

Sec.

- (a) Operating and technical conditions and characteristics; frequencies, emission, and power of radiotelephone equipment.
- (b) Enforcement.
- 1208. Penalties.
 - (a) Master, person in charge, or pilot subject to penalty.
 - (b) Vessel subject to penalty; jurisdiction.
 - (c) Remission or mitigation.

CHAPTER REFERRED TO IN OTHER SECTIONS

This chapter is referred to in section 2034 of this title.

§ 1201. Statement of purpose

It is the purpose of this chapter to provide a positive means whereby the operators of approaching vessels can communicate their intentions to one another through voice radio, located convenient to the operator's navigation station. To effectively accomplish this, there is need for a specific frequency or frequencies dedicated to the exchange of navigational information, on navigable waters of the United States.

(Pub. L. 92-63, § 2, Aug. 4, 1971, 85 Stat. 164.)

SHORT TITLE

Section 1 of Pub. L. 92-63 provided: "That this Act [enacting this chapter] may be cited as the 'Vessel Bridge-to-Bridge Radiotelephone Act'."

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section 10 of Pub. L. 92-63 provided that: "This Act [enacting this chapter] shall become effective May 1, 1971, or six months after the promulgation of regulations which would implement its provisions, whichever is later." See 47 CFR 83.701 et seq.

§ 1202. Definitions

For the purpose of this chapter—

- (1) "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating;
- (2) "power-driven vessel" means any vessel propelled by machinery; and
- (3) "towing vessel" means any commercial vessel engaged in towing another vessel astern, alongside, or by pushing ahead.

(Pub. L. 92-63, § 3, Aug. 4, 1971, 85 Stat. 164.)

§ 1203. Radiotelephone requirement**(a) Vessel coverage; exchange of navigational information**

Except as provided in section 1206 of this title—

- (1) every power-driven vessel of twenty meters or over in length while navigating;
- (2) every vessel of one hundred gross tons as measured under section 14502 of title 46, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of that title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of that title, and upward carrying one or more passengers for hire while navigating;
- (3) every towing vessel of twenty-six feet or over in length while navigating; and
- (4) every dredge and floating plant engaged in or near a channel or fairway in operations likely to restrict or affect navigation of other vessels—

shall have a radiotelephone capable of operation from its navigational bridge or, in the case of a dredge, from its main control station and capable of transmitting and receiving on the frequency or frequencies within the 156-162 Mega-Hertz band using the classes of emissions designated by the Federal Communications Commission, after consultation with other cognizant agencies, for the exchange of navigational information.

(b) Vessels upon navigable waters of United States inside high seas lines

The radiotelephone required by subsection (a) of this section shall be carried on board the described vessels, dredges, and floating plants upon the navigable waters of the United States inside the lines established pursuant to section 151 of this title.

(Pub. L. 92-63, § 4, Aug. 4, 1971, 85 Stat. 164; Pub. L. 102-241, § 16, Dec. 19, 1991, 105 Stat. 2213; Pub. L. 104-324, title VII, § 704, Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3933.)

AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 104-324 inserted "as measured under section 14502 of title 46, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of that title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of that title," after "one hundred gross tons".

1991—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 102-241 amended par. (1) generally, substituting "twenty meters or over in length" for "three hundred gross tons and upward".

VESSEL COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT REGULATIONS

Pub. L. 101-380, title IV, § 4118, Aug. 18, 1990, 104 Stat. 523, provided that: "The Secretary shall, not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act [Aug. 18, 1990], issue regulations necessary to ensure that vessels subject to the Vessel Bridge-to-Bridge Radiotelephone Act of 1971 (33 U.S.C. 1203) are also equipped as necessary to—

"(1) receive radio marine navigation safety warnings; and

"(2) engage in radio communications on designated frequencies with the Coast Guard, and such other vessels and stations as may be specified by the Secretary."

SECTION REFERRED TO IN OTHER SECTIONS

This section is referred to in title 46 section 14305.

§ 1204. Radiotelephone for exclusive use of master, person in charge, or pilot; frequency listening watch; portable radiotelephone equipment

The radiotelephone required by this chapter is for the exclusive use of the master or person in charge of the vessel, or the person designated by the master or person in charge to pilot or direct the movement of the vessel, who shall maintain a listening watch on the designated frequency. Nothing contained herein shall be interpreted as precluding the use of portable radiotelephone equipment to satisfy the requirements of this chapter.

(Pub. L. 92-63, § 5, Aug. 4, 1971, 85 Stat. 165.)

§ 1205. Radiotelephone capability; maintenance; restoration; consequences of loss; navigation of vessel

Whenever radiotelephone capability is required by this chapter, a vessel's radiotelephone