

as amended (31 U.S.C. 3701 *et seq.*), and any implementing regulations (including 32 CFR part 199.11) regarding collection of indebtedness due the United States shall also be available to effect collections pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1095b and this section.

(h) *Obligations of beneficiaries.* To insure the expeditious and efficient processing of third-party payer claims, any person furnished care and treatment under CHAMPUS, his or her guardian, personal representative, counsel, estate, dependents or survivors shall be required:

(1) To provide information regarding coverage by a third-party payer plan and/or the circumstances surrounding an injury to the patient as a condition precedent to the processing of a CHAMPUS claim involving possible third-party payer coverage.

(2) To furnish such additional information as may be requested concerning the circumstances giving rise to the injury or disease for which care and treatment are being given and concerning any action instituted or to be instituted by or against a third person; and,

(3) To cooperate in the prosecution of all claims and actions by the United States against such third person.

(i) *Responsibility for recovery.* The Director, OCHAMPUS, or a designee, is responsible for insuring that CHAMPUS claims arising under 10 U.S.C. 1095b and this section (including claims involving the FMCRA) are properly referred to and coordinated with designated claims authorities of the uniformed services who shall assert and recover CHAMPUS costs incurred on behalf of beneficiaries. Generally, claims arising under this section will be processed as follows:

(1) *Identification and referral.* In most cases where civilian providers provide medical care and payment for such care has been made by a CHAMPUS contractor, initial identification of potential third-party payers will be by the CHAMPUS contractor. In such cases, the CHAMPUS contractor is responsible for conducting a preliminary investigation and referring the case to designated appropriate claims authorities of the Uniformed Services.

(2) *Processing CHAMPUS claims.* When the CHAMPUS contractor initially identifies a claim as involving a potential third-party payer, it shall request additional information concerning the circumstances of the injury or disease and/or the identity of any potential third-party payer from the beneficiary or other responsible party unless adequate information is

submitted with the claim. The CHAMPUS claim will be suspended and no payment issued pending receipt of the requested information. If the requested information is not received, the claim will be denied. A CHAMPUS beneficiary may expedite the processing of his or her CHAMPUS claim by submitting appropriate information with the first claim for treatment of an accidental injury. Third-party payer information normally is required only once concerning any single accidental injury or episode of care. Once the third-party payer information pertaining to a single incident or episode of care is received, subsequent claims associated with the same incident or episode of care may be processed to payment in the usual manner. If, however, the requested third-party payer information is not received, subsequent claims involving the same incident or episode of care will be suspended or denied as stated above.

(3) *Ascertaining total potential liability.* It is essential that the appropriate claims authority responsible for asserting the claim against the third-party payer receive from the CHAMPUS contractor a report of all amounts expended by the United States for care resulting from the incident upon which potential liability in the third party is based (including amounts paid by CHAMPUS for both inpatient and outpatient care). Prior to assertion and final settlement of a claim, it will be necessary for the responsible claims authority to secure from the CHAMPUS contractor updated information to insure that all amounts expended under CHAMPUS are included in the government's claim. It is equally important that information on future medical payments be obtained through the investigative process and included as a part of the government's claim. No CHAMPUS-related claim will be settled, compromised or waived without full consideration being given to the possible future medical payment aspects of the individual case.

(j) *Reporting requirements.* Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1079a, all refunds and other amounts collected in the administration of CHAMPUS shall be credited to the appropriation available for that program for the fiscal year in which the refund or amount is collected. Therefore, the Department of Defense requires an annual report stating the number and dollar amount of claims asserted against, and the number and dollar amount of recoveries from third-party payers (including FMCRA recoveries) arising from the operation of the CHAMPUS. To facilitate the preparation of this report and to maintain program

integrity, the following reporting requirements are established:

(1) *CHAMPUS contractors.* Each CHAMPUS contractor shall submit on or before January 31 of each year an annual report to the Director, OCHAMPUS, or a designee, covering the 12 months of the previous calendar year. This report shall contain, as a minimum, the number and total dollar amount of cases of potential third-party payer/FMCRA liability referred to uniformed services claims authorities for further investigation and collection. These figures are to be itemized by the states and uniformed services to which the cases are referred.

(2) *Uniformed Services.* Each uniformed service will submit to the Director, OCHAMPUS, or designee, an annual report covering the 12 calendar months of the previous year, setting forth, as a minimum, the number and total dollar amount of cases involving CHAMPUS payments received from CHAMPUS contractors, the number and dollar amount of cases involving CHAMPUS payments received from other sources, and the number and dollar amount of claims actually asserted against, and the dollar amount of recoveries from, third-party payers or under the FMCRA. The report, itemized by state and foreign claims jurisdictions, shall be provided no later than February 28 of each year.

(3) *Implementation of the reporting requirements.* The Director, OCHAMPUS, or a designee shall issue guidance for implementation of the reporting requirements prescribed by this section.

Dated: October 13, 1999.

