

Maritime Administration, DOT

§ 221.75

procedure specified in §§221.73 through 221.89 of this subpart.

(c) If, within 30 days of receipt of the notification specified in paragraph (a) of this section, the Party neither agrees to the penalty nor elects the informal hearing procedure, the Party will be deemed to have waived its right to the informal hearing procedure and the penalty will be considered accepted. If a monetary penalty is assessed, it is due and payable to the United States, and the Maritime Administration may initiate appropriate action to collect the penalty.

§ 221.69 Hearing Officer.

(a) The Hearing Officer shall have no responsibility, direct or supervisory, for the investigation of cases referred for the assessment of civil penalties.

(b) The Hearing Officer shall decide each case on the basis of the evidence before him or her, and must have no prior connection with the case. The Hearing Officer is solely responsible for the decision in each case referred to him or her.

(c) The Hearing Officer is authorized to administer oaths and issue subpoenas necessary to the conduct of a hearing, to the extent provided by law.

§ 221.71 Hearing Officer referral.

If, pursuant to §221.67(b)(2) of this subpart, a Party elects to have the matter referred to a Hearing Officer, the Vessel Transfer Officer may—

(a) Decide not to proceed with penalty action, close the case, and notify the Party in writing that the case has been closed; or

(b) Refer the matter to a Hearing Officer with the case file and a record of any prior violations by the Party.

§ 221.73 Initial Hearing Officer consideration.

(a) When a case is received for action, the Hearing Officer shall examine the material submitted. If the Hearing Officer determines that there is insufficient evidence to proceed, or that there is any other reason which would make penalty action inappropriate, the Hearing Officer shall return the case to the Vessel Transfer Officer with a written statement of the reason. The Vessel Transfer Officer may close the case or

investigate the matter further. If additional evidence supporting a violation is discovered, the Vessel Transfer Officer may resubmit the matter to the Hearing Officer.

(b) If the Hearing Officer determines that there is reason to believe that a violation has been committed, the Hearing Officer notifies the Party in writing by registered or certified mail of—

(1) The alleged violation and the applicable statute and regulations;

(2) The maximum penalty that may be assessed for each violation;

(3) The general nature of the procedure for assessing and collecting the penalty;

(4) The amount of the penalty that appears to be appropriate, based on the material then available to the Hearing Officer;

(5) The right to examine all the material in the case file and have a copy of all written documents provided upon requests; and

(6) The right to request a hearing.

(c) If at any time it appears that the addition of another Party to the proceedings is necessary or desirable, the Hearing Officer will provide the additional Party and the Party alleged to be in violation with notice as described above.

(d) At any time during a proceeding, before the Hearing Officer issues a decision under §221.89, the Hearing Officer and the Party may agree to a Settlement of the case.

§ 221.75 Response by party.

(a) Within 30 days after receipt of notice from the Hearing Officer, the Party, or counsel for the Party, may—

(1) Pay the amount specified in the notice as being appropriate;

(2) In writing request a hearing, specifying the issues in dispute; or

(3) Submit written evidence or arguments in lieu of a hearing.

(b) The right to a hearing is waived if the Party does not submit a request to the Hearing Officer within 30 days after receipt of notice from the Hearing Officer, unless additional time has been granted by the Hearing Officer.

(c) The Hearing Officer has discretion as to the venue and scheduling of a hearing. The hearing will normally be

§ 221.77

held at the office of the Hearing Officer. A request for a change of location of a hearing or transfer to another Hearing Officer must be in writing and state the reasons why the requested action is necessary or desirable. Action on the request is at the discretion of the Hearing Officer.

(d) A Party who has requested a hearing may amend the specification of the issues in dispute at any time up to 10 days before the scheduled date of the hearing. Issues raised later than 10 days before the scheduled hearing may be presented only at the discretion of the Hearing Officer.

§ 221.77 Disclosure of evidence.

The Party shall, upon request, be provided a free copy of all the evidence in the case file, except material that would disclose or lead to the disclosure of the identity of a confidential informant and any other information properly exempt from disclosure.

§ 221.79 Request for confidential treatment.

(a) In addition to information treated as confidential under § 221.77 of this subpart, a request for confidential treatment of a document or portion thereof may be made by the Person supplying the information on the basis that the information is—

(1) Confidential financial information, trade secrets, or other material exempt from disclosure by the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552);

(2) Required to be held in confidence by 18 U.S.C. 1905; or

(3) Otherwise exempt by law from disclosure.

(b) The Person desiring confidential treatment must submit the request to the Hearing Officer in writing and the reasons justifying nondisclosure. The Hearing Officer shall forward any request for confidential treatment to the appropriate official of the Maritime Administration for a determination hereon. Failure to make a timely request may result in a document being considered as nonconfidential and subject to release.

(c) Confidential material shall not be considered by the Hearing Officer in reaching a decision unless—

46 CFR Ch. II (10–1–10 Edition)

(1) It has been furnished by a Party; or

(2) It has been furnished pursuant to a subpoena.

§ 221.81 Counsel.

A Party has the right to be represented at all stages of the proceeding by counsel. After receiving notification that a Party is represented by counsel, the Hearing Officer will direct all further communications to that counsel.

§ 221.83 Witnesses.

A Party may present the testimony of any witness either through a personal appearance or through a written statement. The Party may request the assistance of the Hearing Officer in obtaining the personal appearance of a witness. The request must be in writing and state the reasons why a written statement would be inadequate, the issue or issues to which the testimony would be relevant, and the substance of the expected testimony. If the Hearing Officer determines that the personal appearance of the witness may materially aid in the decision on the case, the Hearing Officer will seek to obtain the witness' appearance. The Hearing Officer may move the hearing to the witness' location, accept a written statement, or accept a stipulation in lieu of testimony.

§ 221.85 Hearing procedures.

(a) The Hearing Officer shall conduct a fair and impartial proceeding in which the Party is given a full opportunity to be heard. At the opening of a hearing, the Hearing Officer shall advise the Party of the nature of the proceedings and of the alleged violation.

(b) The material in the case file pertinent to the issues to be determined by the Hearing Officer shall first be presented. The Party may examine, respond to and rebut this material. The Party may offer any facts, statements, explanations, documents, sworn or unsworn testimony, or other exculpatory items that bear on the issues, or which may be relevant to the size of an appropriate penalty. The Hearing Officer may require the authentication of any written exhibit or statement.

(c) At the close of the Party's presentation of evidence, the Hearing Officer