

§ 245.3 Applicability.

(a) These procedures apply to the removal of wrecks or other obstructions within the navigable waters of the United States, as defined in part 329 of this chapter.

(b) This part does not apply to the summary removal or destruction of a vessel by the Coast Guard under authority of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1321), or to any removal actions involving obstructive bridges which are subject to separate regulation under part 114 of this title.

(c) For vessels which were sunk or wrecked prior to November 17, 1986, the statutory obligation to remove belongs solely to the owner (not the operator or lessee), and the owner's obligation to reimburse the U.S. Treasury for federal removal is limited to cases of voluntary or careless sinking.

§ 245.5 Definitions.

Abandonment means the surrendering of all rights to a vessel (or other obstruction) and its cargo by the owner, or owners if vessel and cargo are separately owned.

Hazard to navigation is an obstruction, usually sunken, that presents sufficient danger to navigation so as to require expeditious, affirmative action such as marking, removal, or redefinition of a designated waterway to provide for navigational safety.

Obstruction is anything that restricts, endangers or interferes with navigation.

Responsible party means the owner of a vessel and/or cargo, or an operator or lessee where the operator or lessee has substantial control of the vessel's operation.

Vessel as used in this part includes any ship, boat, barge, raft, or other water craft.

§ 245.10 General policy.

(a) *Coordination with Coast Guard.* The Corps of Engineers coordinates its wreck removal program with the Coast Guard through interagency agreement, to insure a coordinated approach to the protection of federal interests in navigation and safety. Disagreements at the field level are resolved by referral to higher authority within each agency, ultimately (within the Corps of En-

gineers) to the Director of Civil Works, who retains the final authority to make independent determinations where Corps responsibilities and activities are affected.

(b) *Owner responsibility.* Primary responsibility for removal of wrecks or other obstructions lies with the owner, lessee, or operator. Where an obstruction presents a hazard to navigation which warrants removal, the District Engineer will attempt to identify the owner or other responsible party and vigorously pursue removal by that party before undertaking Corps removal.

(c) *Emergency authority.* Obstructions which impede or stop navigation; or pose an immediate and significant threat to life, property, or a structure that facilitates navigation; may be removed by the Corps of Engineers under the emergency authority of section 20 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, as amended.

(d) *Non-emergency situations.* In other than emergency situations, all reported obstructions will be evaluated jointly by the District Engineer and the Coast Guard district for impact on safe navigation and for determination of a course of action, which may include the need for removal. Obstructions which are not a hazard to general navigation will not be removed by the Corps of Engineers.

(e) *Corps removal.* Where removal is warranted and the responsible party cannot be identified or does not pursue removal diligently, the District Engineer may pursue removal by the Corps of Engineers under section 19 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, as amended, following procedures outlined in this CFR part.

§ 245.15 Delegation.

District Engineers may undertake removal without prior approval of the Chief of Engineers provided the cost does not exceed \$100,000. Removals estimated to cost above \$100,000 require advance approval of the Director of Civil Works.

§ 245.20 Determination of hazard to navigation.

(a) Upon receiving a report of a wreck or other obstruction, District

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Engineers will consult with the Coast Guard district to jointly determine whether the obstruction poses a hazard to navigation.

(b) Factors to be considered, as a minimum, include:

(1) Location of the obstruction in relation to the navigable channel and other navigational traffic patterns.

(2) Navigational difficulty in the vicinity of the obstruction.

(3) Clearance or depth of water over the obstruction, fluctuation of water level, and other hydraulic characteristics in the vicinity.

(4) Type and density of commercial and recreational vessel traffic, or other marine activity, in the vicinity of the obstruction.

(5) Physical characteristics of the obstruction, including cargo, if any.

(6) Possible movement of the obstruction.

(7) Location of the obstruction in relation to existing aids to navigation.

(8) Prevailing and historical weather conditions.

(9) Length of time the obstruction has been in existence.

(10) History of vessel accidents involving the obstruction.

§ 245.25 Determination of remedial action.

(a) *Consultation with Coast Guard.* After a determination has been made that an obstruction presents a hazard to navigation, District Engineers will consult with the Coast Guard district to determine appropriate remedial action for the specific situation.

(b) *Options.* The following options, or some combination of these options, may be considered:

(1) No action.

(2) Charting.

(3) Broadcast notice to mariners and publication of navigational safety information.

(4) Marking.

(5) Redefinition of navigational area (e.g., channel, fairway, anchorage, etc.).

(6) Removal.

§ 245.30 Identification of responsible parties.

(a) *Investigation.* When marking or removal are determined to be appro-

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priate remedial action and no emergency situation exists, the District Engineer will investigate to determine the owner or, if the owner cannot be determined, the lessee or operator. If cargo is involved, ownership will be separately determined.

(b) *Notification.* If the owner or other responsible party can be determined, the District Engineer and/or the Coast Guard will send a notice, via certified mail, advising them of their legal obligation to mark (referencing Coast Guard requirements) and to remove the obstruction, and of the legal consequences for failure to do so, with a request for prompt reply of intent.

(c) *Public notice.* If the owner or responsible party cannot be determined from investigation, the District Engineer will publish a legal advertisement in a newspaper nearest the location of the obstruction and in a newspaper of at least 25,000 circulation, addressed "To Whom It May Concern," requiring removal by the owner, lessee or operator. The advertisement will be published at least once a week for 30 days.

§ 245.35 Judgments to require removal.

When the owner or responsible party has been identified, and refuses or fails to take prompt action toward removal, the District Engineer may seek a judgment by the district court requiring removal.

§ 245.40 Removal by responsible party.

(a) *Corps monitoring.* If the owner, lessee or operator agrees to remove a hazard to navigation, the District Engineer should ascertain that:

(1) Marking is accomplished promptly and is maintained,

(2) The plan for removal and disposal is reasonable and acceptable to the District Engineer,

(3) Removal operations do not unreasonably interfere with navigation,

(4) All conditions of the Corps of Engineers permit are met, and

(5) Removal operations are pursued diligently.

(b) *Deficiencies.* If the removal actions are not proceeding satisfactorily, the District Engineer will notify the responsible party of the deficiencies and