensation claims.

**(3) Rulemaking authority**

Not later than 1 year after October 19, 1996, the President shall promulgate regulations to establish a process for implementing paragraph (2) in a manner that will allow for the orderly and expeditious presentation and resolution of claims and effectuate the purposes of this Act.

**(g) Limitation on guarantor's liability**

Nothing in this Act shall impose liability with respect to an incident on any guarantor for damages or removal costs which exceed, in the aggregate, the amount of financial responsibility which that guarantor has provided for a responsible party pursuant to this section. The total liability of the guarantor on direct action for claims brought under this Act with respect to an incident shall be limited to that amount.

**(h) Continuation of regulations**

Any regulation relating to financial responsibility, which has been issued pursuant to any provision of law repealed or superseded by this Act, and which is in effect on the date immediately preceding the effective date of this Act, is deemed and shall be construed to be a regulation issued pursuant to this section. Such a regulation shall remain in full force and effect unless and until superseded by a new regulation issued under this section.

**(i) Unified certificate**

The Secretary may issue a single unified certificate of financial responsibility for purposes of this Act and any other law.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, § 1016, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 502; Pub. L. 104-55, § 2(d)(2), Nov. 20, 1995, 109 Stat. 547; Pub. L. 104-324, title XI, § 1125(a), Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3981.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in subsecs. (e), (f), (g), (h), and (i), is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as

<sup>1</sup> So in original. No subsec. (d) has been enacted.

amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

The effective date of this Act, referred to in subsec. (h), is the effective date of Pub. L. 101-380 which is 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 this title.

#### CODIFICATION

In subsec. (b)(1), “section 60105 of title 46” substituted for “section 4197 of the Revised Statutes of the United States” on authority of Pub. L. 109-304, §18(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1709, which Act enacted section 60105 of Title 46, Shipping.

#### AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 104-324, §1125(a)(1), reenacted heading without change and amended text generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “Except as provided in paragraph (2), each responsible party with respect to an offshore facility shall establish and maintain evidence of financial responsibility of \$150,000,000 to meet the amount of liability to which the responsible party could be subjected under section 2704(a) of this title in a case in which the responsible party would be entitled to limit liability under that section. In a case in which a person is the responsible party for more than one facility subject to this subsection, evidence of financial responsibility need be established only to meet the maximum liability applicable to the facility having the greatest maximum liability.”

Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 104-324, §1125(a)(2), reenacted heading without change and amended text generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “Any claim for which liability may be established under section 2702 of this title may be asserted directly against any guarantor providing evidence of financial responsibility for a responsible party liable under that section for removal costs and damages to which the claim pertains. In defending against such a claim, the guarantor may invoke (1) all rights and defenses which would be available to the responsible party under this Act, (2) any defense authorized under subsection (e) of this section, and (3) the defense that the incident was caused by the willful misconduct of the responsible party. The guarantor may not invoke any other defense that might be available in proceedings brought by the responsible party against the guarantor.”

Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 104-324, §1125(a)(3), reenacted heading without change and amended text generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “Nothing in this Act shall impose liability with respect to an incident on any guarantor for damages or removal costs which exceed, in the aggregate, the amount of financial responsibility required under this Act which that guarantor has provided for a responsible party.”

1995—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 104-55 substituted “the responsible party could be subjected under section 2704(a) or (d) of this title” for “, in the case of a tank vessel, the responsible party could be subject under section 2704(a)(1) or (d) of this title, or to which, in the case of any other vessel, the responsible party could be subjected under section 2704(a)(2) or (d) of this title”.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1996 AMENDMENT

Section 1125(b) of Pub. L. 104-324 provided that: “The amendment made by subsection (a)(2) [amending this section] shall not apply to any final rule issued before the date of enactment of this section [Oct. 19, 1996].”

#### DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Specific functions of President under subsec. (e) of this section delegated to Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating by section 5(a) of Ex. Ord. No. 12777, Oct. 18, 1991, 56 F.R. 54764, as amended, set out as a note under section 1321 of this title.

## § 2716a. Financial responsibility civil penalties

### (a) Administrative

Any person who, after notice and an opportunity for a hearing, is found to have failed to comply with the requirements of section 2716 of this title or the regulations issued under that section, or with a denial or detention order issued under subsection (c)(2) of that section, shall be liable to the United States for a civil penalty, not to exceed \$25,000 per day of violation. The amount of the civil penalty shall be assessed by the President by written notice. In determining the amount of the penalty, the President shall take into account the nature, circumstances, extent, and gravity of the violation, the degree of culpability, any history of prior violation, ability to pay, and such other matters as justice may require. The President may compromise, modify, or remit, with or without conditions, any civil penalty which is subject to imposition or which had been imposed under this paragraph. If any person fails to pay an assessed civil penalty after it has become final, the President may refer the matter to the Attorney General for collection.

### (b) Judicial

In addition to, or in lieu of, assessing a penalty under subsection (a) of this section, the President may request the Attorney General to secure such relief as necessary to compel compliance with this<sup>1</sup> section 2716 of this title, including a judicial order terminating operations. The district courts of the United States shall have jurisdiction to grant any relief as the public interest and the equities of the case may require.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title IV, §4303, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 539.)

#### CODIFICATION

Section was not enacted as part of title I of Pub. L. 101-380 which comprises this subchapter.

#### DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Specific functions of President under this section delegated to Secretary of Department in which Coast Guard is operating and Secretary of the Interior by section 5(b) of Ex. Ord. No. 12777, Oct. 18, 1991, 56 F.R. 54765, as amended, set out as a note under section 1321 of this title.

## § 2717. Litigation, jurisdiction, and venue

### (a) Review of regulations

Review of any regulation promulgated under this Act may be had upon application by any interested person only in the Circuit Court of Appeals of the United States for the District of Columbia. Any such application shall be made within 90 days from the date of promulgation of such regulations. Any matter with respect to which review could have been obtained under this subsection shall not be subject to judicial review in any civil or criminal proceeding for enforcement or to obtain damages or recovery of response costs.

### (b) Jurisdiction

Except as provided in subsections (a) and (c) of this section, the United States district courts

<sup>1</sup> So in original. The word “this” probably should not appear.

shall have exclusive original jurisdiction over all controversies arising under this Act, without regard to the citizenship of the parties or the amount in controversy. Venue shall lie in any district in which the discharge or injury or damages occurred, or in which the defendant resides, may be found, has its principal office, or has appointed an agent for service of process. For the purposes of this section, the Fund shall reside in the District of Columbia.

**(c) State court jurisdiction**

A State trial court of competent jurisdiction over claims for removal costs or damages, as defined under this Act, may consider claims under this Act or State law and any final judgment of such court (when no longer subject to ordinary forms of review) shall be recognized, valid, and enforceable for all purposes of this Act.

**(d) Assessment and collection of tax**

The provisions of subsections (a), (b), and (c) of this section shall not apply to any controversy or other matter resulting from the assessment or collection of any tax, or to the review of any regulation promulgated under title 26.

**(e) Savings provision**

Nothing in this subchapter shall apply to any cause of action or right of recovery arising from any incident which occurred prior to August 18, 1990. Such claims shall be adjudicated pursuant to the law applicable on the date of the incident.

**(f) Period of limitations**

**(1) Damages**

Except as provided in paragraphs (3) and (4), an action for damages under this Act shall be barred unless the action is brought within 3 years after—

(A) the date on which the loss and the connection of the loss with the discharge in question are reasonably discoverable with the exercise of due care, or

(B) in the case of natural resource damages under section 2702(b)(2)(A) of this title, the date of completion of the natural resources damage assessment under section 2706(c) of this title.

