

§ 1701. Customs-enforcement area**(a) Establishment; extent and duration; enforcement of laws applicable to waters adjacent to customs waters**

Whenever the President finds and declares that at any place or within any area on the high seas adjacent to but outside customs waters any vessel or vessels hover or are being kept off the coast of the United States and that, by virtue of the presence of any such vessel or vessels at such place or within such area, the unlawful introduction or removal into or from the United States of any merchandise or person is being or may be occasioned, promoted, or threatened, the place or area so found and declared shall constitute a customs-enforcement area for the purposes of this Act. Only such waters on the high seas shall be within a customs-enforcement area as the President finds and declares are in such proximity to such vessel or vessels that such unlawful introduction or removal of merchandise or persons may be carried on by or to or from such vessel or vessels. No customs-enforcement area shall include any waters more than one hundred nautical miles from the place or immediate area where the President declares such vessel or vessels are hovering or are being kept and, notwithstanding the foregoing provision, shall not include any waters more than fifty nautical miles outwards from the outer limit of customs waters. Whenever the President finds that, within any customs-enforcement area, the circumstances no longer exist which gave rise to the declaration of such area as a customs-enforcement area, he shall so declare, and thereafter, and until a further finding and declaration is made under this subsection with respect to waters within such area, no waters within such area shall constitute a part of such customs-enforcement area. The provisions of law applying to the high seas adjacent to customs waters of the United States shall be enforced in a customs-enforcement area upon any vessel, merchandise, or person found therein.

(b) Boarding vessels; arrest and seizure; compliance with treaty provisions; authority of Secretary of Commerce unaffected

At any place within a customs-enforcement area the several officers of the customs may go on board of any vessel and examine the vessel and any merchandise or person on board, and bring the same into port, and, subject to regulations of the Secretary of the Treasury, it shall be their duty to pursue and seize or arrest and otherwise enforce upon such vessel, merchandise, or person, the provisions of law which are made effective thereto in pursuance of subsection (a) of this section in the same manner as such officers are or may be authorized or required to do in like case at any place in the United States by virtue of any law respecting the revenue: *Provided*, That nothing contained in this section or in any other provision of law respecting the revenue shall be construed to authorize or to require any officer of the United States to enforce any law thereof upon the high seas upon a foreign vessel in contravention of any treaty with a foreign government enabling or permitting the authorities of the United

States to board, examine, search, seize, or otherwise to enforce upon such vessel upon the high seas the laws of the United States except as such authorities are or may otherwise be enabled or permitted under special arrangement with such foreign government: *Provided further*, That none of the provisions of this Act shall be construed to relieve the Secretary of Commerce of any authority, responsibility, or jurisdiction now vested in or imposed on that officer.

(Aug. 5, 1935, ch. 438, title I, § 1, 49 Stat. 517.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in text, means act Aug. 5, 1935, which enacted this chapter and sections 1432a and 1601a of this title and amended sections 70, 483, 1401, 1434, 1436, 1441, 1581, 1584, 1585, 1586, 1587, 1591, 1592, 1615, 1619, 1621 of this title, sections 60, 106, and 288 of former Title 46, Shipping, and sections 91, 277, 319, 325 of Title 46, Appendix. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Tables.

DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

For delegation to Secretary of the Treasury of authority vested in President by this section, see Ex. Ord. No. 10289, § 1(b), Sept. 17, 1951, 16 F.R. 9499, set out as a note under section 301 of Title 3, The President.

§ 1702. Repealed. June 25, 1948, ch. 645, § 21, 62 Stat. 862, eff. Sept. 1, 1948

Section, act Aug. 5, 1935, ch. 438, title I, § 2, 49 Stat. 518, related to smuggling into territory of a foreign government. See section 546 of Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure.

§ 1703. Seizure and forfeiture of vessels**(a) Vessels subject to seizure and forfeiture**

Whenever any vessel which shall have been built, purchased, fitted out in whole or in part, or held, in the United States or elsewhere, for the purpose of being employed to defraud the revenue or to smuggle any merchandise into the United States, or to smuggle any merchandise into the territory of any foreign government in violation of the laws there in force, if under the laws of such foreign government any penalty or forfeiture is provided for violation of the laws of the United States respecting the customs revenue, or whenever any vessel which shall be found, or discovered to have been employed, or attempted to be employed, within the United States for any such purpose, or in anywise in assistance thereof, or whenever any vessel of the United States which shall be found, or discovered to have been, employed, or attempted to be employed at any place, for any such purpose, or is anywise in assistance thereof, if not subsequently forfeited to the United States or to a foreign government, is found at any place at which any such vessel may be examined by an officer of the customs in the enforcement of any law respecting the revenue, the said vessel and its cargo shall be seized and forfeited.

(b) "Vessels of the United States" defined

Every vessel which is documented, owned, or controlled in the United States, and every vessel of foreign registry which is, directly or indirectly, substantially owned or controlled by any citizen of, or corporation incorporated, owned, or controlled in, the United States, shall, for the purposes of this section, be deemed a vessel of the United States.

(c) Acts constituting prima facie evidence vessel engaged in smuggling

For the purposes of this section, the fact that a vessel has become subject to pursuit as provided in section 1581 of this title, or is a hovering vessel, or that a vessel fails, at any place within the customs waters of the United States or within a customs-enforcement area, to display lights as required by law, shall be prima facie evidence that such vessel is being, or has been, or is attempted to be employed to defraud the revenue of the United States.

