

§ 30308. Nonapplication

(a) STATE LAW.—This chapter does not affect the law of a State regulating the right to recover for death.

(b) INTERNAL WATERS.—This chapter does not apply to the Great Lakes or waters within the territorial limits of a State.

(Pub. L. 109–304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1512.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 3 columns: Revised Section, Source (U.S. Code), Source (Statutes at Large). Row 1: 30308, 46 App.:767, Mar. 30, 1920, ch. 111, §7, 41 Stat. 538.

In subsection (a), the words “law of a State” are substituted for “any State statute” for consistency in the revised title. The words “regulating the right to recover for death” are substituted for “giving or regulating rights of action or remedies for death” to eliminate unnecessary words.

In subsection (b), the words “or to any navigable waters in the Panama Canal Zone” are omitted because the Panama Canal Zone was transferred to the Republic of Panama.

CHAPTER 305—EXONERATION AND LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

- Sec. 30501. Definition. 30502. Application. 30503. Declaration of nature and value of goods. 30504. Loss by fire. 30505. General limit of liability. 30506. Limit of liability for personal injury or death. 30507. Apportionment of losses. 30508. Provisions requiring notice of claim or limiting time for bringing action. 30509. Provisions limiting liability for personal injury or death. 30510. Vicarious liability for medical malpractice with regard to crew. 30511. Action by owner for limitation. 30512. Liability as master, officer, or seaman not affected.

§ 30501. Definition

In this chapter, the term “owner” includes a charterer that mans, supplies, and navigates a vessel at the charterer’s own expense or by the charterer’s own procurement.

(Pub. L. 109–304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1512.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 3 columns: Revised Section, Source (U.S. Code), Source (Statutes at Large). Row 1: 30501, 46 App.:186, R.S. §4286.

The words “In this chapter” are substituted for “within the meaning of the provisions of title 48 of the Revised Statutes relating to the limitation of the liability of the owners of vessels” because of the codification of title 46, United States Code. The word “supplies” is substituted for “victual” for clarity. The words “and such vessel, when so chartered, shall be liable in the same manner as if navigated by the owner thereof” are omitted as unnecessary.

§ 30502. Application

Except as otherwise provided, this chapter (except section 30503) applies to seagoing vessels and vessels used on lakes or rivers or in inland

navigation, including canal boats, barges, and lighters.

(Pub. L. 109–304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1512.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 3 columns: Revised Section, Source (U.S. Code), Source (Statutes at Large). Row 1: 30502, 46 App.:188, R.S. §4289; Feb. 18, 1875, ch. 80, §1 (related to R.S. §4289), 18 Stat. 320; June 19, 1886, ch. 421, §4, 24 Stat. 80; June 5, 1936, ch. 521, §4, 49 Stat. 1481.

§ 30503. Declaration of nature and value of goods

(a) IN GENERAL.—If a shipper of an item named in subsection (b), contained in a parcel, package, or trunk, loads the item as freight or baggage on a vessel, without at the time of loading giving to the person receiving the item a written notice of the true character and value of the item and having that information entered on the bill of lading, the owner and master of the vessel are not liable as carriers. The owner and master are not liable beyond the value entered on the bill of lading.

(b) ITEMS.—The items referred to in subsection (a) are precious metals, gold or silver plated articles, precious stones, jewelry, trinkets, watches, clocks, glass, china, coins, bills, securities, printings, engravings, pictures, stamps, maps, papers, silks, furs, lace, and similar items of high value and small size.

(Pub. L. 109–304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1512.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 3 columns: Revised Section, Source (U.S. Code), Source (Statutes at Large). Row 1: 30503, 46 App.:181, R.S. §4281.

In subsection (a), the words “load” and “loading” are substituted for “lade” and “lading” to use more common terminology. The words “person receiving the item” are substituted for “master, clerk, agent, or owner of such vessel receiving the same” to eliminate unnecessary words. The words “thereof in any form or manner” and “and according to the character thereof so notified and” are omitted as unnecessary.

In subsection (b), the words “precious metals” are substituted for “platina, gold, gold dust, silver, . . . or other precious metals, . . . gold or silver in a manufactured or unmanufactured state”, the words “precious stones” are substituted for “diamonds, or other precious stones”, the words “watches, clocks” are substituted for “watches, clocks, or timepieces of any description”, the words “coins, bills, securities” are substituted for “bullion, . . . coins, . . . bills of any bank or public body, . . . orders, notes, or securities for the payment of money”, the word “papers” is substituted for “writings, title deeds”, and the word “silks” is substituted for “silks in a manufactured or unmanufactured state, and whether wrought up or not wrought up with any other material”, to eliminate unnecessary words. The words “and similar items of high value and small size” are added to ensure that any of the items specifically named in the source but omitted in the revised section, or similar items, will be covered by this section.

§ 30504. Loss by fire

The owner of a vessel is not liable for loss or damage to merchandise on the vessel caused by a fire on the vessel unless the fire resulted from the design or neglect of the owner.

(Pub. L. 109-304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1513.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised Section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
30504	46 App.:182.	R.S. § 4282.

The words “liable for” are substituted for “liable to answer for or make good to any person”, the words “merchandise on the vessel” are substituted for “any merchandise whatsoever, which shall be shipped, taken in, or put on board any such vessel”, and the words “caused by a fire on the vessel” are substituted for “by reason or by means of any fire happening to or on board the vessel”, to eliminate unnecessary words.

§ 30505. General limit of liability

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in section 30506 of this title, the liability of the owner of a vessel for any claim, debt, or liability described in subsection (b) shall not exceed the value of the vessel and pending freight. If the vessel has more than one owner, the proportionate share of the liability of any one owner shall not exceed that owner’s proportionate interest in the vessel and pending freight.

(b) CLAIMS SUBJECT TO LIMITATION.—Unless otherwise excluded by law, claims, debts, and liabilities subject to limitation under subsection (a) are those arising from any embezzlement, loss, or destruction of any property, goods, or merchandise shipped or put on board the vessel, any loss, damage, or injury by collision, or any act, matter, or thing, loss, damage, or forfeiture, done, occasioned, or incurred, without the privity or knowledge of the owner.

(c) WAGES.—Subsection (a) does not apply to a claim for wages.

(Pub. L. 109-304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1513.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised Section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
30505	46 App.:183(a).	R.S. § 4283(a); Aug. 29, 1935, ch. 804, §1, 49 Stat. 960; June 5, 1936, ch. 521, §1, 49 Stat. 1479.
	46 App.:189	June 26, 1884, ch. 121, §18, 23 Stat. 57.

In subsection (a), the words “Except as provided in section 30506 of this title” are substituted for “except in the cases provided for in subsection (b) of this section” because 46 App. U.S.C. 183(b) is restated in section 30506 of the revised title. The words “whether American or foreign” are omitted as unnecessary because of section 30502 of the revised title. The words “shall not exceed the value of the vessel and pending freight” are substituted for “shall not . . . exceed the amount or value of . . . such vessel, and her freight then pending” in 46 App. U.S.C. 183(a) and for “the aggregate liabilities of all the owners of a vessel on account of the same shall not exceed the value of such vessels and freight pending” in 46 App. U.S.C. 189 for consistency and to eliminate unnecessary words. The last sentence is substituted for “the interest of such owner in” in 46 App. U.S.C. 183(a) and for “The individual liability of a shipowner shall be limited to the proportion of any or all debts and liabilities that his individual share of the vessel bears to the whole” in 46 App. U.S.C. 189 for clarity and consistency. The words “Provided, That this provision shall not prevent any claimant from joining all the owners in one action” in 46 App. U.S.C. 189 are omitted as unnecessary.

Subsection (c) is substituted for “nor shall the same apply to wages due to persons employed by said ship-

owners” in 46 App. U.S.C. 189 because of the reorganization of the source provisions.

§ 30506. Limit of liability for personal injury or death

(a) APPLICATION.—This section applies only to seagoing vessels, but does not apply to pleasure yachts, tugs, towboats, towing vessels, tank vessels, fishing vessels, fish tender vessels, canal boats, scows, car floats, barges, lighters, or nondescript vessels.

(b) MINIMUM LIABILITY.—If the amount of the vessel owner’s liability determined under section 30505 of this title is insufficient to pay all losses in full, and the portion available to pay claims for personal injury or death is less than \$420 times the tonnage of the vessel, that portion shall be increased to \$420 times the tonnage of the vessel. That portion may be used only to pay claims for personal injury or death.

(c) CALCULATION OF TONNAGE.—Under subsection (b), the tonnage of a self-propelled vessel is the gross tonnage without deduction for engine room, and the tonnage of a sailing vessel is the tonnage for documentation. However, space for the use of seamen is excluded.

(d) CLAIMS ARISING ON DISTINCT OCCASIONS.—Separate limits of liability apply to claims for personal injury or death arising on distinct occasions.

(e) PRIVILEGE OR KNOWLEDGE.—In a claim for personal injury or death, the privity or knowledge of the master or the owner’s superintendent or managing agent, at or before the beginning of each voyage, is imputed to the owner.

(Pub. L. 109-304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1513.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised Section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
30506(a)	46 App.:183(f) (related to 46 App.:183(b)-(e)).	
30506(b)	46 App.:183(b) (1st sentence).	R.S. § 4283(b) (1st sentence); Aug. 29, 1935, ch. 804, §1, 49 Stat. 960; June 5, 1936, ch. 521, §1, 49 Stat. 1479; Pub. L. 98-498, title II, §213(a), Oct. 19, 1984, 98 Stat. 2306.
30506(c)	46 App.:183(c).	R.S. § 4283(c)-(f) (related to R.S. § 4283(b)-(e)); Aug. 29, 1935, ch. 804, §1, 49 Stat. 960; June 5, 1936, ch. 521, §1, 49 Stat. 1480.
30506(d)	46 App.:183(d).	
30506(e)	46 App.:183(e).	

Subsection (a) is written as an application provision rather than as a definition to be more direct and to avoid having to repeat the word “seagoing” throughout the section. The words “fishing vessel, fish tender vessel” are substituted for “fishing vessels or their tenders” for clarity. The words “nondescript vessel” are substituted for “nondescript self-propelled vessels” and “nondescript non-self-propelled vessels” to eliminate unnecessary words. The words “self-propelled lighters” are omitted as covered by “lighter”. The words “even though the same may be seagoing vessels within the meaning of such term as used in section 188 of this Appendix, as amended” are omitted as unnecessary. This provision is restated also at section 30508(a) of the revised title.

In subsection (b), the words “is such that the portion available to pay claims for personal injury or death” are substituted for “is insufficient to pay all losses in full, and the portion of such amount applicable to the payment of losses in respect of loss of life or bodily injury” to eliminate unnecessary words.

In subsection (c), the words “self-propelled vessel” are substituted for “steam or motor vessel”, and the words “tonnage for documentation” are substituted for “registered tonnage”, for consistency in the revised title. The words “space for the use of seamen” are substituted for “space occupied by seamen or apprentices and appropriated to their use” to eliminate unnecessary words.

In subsection (d), the words “Separate limits of liability apply” are substituted for “The owner . . . shall be liable . . . to the same extent as if no other loss of life or bodily injury had arisen” to eliminate unnecessary words.

In subsection (e), the words “the privity or knowledge . . . is imputed to the owner” are substituted for “shall be deemed conclusively the privity or knowledge of the owner” for consistency and to eliminate unnecessary words.

§ 30507. Apportionment of losses

If the amounts determined under sections 30505 and 30506 of this title are insufficient to pay all claims—

- (1) all claimants shall be paid in proportion to their respective losses out of the amount determined under section 30505 of this title; and
- (2) personal injury and death claimants, if any, shall be paid an additional amount in proportion to their respective losses out of the additional amount determined under section 30506(b) of this title.

(Pub. L. 109–304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1513.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised Section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
30507	46 App.:183(b) (last sentence). 46 App.:184.	R.S. § 4283(b) (last sentence); Aug. 29, 1935, ch. 804, §1, 49 Stat. 960; June 5, 1936, ch. 521, §1, 49 Stat. 1479; Pub. L. 98–498, title II, §213(a), Oct. 19, 1984, 98 Stat. 2306. R.S. § 4284; Feb. 27, 1877, ch. 69, §1 (related to R.S. § 4284), 19 Stat. 251.

This section is substituted for 46 App. U.S.C. 183(b) (last sentence) and 184 (words before semicolon) for clarity and consistency and to eliminate unnecessary words. The text of 46 App. U.S.C. 184 (words after semicolon) is omitted as unnecessary. See G. Gilmore & C. Black, *The Law of Admiralty*, §10–3 (2d ed. 1975).

§ 30508. Provisions requiring notice of claim or limiting time for bringing action

(a) APPLICATION.—This section applies only to seagoing vessels, but does not apply to pleasure yachts, tugs, towboats, towing vessels, tank vessels, fishing vessels, fish tender vessels, canal boats, scows, car floats, barges, lighters, or non-descript vessels.

(b) MINIMUM TIME LIMITS.—The owner, master, manager, or agent of a vessel transporting passengers or property between ports in the United States, or between a port in the United States and a port in a foreign country, may not limit by regulation, contract, or otherwise the period for—

- (1) giving notice of, or filing a claim for, personal injury or death to less than 6 months after the date of the injury or death; or
- (2) bringing a civil action for personal injury or death to less than one year after the date of the injury or death.

(c) EFFECT OF FAILURE TO GIVE NOTICE.—When notice of a claim for personal injury or death is required by a contract, the failure to give the notice is not a bar to recovery if—

(1) the court finds that the owner, master, or agent of the vessel had knowledge of the injury or death and the owner has not been prejudiced by the failure;

(2) the court finds there was a satisfactory reason why the notice could not have been given; or

(3) the owner of the vessel fails to object to the failure to give the notice.

(d) TOLLING OF PERIOD TO GIVE NOTICE.—If a claimant is a minor or mental incompetent, or if a claim is for wrongful death, any period provided by a contract for giving notice of the claim is tolled until the earlier of—

- (1) the date a legal representative is appointed for the minor, incompetent, or decedent’s estate; or
- (2) 3 years after the injury or death.

(Pub. L. 109–304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1514.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised Section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
30508(a)	46 App.:183(f) (related to 46 App.:183b).	R.S. § 4283(f) (related to R.S. § 4283A); Aug. 29, 1935, ch. 804, §1, 49 Stat. 960; June 5, 1936, ch. 521, §1, 49 Stat. 1480.
30508(b)	46 App.:183b(a).	R.S. § 4283A, as added Aug. 29, 1935, ch. 804, §3, 49 Stat. 960.
30508(c)	46 App.:183b(b).	
30508(d)	46 App.:183b(c).	

For an explanation of subsection (a), see the revision notes for section 30506(a), where 46 App. U.S.C. 183(f) is also restated.

In subsection (b), before paragraph (1), the words “sea-going vessel (other than tugs, barges, fishing vessels and their tenders)” are omitted because of subsection (a) of this section. The word “merchandise” is omitted as covered by “property”. The words “between ports in the United States, or between a port in the United States and a port in a foreign country” are substituted for “from or between ports of the United States and foreign ports” for clarity and for consistency with section 30509(a)(1) of the revised title. See *Burstein v. United States Lines Co.*, 43 F. Supp. 226 (S.D.N.Y. 1942), rev’d on other grounds, 134 F.2d 89 (2d Cir. 1943). The word “rule” is omitted as covered by “regulation”. In paragraph (1), the words “after the date of the injury or death” are added for clarity and consistency with paragraph (2).

In subsection (c), before paragraph (1), the words “When notice of a claim for personal injury or death is required by a contract, the failure to give the notice” are substituted for “Failure to give such notice, where lawfully prescribed in such contract” for clarity. In paragraph (1), the words “the court finds” are stated at the beginning rather than the middle to be more precise. The word “damage” is omitted as unnecessary. In paragraph (2), the words “the court finds there was a satisfactory reason” are substituted for “the court excuses such failure on the ground that for some satisfactory reason” to eliminate unnecessary words.

In subsection (d), before paragraph (1), the word “claimant” is substituted for “person who is entitled to recover on any such claim” to eliminate unnecessary words. The word “lawful” is omitted as unnecessary. The words “is tolled until” are substituted for “shall not be applicable so long as” and “but shall be applicable from” for clarity and to eliminate unnecessary words.

§ 30509. Provisions limiting liability for personal injury or death

(a) PROHIBITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The owner, master, manager, or agent of a vessel transporting passengers between ports in the United States, or between a port in the United States and a port in a foreign country, may not include in a regulation or contract a provision limiting—

(A) the liability of the owner, master, or agent for personal injury or death caused by the negligence or fault of the owner or the owner’s employees or agents; or

(B) the right of a claimant for personal injury or death to a trial by court of competent jurisdiction.

(2) VOIDNESS.—A provision described in paragraph (1) is void.

(b) EMOTIONAL DISTRESS, MENTAL SUFFERING, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL INJURY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) does not prohibit a provision in a contract or in ticket conditions of carriage with a passenger that relieves an owner, master, manager, agent, operator, or crewmember of a vessel from liability for infliction of emotional distress, mental suffering, or psychological injury so long as the provision does not limit such liability when the emotional distress, mental suffering, or psychological injury is—

(A) the result of physical injury to the claimant caused by the negligence or fault of a crewmember or the owner, master, manager, agent, or operator;

(B) the result of the claimant having been at actual risk of physical injury, and the risk was caused by the negligence or fault of a crewmember or the owner, master, manager, agent, or operator; or

(C) intentionally inflicted by a crewmember or the owner, master, manager, agent, or operator.

(2) SEXUAL OFFENSES.—This subsection does not limit the liability of a crewmember or the owner, master, manager, agent, or operator of a vessel in a case involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, or rape.

(Pub. L. 109-304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1514.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 3 columns: Revised Section, Source (U.S. Code), Source (Statutes at Large). Row 1: 30509, 46 App.:183c., R.S. § 4283B, as added June 5, 1936, ch. 521, §2, 49 Stat. 1480; Oct. 19, 1996, Pub. L. 104-324, §1129(b), 110 Stat. 3984.

In subsection (a)(1), before subparagraph (A), the words “may not” are substituted for “It shall be unlawful” for consistency in the revised title and with other titles of the United States Code. The words “rule” and “agreement” are omitted as covered by “regulation” and “contract”, respectively. The words “a provision limiting” are substituted for “any provision or limitation (1) purporting . . . to relieve . . . , or (2) purporting . . . to lessen, weaken, or avoid” to eliminate unnecessary words. In subparagraph (A), the words “the owner’s employees or agents” are substituted for “his servants” for consistency in the revised title. In subparagraph (B), the words “on the question of liability

for such loss or injury, or the measure of damages therefor” are omitted as unnecessary.

Subsection (b)(2) is substituted for 46 App. U.S.C. 183c (last sentence) for consistency and to eliminate unnecessary words.

§ 30510. Vicarious liability for medical malpractice with regard to crew

In a civil action by any person in which the owner or operator of a vessel or employer of a crewmember is claimed to have vicarious liability for medical malpractice with regard to a crewmember occurring at a shoreside facility, and to the extent the damages resulted from the conduct of any shoreside doctor, hospital, medical facility, or other health care provider, the owner, operator, or employer is entitled to rely on any statutory limitations of liability applicable to the doctor, hospital, medical facility, or other health care provider in the State of the United States in which the shoreside medical care was provided.

(Pub. L. 109-304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1515.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 3 columns: Revised Section, Source (U.S. Code), Source (Statutes at Large). Row 1: 30510, 46 App.:183(g), R.S. §4283(g); Pub. L. 104-324, §1129(a), Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3984.

The words “civil action” are substituted for “suit” for consistency in the revised title. The words “is entitled to rely on any statutory” are substituted for “shall be entitled to rely upon any and all statutory” to eliminate unnecessary words.

§ 30511. Action by owner for limitation

(a) IN GENERAL.—The owner of a vessel may bring a civil action in a district court of the United States for limitation of liability under this chapter. The action must be brought within 6 months after a claimant gives the owner written notice of a claim.

(b) CREATION OF FUND.—When the action is brought, the owner (at the owner’s option) shall—

(1) deposit with the court, for the benefit of claimants—

(A) an amount equal to the value of the owner’s interest in the vessel and pending freight, or approved security; and

(B) an amount, or approved security, that the court may fix from time to time as necessary to carry out this chapter; or

(2) transfer to a trustee appointed by the court, for the benefit of claimants—

(A) the owner’s interest in the vessel and pending freight; and

(B) an amount, or approved security, that the court may fix from time to time as necessary to carry out this chapter.

(c) CESSATION OF OTHER ACTIONS.—When an action has been brought under this section and the owner has complied with subsection (b), all claims and proceedings against the owner related to the matter in question shall cease.

(Pub. L. 109-304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1515.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised Section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
30511	46 App.:185.	R.S. §4285; June 5, 1936, ch. 521, §3, 49 Stat. 1480.

In subsection (a), the words “bring a civil action . . . in a district court of the United States” are substituted for “petition a district court of the United States” for consistency in the revised title and with other titles of the United States Code. See rule 2 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (28 App. U.S.C.). The words “of competent jurisdiction” are omitted as unnecessary.

In subsection (b), the word “pending” before “freight” is added for consistency in the chapter. The words “to carry out this chapter” are substituted for “to carry out the provisions of section 183 of this Appendix” because of the reorganization of the source provisions.

§ 30512. Liability as master, officer, or seaman not affected

This chapter does not affect the liability of an individual as a master, officer, or seaman, even though the individual is also an owner of the vessel.

(Pub. L. 109-304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1516.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised Section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
30512	46 App.:187.	R.S. §4287.

This section is substituted for the source provision for consistency with the restatement of 46 App. U.S.C. 183(a) and 189 in section 30505 and to eliminate unnecessary words. The reference in the source to particular sections is extended to include the entire chapter to simplify the reference and to conform to the obvious original policy and intent of the source provision.

CHAPTER 307—LIABILITY OF WATER CARRIERS

Sec.	
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§ 30701. Definition

In this chapter, the term “carrier” means the owner, manager, charterer, agent, or master of a vessel.

(Pub. L. 109-304, §6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1516.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Revised Section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
30701	(no source).	

This chapter codifies the Act of February 13, 1893 (ch. 105, 27 Stat. 445) (commonly known as the Harter Act). Changes are made to simplify, clarify, and modernize the language and style, but the intent is that these changes should not result in changes in substance.

A definition of “carrier” is added based on language appearing in various provisions of the Harter Act. The definition avoids the need to repeat in various sections of this chapter the list of persons to whom the requirements and restrictions of this chapter apply, and it en-

sure that the list of persons is consistent in the chapter.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

CARRIAGE OF GOODS BY SEA ACT

Act Apr. 16, 1936, ch. 229, 49 Stat. 1207, as amended by Pub. L. 97-31, §12(146), Aug. 6, 1981, 95 Stat. 166, provided:

“That every bill of lading or similar document of title which is evidence of a contract for the carriage of goods by sea to or from ports of the United States, in foreign trade, shall have effect subject to the provisions of this Act.

“TITLE I

“SECTION 1. When used in this Act—

“(a) The term ‘carrier’ includes the owner or the charterer who enters into a contract of carriage with a shipper.

“(b) The term ‘contract of carriage’ applies only to contracts of carriage covered by a bill of lading or any similar document of title, insofar as such document relates to the carriage of goods by sea, including any bill of lading or any similar document as aforesaid issued under or pursuant to a charter party from the moment at which such bill of lading or similar document of title regulates the relations between a carrier and a holder of the same.

“(c) The term ‘goods’ includes goods, wares, merchandise, and articles of every kind whatsoever, except live animals and cargo which by the contract of carriage is stated as being carried on deck and is so carried.

“(d) The term ‘ship’ means any vessel used for the carriage of goods by sea.

“(e) The term ‘carriage of goods’ covers the period from the time when the goods are loaded on to the time when they are discharged from the ship.

“RISKS

“SEC. 2. Subject to the provisions of section 6, under every contract of carriage of goods by sea, the carrier in relation to the loading, handling, stowage, carriage, custody, care, and discharge of such goods, shall be subject to the responsibilities and liabilities and entitled to the rights and immunities hereinafter set forth.

“RESPONSIBILITIES AND LIABILITIES

“SEC. 3. (1) The carrier shall be bound, before and at the beginning of the voyage, to exercise due diligence to—

“(a) Make the ship seaworthy;

“(b) Properly man, equip, and supply the ship;

“(c) Make the holds, refrigerating and cooling chambers, and all other parts of the ship in which goods are carried, fit and safe for their reception, carriage, and preservation.

“(2) The carrier shall properly and carefully load, handle, stow, carry, keep, care for, and discharge the goods carried.

“(3) After receiving the goods into his charge the carrier, or the master or agent of the carrier, shall, on demand of the shipper, issue to the shipper a bill of lading showing among other things—

“(a) The leading marks necessary for identification of the goods as the same are furnished in writing by the shipper before the loading of such goods starts, provided such marks are stamped or otherwise shown clearly upon the goods if uncovered, or on the cases or coverings in which such goods are contained, in such a manner as should ordinarily remain legible until the end of the voyage.

“(b) Either the number of packages or pieces, or the quantity or weight, as the case may be, as furnished in writing by the shipper.

“(c) The apparent order and condition of the goods: *Provided*, That no carrier, master, or agent of the carrier, shall be bound to state or show in the bill of lad-