**(2) Removal costs**

An action for recovery of removal costs referred to in section 2702(b)(1) of this title must be commenced within 3 years after completion of the removal action. In any such action described in this subsection, the court shall enter a declaratory judgment on liability for removal costs or damages that will be binding on any subsequent action or actions to recover further removal costs or damages. Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, an action may be commenced under this subchapter for recovery of removal costs at any time after such costs have been incurred.

**(3) Contribution**

No action for contribution for any removal costs or damages may be commenced more than 3 years after—

(A) the date of judgment in any action under this Act for recovery of such costs or damages, or

(B) the date of entry of a judicially approved settlement with respect to such costs or damages.

**(4) Subrogation**

No action based on rights subrogated pursuant to this Act by reason of payment of a claim may be commenced under this Act more than 3 years after the date of payment of such claim.

**(5) Commencement**

The time limitations contained herein shall not begin to run—

(A) against a minor until the earlier of the date when such minor reaches 18 years of age or the date on which a legal representative is duly appointed for such minor, or

(B) against an incompetent person until the earlier of the date on which such incompetent's incompetency ends or the date on which a legal representative is duly appointed for such incompetent.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1017, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 504.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in subsecs. (a), (b), (c), and (f), is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

**§ 2718. Relationship to other law**

**(a) Preservation of State authorities; Solid Waste Disposal Act**

Nothing in this Act or the Act of March 3, 1851 shall—

(1) affect, or be construed or interpreted as preempting, the authority of any State or political subdivision thereof from imposing any additional liability or requirements with respect to—

(A) the discharge of oil or other pollution by oil within such State; or

(B) any removal activities in connection with such a discharge; or

(2) affect, or be construed or interpreted to affect or modify in any way the obligations or liabilities of any person under the Solid Waste Disposal Act (42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.) or State law, including common law.

**(b) Preservation of State funds**

Nothing in this Act or in section 9509 of title 26 shall in any way affect, or be construed to affect, the authority of any State—

(1) to establish, or to continue in effect, a fund any purpose of which is to pay for costs or damages arising out of, or directly resulting from, oil pollution or the substantial threat of oil pollution; or

(2) to require any person to contribute to such a fund.

**(c) Additional requirements and liabilities; penalties**

Nothing in this Act, the Act of March 3, 1851 (46 U.S.C. 183 et seq.),<sup>1</sup> or section 9509 of title 26,

<sup>1</sup> See References in Text note below.

shall in any way affect, or be construed to affect, the authority of the United States or any State or political subdivision thereof—

(1) to impose additional liability or additional requirements; or

(2) to impose, or to determine the amount of, any fine or penalty (whether criminal or civil in nature) for any violation of law;

relating to the discharge, or substantial threat of a discharge, of oil.

**(d) Federal employee liability**

For purposes of section 2679(b)(2)(B) of title 28, nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize or create a cause of action against a Federal officer or employee in the officer's or employee's personal or individual capacity for any act or omission while acting within the scope of the officer's or employee's office or employment.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1018, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 505.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in text, is Pub. L. 101-380, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 484, as amended, known as the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

Act of March 3, 1851, referred to in subsecs. (a) and (c), is act Mar. 3, 1851, ch. 43, 9 Stat. 635, which was incorporated into the Revised Statutes as R.S. §§4282, 4283, 4284 to 4287 and 4289, and was classified to sections 182, 183, and 184 to 188 of Title 46, Appendix, Shipping, prior to being repealed and restated in chapter 305 of Title 46, Shipping, by Pub. L. 109-304, §§6(c), 19, Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1509, 1710. For disposition of sections of the former Appendix to Title 46, see Disposition Table preceding section 101 of Title 46.

The Solid Waste Disposal Act, referred to in subsec. (a)(2), is title II of Pub. L. 89-272, Oct. 20, 1965, 79 Stat. 997, as amended generally by Pub. L. 94-580, §2, Oct. 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2795, which is classified generally to chapter 82 (§6901 et seq.) of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 6901 of Title 42 and Tables.