L.M. Bynum,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Coast Guard

33 CFR Ch. I

[USCG-1998-4501]

Improvements to Marine Safety in Puget Sound-Area Waters

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of meeting and reopening comment period.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard announces two identical meetings to describe the results of the cost-benefit analysis of potential rules that could improve

marine safety in Puget Sound-Area waters and to describe ongoing activities to improve marine safety in the region. Under consideration are regulatory requirements for tug escorts and/or dedicated rescue tugs for certain vessels operating in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and adjacent waters. Additionally, the docket for the advance notice of proposed rulemaking for these tug measures has been reopened until January 31, 2000.

DATES: The meetings will be held from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Tuesday, November 16, 1999 and from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Wednesday, November 17, 1999. Comments to the docket for the advance notice of proposed rulemaking must reach the Docket Management Facility on or before January 31, 2000.

ADDRESSES: The public meeting will be held at the Hotel Edgewater at Pier 67, 2411 Alaskan Way, Seattle, WA 98121.

You may submit your written comments and related material by only one of the following methods:

(1) By mail to the Docket Management Facility, (USCG-1999-4501), U.S. Department of Transportation, room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001.

(2) By hand to room PL-401 on the Plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is 202-366-9329.

(3) By fax to the Docket Management Facility at 202-493-2251.

(4) Electronically through the Web Site for the Docket Management System at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

The Docket Management Facility maintains the public docket for this notice. Comments and documents, as indicated in this notice, will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection or copying at room PL-401 on the Plaza level of the Nassif Building at the same address between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. You may electronically access the public docket for this notice on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For questions on the public meeting, contact CDR Timothy M. Close, Human Element and Ship Design Division (G-MSE-1), U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, 2100 Second Street SW., Washington, DC 20593-0001, telephone 202-267-2997, fax 202-267-4816, email fldr-he@comdt.uscg.mil. For questions on viewing or submitting material to the docket, call Dorothy Walker, Chief,

Dockets, Department of Transportation, telephone 202-366-9329.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Request for Comments

We encourage you to participate by submitting comments and related material. If you do so, please include your name and address, identify the docket number [USCG-1998-4501], indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and give the reason for each comment. You may submit your comments and material by mail, hand delivery, fax, or electronic means to the Docket Management Facility at the address under **ADDRESSES**; but please submit your comments and material by only one means. If you submit them by mail or hand delivery, submit them in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. If you submit them by mail and would like to know they reached the Facility, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope. We will consider all comments and material received during the comment period. We may change this rule in view of them.

Public Meeting

The purpose of the meeting is to describe the results of the cost-benefit analysis. Also, as time allows, The Coast Guard will respond to questions about the cost-benefit analysis, and to discuss how the results will be used. Attendance is open to the public.

Background and Purpose

On November 24, 1998, the Coast Guard published an advance notice of proposed rulemaking for marine safety in the Puget Sound region (63 FR 64937). Under consideration were regulatory requirements for tug escorts and/or dedicated rescue tugs for certain vessels operating in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and adjacent waters. Comments to guide a cost-benefit analysis were requested by December 24, 1998. Based upon the comments received, the Coast Guard framed a cost-benefit analysis of these two measures as well as variations of their application. A public meeting was held on May 12, 1999 to discuss the framework for and conduct of the cost-benefit analysis. The purpose of the November 4, 1999 public meeting is to provide the public with a briefing on the results of the cost-benefit analysis. Comments to the docket regarding the results of the cost-benefit analysis and their interpretation are encouraged. These comments will be used by the Navigation Safety Advisory Council panel formed to develop a long-term oil-

spill risk management plan for the region (64 FR 48442) and by the Secretary in the final determination regarding the regulatory measures under consideration. Directions for obtaining a copy of the final report of the cost-benefit study will be provided at the Public Meeting. Additionally, a copy will be provided in the docket.

Information on Services for the Handicapped

Contact CDR Close for information on facilities or services for the handicapped or to request special assistance at the meetings as soon as possible.

Dated: October 13, 1999.

Joseph J. Angelo,

Acting Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety and Environmental Protection.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Coast Guard

33 CFR Parts 181 and 183

[USCG-1998-4734]

Manufacturer Exemptions From Recreational Boat Standards

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of petition and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard seeks public comment to better respond to a petition for rulemaking submitted by the Personal Watercraft Industry Association (PWIA). The petition requests that the Coast Guard authorize a new method of complying with recreational boating safety laws as they relate to personal watercraft (PWC). Currently, PWC manufacturers must petition for an exemption from manufacturing regulations. The PWIA petition suggests that the Coast Guard replace the exemption process with a requirement for manufacturers to comply with certain industry standards. This notice fully describes manufacturing regulations for recreational boats, the exemption process, and related issues to assist interested persons with providing helpful comments as to whether the Coast Guard should initiate a regulatory project.

DATES: Comments and related material must reach the Docket Management Facility on or before January 19, 2000.

ADDRESSES: You may submit your comments and related material by only one of the following methods: