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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Coast Guard

46 CFR Parts 10, 12, and 13

[CGD 96-021]

Discussion of the Coast Guard's Course Approval Process

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard plans to hold a public meeting to solicit input from the maritime industry and from the general public concerning the course approval process currently used by the Coast Guard to evaluate maritime training offered in the United States.

DATES: The meeting will be held May 8, 1996, from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Written comments must be submitted by July 24, 1996.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the New Orleans Airport Hilton, 901 Airline Highway, Kenner, Louisiana, 70062.

Written comments may be mailed to the Executive Secretary, Marine Safety Council (G-LRA), U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, 2100 Second Street SW., Washington, DC 20593-0001, or may be delivered to room 3406 at the same address between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Comments will become part of this docket [CGD 96-021] and will be available for inspection or copying at room 3406, Coast Guard Headquarters, between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

A copy of the current course approval guidelines may be obtained by writing to Director, National Maritime Center (NMC-4B), 4200 Wilson Blvd, Suite 510, Arlington, VA 22203-1804, or by calling (703) 235-0014, between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Requests may also be submitted by facsimile at (703) 235-1062.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Christine Meers, Chief, Marine Exam Administration Branch, National Maritime Center (NMC-4B), 4200 Wilson Blvd, Suite 510, Arlington, VA 22203-1804, telephone (703) 235-0014.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background and Discussion

Federal Regulations 46 CFR Parts 10, 12 and 13 require or allow applicants for merchant marine licenses and documents to successfully complete approved courses, or in some cases to substitute coursework in lieu of seatime or examinations when acquiring a licenses. In order to ensure that mariners are properly trained in these courses, the Coast Guard reviews and certifies the courses and the institutions as meeting minimum requirements.

Current Process: Training institutions who want the Coast Guard to certify that their courses meet Federal standards submit their courses for approval to the Coast Guard via the nearest Regional Examination Center (REC). If the application package is complete in accordance with Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular (NVIC) 5-95, it is forwarded to the NMC for review. If the course meets the minimum standards set forth in the regulations and NVIC 5-95, then certification is issued to the institution for that course.

This certification notifies marines that the course will help them to fulfill some

of the Federal requirements for acquiring a Coast Guard license and documentation. The certification also encourages training institutions to provide courses which meet the minimum standards for mariner licensing and documentation.

In order to improve the quality of the public service that we provide, we are holding this meeting to solicit the views and comments of the maritime training community, mariners, and the affected public. We intend to identify any perceived problems with our current system, and to discuss ways that we could revise our policies (e.g. NIV 5-95 or specific course guidelines). The meeting will be held as an open forum and we strongly encourage members of the maritime community and general public to actively participate and provide their insight and knowledge, so that we can continue to provide high-quality service to the public.

Attendance is open to the public. Members of the public are encouraged to make oral presentations during the meeting. Written material may be submitted before, during, or after the meeting. Persons unable to attend the public meeting are encouraged to submit written comments on or before July 24, 1996.

Those needing the assistance of sign language interpretation at the meeting should notify the person listed above under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** as soon as possible so that arrangements may be made to provide the necessary assistance.

Dated: April 10, 1996.
Norman W. Lemley,
Director, National Maritime Center.
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