REPORT ON VESSEL SAFETY AND ABILITY TO MEET  
LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Pub. L. 102-241, §32, Dec. 19, 1991, 105 Stat. 2222, provided that: "Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act [Dec. 19, 1991], the Secretary of Transportation shall report to Congress on the effect of section 1018 of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-380; 104 Stat. 484) [33 U.S.C. 2718] on the safety of vessels being used to transport oil and the capability of owners and operators to meet their legal obligations in the event of an oil spill."

**§ 2719. State financial responsibility**

A State may enforce, on the navigable waters of the State, the requirements for evidence of financial responsibility under section 2716 of this title.

(Pub. L. 101-380, title I, §1019, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 506.)

**§ 2720. Differentiation among fats, oils, and greases**

**(a) In general**

Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, in issuing or enforcing any regulation

or establishing any interpretation or guideline relating to the transportation, storage, discharge, release, emission, or disposal of a fat, oil, or grease under any Federal law, the head of that Federal agency shall—

(1) differentiate between and establish separate classes for—

(A) animal fats and oils and greases, and fish and marine mammal oils, within the meaning of paragraph (2) of section 61(a) of title 13, and oils of vegetable origin, including oils from the seeds, nuts, and kernels referred to in paragraph (1)(A) of that section; and

(B) other oils and greases, including petroleum; and

(2) apply standards to different classes of fats and oils based on considerations in subsection (b) of this section.

**(b) Considerations**

In differentiating between the class of fats, oils, and greases described in subsection (a)(1)(A) of this section and the class of oils and greases described in subsection (a)(1)(B) of this section, the head of the Federal agency shall consider differences in the physical, chemical, biological, and other properties, and in the environmental effects, of the classes.

**(c) Exception**

The requirements of this Act shall not apply to the Food and Drug Administration and the Food Safety and Inspection Service.

(Pub. L. 104-55, §2, Nov. 20, 1995, 109 Stat. 546.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in subsec. (c), is Pub. L. 104-55, Nov. 20, 1995, 109 Stat. 546, which enacted this section and amended sections 2704 and 2716 of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title of 1995 Amendment note set out under section 2701 of this title and Tables.

CODIFICATION

Section was enacted as part of the Edible Oil Regulatory Reform Act, and not as part of title I of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 which comprises this subchapter.

Section is comprised of section 2 of Pub. L. 104-55. Subsec. (d) of section 2 of Pub. L. 104-55 amended sections 2704 and 2716 of this title.

REGULATIONS

Pub. L. 105-277, div. A, §101(g) [title III, §343], Oct. 21, 1998, 112 Stat. 2681-439, 2681-473, provided that:

"(a) None of the funds made available by this Act or subsequent Acts may be used by the Coast Guard to issue, implement, or enforce a regulation or to establish an interpretation or guideline under the Edible Oil Regulatory Reform Act (Public Law 104-55) [see Short Title of 1995 Amendment note set out under section 2701 of this title], or the amendments made by that Act, that does not recognize and provide for, with respect to fats, oils, and greases (as described in that Act, or the amendments made by that Act) differences in—

"(1) physical, chemical, biological and other relevant properties; and

"(2) environmental effects.

"(b) Not later than March 31, 1999, the Secretary of Transportation shall issue regulations amending 33 CFR 154 to comply with the requirements of Public Law 104-55."

[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.]

Pub. L. 105-276, title III, Oct. 21, 1998, 112 Stat. 2499, provided that: “Not later than March 31, 1999, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue regulations amending 40 C.F.R. 112 to comply with the requirements of the Edible Oil Regulatory Reform Act (Public Law 104-55) [see Short Title of 1995 Amendment note set out under section 2701 of this title]. Such regulations shall differentiate between and establish separate classes for animal fats and oils and greases, and fish and marine mammal oils (as described in that Act), and other oils and greases, and shall apply standards to such different classes of fats and oils based on differences in the physical, chemical, biological, and other properties, and in the environmental effects, of the classes. None of the funds made available by this Act or in subsequent Acts may be used by the Environmental Protection Agency to issue or to establish an interpretation or guidance relating to fats, oils, and greases (as described in Public Law 104-55) that does not comply with the requirements of the Edible Oil Regulatory Reform Act.”

SENSE OF CONGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF REGULATIONS REGARDING ANIMAL FATS AND VEGETABLE OILS

Pub. L. 104-324, title XI, §1130, Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3985, provided that:

“(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that, in an effort to reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens, a regulation issued or enforced and an interpretation or guideline established pursuant to Public Law 104-55 [see Short Title of 1995 Amendment note set out under section 2701 of this title] should in any manner possible recognize and provide for the differences in the physical, chemical, biological, and other properties, and in the environmental effects, of the classes of fats, oils, and greases described under that law.

“(b) REPORT.—Within 60 days after the date of enactment of this section [Oct. 19, 1996] and on January 1 of each year thereafter, the Secretary of Transportation shall submit a report to Congress on the extent to which the implementation by the United States Coast Guard of regulations issued or enforced, or interpretations or guidelines established, pursuant to Public Law 104-55, carry out the intent of Congress and recognize and provide for the differences in the physical, chemical, biological, and other properties, and in the environmental effects, of the classes of fats, oils, and greases described under that law.”

[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.]

SUBCHAPTER II—PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND PROVISIONS

§ 2731. Oil Spill Recovery Institute

(a) Establishment of Institute

The Secretary of Commerce shall provide for the establishment of a Prince William Sound Oil Spill Recovery Institute (hereinafter in this section referred to as the “Institute”) through the Prince William Sound Science and Technology Institute located in Cordova, Alaska.

(b) Functions

The Institute shall conduct research and carry out educational and demonstration projects designed to—

(1) identify and develop the best available techniques, equipment, and materials for dealing with oil spills in the arctic and subarctic marine environment; and

(2) complement Federal and State damage assessment efforts and determine, document, assess, and understand the long-range effects of Arctic or Subarctic oil spills on the natural resources of Prince William Sound and its adjacent waters (as generally depicted on the map entitled “EXXON VALDEZ oil spill dated March 1990”), and the environment, the economy, and the lifestyle and well-being of the people who are dependent on them, except that the Institute shall not conduct studies or make recommendations on any matter which is not directly related to Arctic or Subarctic oil spills or the effects thereof.

(c) Advisory board

(1) In general

The policies of the Institute shall be determined by an advisory board, composed of 16 members appointed as follows:

(A) One representative appointed by each of the Commissioners of Fish and Game, Environmental Conservation, and Natural Resources of the State of Alaska, all of whom shall be State employees.

(B) One representative appointed by each of the Secretaries of Commerce and the Interior and the Commandant of the Coast Guard, who shall be Federal employees.

(C) Two representatives from the fishing industry appointed by the Governor of the State of Alaska from among residents of communities in Alaska that were affected by the EXXON VALDEZ oil spill, who shall serve terms of 2 years each. Interested organizations from within the fishing industry may submit the names of qualified individuals for consideration by the Governor.

(D) Two Alaska Natives who represent Native entities affected by the EXXON VALDEZ oil spill, at least one of whom represents an entity located in Prince William Sound, appointed by the Governor of Alaska from a list of 4 qualified individuals submitted by the Alaska Federation of Natives, who shall serve terms of 2 years each.

(E) Two representatives from the oil and gas industry to be appointed by the Governor of the State of Alaska who shall serve terms of 2 years each. Interested organizations from within the oil and gas industry may submit the names of qualified individuals for consideration by the Governor.

(F) Two at-large representatives from among residents of communities in Alaska that were affected by the EXXON VALDEZ oil spill who are knowledgeable about the marine environment and wildlife within Prince William Sound, and who shall serve terms of 2 years each, appointed by the remaining members of the Advisory Board. Interested parties may submit the names of qualified individuals for consideration by the Advisory Board.