(Aug. 5, 1935, ch. 438, title I, § 3, 49 Stat. 518.)

SECTION REFERRED TO IN OTHER SECTIONS

This section is referred to in section 1590 of this title.

§ 1704. Refusal or revocation of registry, enrollment, license or number on evidence that vessel engaging in smuggling; appeal; immunity from liability

Subject to appeal to the Secretary of the Treasury and under such regulations as he may prescribe, when the Secretary of Transportation is shown upon evidence which he deems sufficient that such vessel is being, or is intended to be, employed to smuggle, transport, or otherwise assist in the unlawful introduction or importation into the United States of any merchandise or person, or to smuggle any merchandise into the territory of any foreign government in violation of the laws there in force, if under the laws of such foreign government any penalty or forfeiture is provided for violation of the laws of the United States respecting the customs revenue, or whenever, from the design or fittings of any vessel or the nature of any repairs made thereon, it is apparent to the Secretary of Transportation that such vessel has been built or adapted for the purpose of smuggling merchandise, the the¹ Secretary of Transportation shall revoke any endorsement on the vessel's certificate of documentation or number (when the Secretary is the authority issuing the number under chapter 123 of title 46) or refuse the same if application be made therefor, as the case may be. The Secretary of Transportation and all persons acting by or under his direction shall be indemnified from any penalties or actions for damages for carrying out the provisions of this section.

(Aug. 5, 1935, ch. 438, title I, § 4, 49 Stat. 519; 1946 Reorg. Plan No. 3, §§101-104, eff. July 16, 1946, 11 F.R. 7875, 60 Stat. 1097; Pub. L. 103-182, title VI, § 689(b), Dec. 8, 1993, 107 Stat. 2222.)

AMENDMENTS

1993—Pub. L. 103-182, § 689(b)(4), substituted “The Secretary of Transportation and all persons” for “Such collector and all persons”.

Pub. L. 103-182, § 689(b)(3), which directed the substitution of “the Secretary of Transportation shall revoke any endorsement on the vessel's certificate of documentation or number (when the Secretary is the authority issuing the number under chapter 123 of title 46)” for “said collector shall revoke the registry, enrollment, license, or number of such vessel”, was executed by making the substitution in text which read “said vessel” rather than “such vessel”, to reflect the probable intent of Congress.

¹ So in original.

Pub. L. 130-182, § 689(b)(1), (2), substituted “when the Secretary of Transportation” for “whenever the collector of customs of the district in which any vessel is, or is sought to be, registered, enrolled, licensed, or numbered,” and “is apparent to the Secretary of Transportation” for “is apparent to such collector”.

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

Coast Guard transferred to Department of Transportation and functions, powers, and duties, relating to Coast Guard, of Secretary of the Treasury and of other offices and officers of Department of the Treasury transferred to Secretary of Transportation by section 6(b)(1) of Pub. L. 89-670, Oct. 15, 1966, 80 Stat. 938. Section 6(b)(2), however, provided that notwithstanding such transfer of functions, Coast Guard shall operate as part of Navy in time of war or when President directs as provided in section 3 of Title 14, Coast Guard. See section 108 of Title 49, Transportation.

All offices of collector of customs, comptroller of customs, surveyor of customs, and appraiser of merchandise in Bureau of Customs of Department of the Treasury to which appointments were required to be made by President with advice and consent of Senate ordered abolished, with such offices to be terminated not later than December 31, 1966, by Reorg. Plan No. 1, of 1965, eff. May 25, 1965, 30 F.R. 7035, 79 Stat. 1317, set out as a note under section 1 of this title.

Functions of all officers of Department of the Treasury and functions of all agencies and employees of such Department transferred, with certain exceptions, to Secretary of the Treasury, with power vested in him to authorize their performance or performance of any of his functions, by any of those officers, agencies, and employees, by Reorg. Plan No. 26, of 1950, §§1, 2, eff. July 31, 1950, 15 F.R. 4935, 64 Stat. 1280, 1281, set out in the Appendix to Title 5, Government Organization and Employees. Under the Plan, collectors of customs and Commandant of Coast Guard were officers of Department of the Treasury, but, in case of Coast Guard, and Commandant thereof, the Plan provided that, notwithstanding transfer of functions, Coast Guard should continue to operate as a part of Navy, subject to orders of Secretary of the Navy, in time of war or when President directed, as provided in sections 1 and 3 of Title 14, Coast Guard.

“Secretary of the Treasury” substituted in text for “Secretary of Commerce” and functions under this section relating to the numbering of vessels vested in Commandant of Coast Guard instead of collectors of customs on authority of Reorg. Plan No. 3 of 1946, set out in the Appendix to Title 5.

§ 1705. Destruction of forfeited vessel or vehicle

Any vessel or vehicle forfeited to the United States, whether summarily or by a decree of any court, for violation of any law respecting the revenue, may, in the discretion of the Secretary of the Treasury, if he deems it necessary to protect the revenue of the United States, be destroyed in lieu of the sale thereof under existing law.

(Aug. 5, 1935, ch. 438, title I, § 5, 49 Stat. 519.)

§ 1706. Importation in vessels under thirty tons and aircraft; licenses; labels as prima facie evidence of foreign origin of merchandise

Except into the districts adjoining to the Dominion of Canada, or into the districts adjacent to Mexico, no merchandise of foreign growth or manufacture subject to the payment of duties shall be brought into the United States from any foreign port or place, or from any hovering vessel, in any vessel of less than thirty net tons burden without special license granted by the