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TITLE 46--SHIPPING

Subtitle II--Vessels and Seamen

Part B--Inspection and Regulation of Vessels

CHAPTER 33--INSPECTION GENERALLY

Sec. 3305. Scope and standards of inspection

(a) The inspection process shall ensure that a vessel subject to inspection--

- (1) is of a structure suitable for the service in which it is to be employed;
- (2) is equipped with proper appliances for lifesaving, fire prevention, and firefighting;
- (3) has suitable accommodations for the crew, sailing school instructors, and sailing school students, and for passengers on the vessel if authorized to carry passengers;
- (4) is in a condition to be operated with safety to life and property; and
- (5) complies with applicable marine safety laws and regulations.

(b) If an inspection, or examination under section 3308 of this title, reveals that a life preserver, lifesaving device, or firehose is defective and incapable of being repaired, the owner or master shall destroy the life preserver, lifesaving device, or firehose in the presence of the official conducting the inspection or examination.

(c) A nautical school vessel operated by a civilian nautical school or by an educational institution under section 13 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1986 shall be inspected like a small passenger vessel or a passenger vessel, depending on its tonnage.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 513; Pub. L. 99-36, Sec. 1(a)(1), May 15, 1985, 99 Stat. 67; Pub. L. 99-640, Sec. 13(e), Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3551.)

Historical and Revision Notes

Revised section	Source section (U.S. Code)
3305.....	46:369
	46:390a
	46:391
	46:392
	46:395
	46:404-1
	46:405
	46:406
	46:407
	46:408
	46:660a
	46:881

Section 3305 consolidates, at one place, the basic scope of coverage of the inspection process. It is to be noted that the time difference in

enactment of various statutes has resulted in some anomalies. Thus, for example, R.S. 4417 (46 U.S.C. 391) which had originally set periods of inspection and vested authority in "local inspectors" was expanded over the years to provide the base for inspection of certain classes of vessels as well as setting out the periods and scope. The distillation of inspection objectives and standards in later laws and the transfer of all functions of separately created bureaus and functionaries to the Coast Guard permit this consolidation. There are those who have a desire to see the scope and standards of inspection be more specific in law similar to those presently applicable to boilers and boiler plating that predate 1871. The Committee believes this serves no useful purpose since the specifics are either antiquated or too limiting and have, in fact, been superseded by the statutorily authorized adoption of various industrial specifications, standards, and codes by the Coast Guard. These include the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS), American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), American National Standards Institute (ANSI), American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), American Welding Society (AWS), Underwriters Laboratories (UL), and many others. In addition, Coast Guard regulations must also implement and conform to the numerous international maritime safety treaties to which the United States is signatory. The Committee expects that the regulatory flexibility being provided will not reduce the present vessel inspection requirements that have been historically developed.

Section 3305(a) establishes the statutory scope of the Coast Guard's vessel inspection authority and duty. The inspection process shall ensure that a vessel is of suitable structure, equipment, and accommodations, is maintained in an operating condition consistent with safety of life and property, and complies with applicable marine safety laws and regulations.

Subsection (b) requires that defective life preservers and firehose be destroyed in the presence of the inspecting official, normally a qualified Coast Guard marine inspector. The Committee believes that if this equipment is defective for use on an inspected vessel, it should be destroyed so that it cannot be used on an uninspected or recreational vessel.

Subsection (c) provides flexibility in the inspection of various sizes of nautical school vessels.

#### References in Text

Section 13 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1986, referred to in subsec. (c), is section 13 of Pub. L. 99-640, which enacted section 484d of Title 40, Public Buildings, Property, and Works, and amended sections 2101 and 3305 of this title.

#### Amendments

1986--Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 99-640 inserted "or by an educational institution under section 13 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1986".

1985--Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 99-36 substituted "lifesaving" and "life preserver, lifesaving device, or firehose" for "life-saving" and "life preserver or firehose", respectively.

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[CITE: **46USC3306**]

TITLE 46--SHIPPING

Subtitle II--Vessels and Seamen

Part B--Inspection and Regulation of Vessels

CHAPTER 33--INSPECTION GENERALLY

Sec. 3306. Regulations

(a) To carry out this part and to secure the safety of individuals and property on board vessels subject to inspection, the Secretary shall prescribe necessary regulations to ensure the proper execution of, and to carry out, this part in the most effective manner for--

(1) the design, construction, alteration, repair, and operation of those vessels, including superstructures, hulls, fittings, equipment, appliances, propulsion machinery, auxiliary machinery, boilers, unfired pressure vessels, piping, electric installations, and accommodations for passengers and crew, sailing school instructors, and sailing school students;

(2) lifesaving equipment and its use;

(3) firefighting equipment, its use, and precautionary measures to guard against fire;

(4) inspections and tests related to paragraphs (1), (2), and

(3) of this subsection; and

(5) the use of vessel stores and other supplies of a dangerous nature.

(b) (1) Equipment and material subject to regulation under this section may not be used on any vessel without prior approval of the Secretary.

(2) Except with respect to use on a public vessel, the Secretary may treat an approval of equipment or materials by a foreign government as approval by the Secretary for purposes of paragraph (1) if the Secretary determines that--

(A) the design standards and testing procedures used by that government meet the requirements of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974;

(B) the approval of the equipment or material by the foreign government will secure the safety of individuals and property on board vessels subject to inspection; and

(C) for lifesaving equipment, the foreign government--

(i) has given equivalent treatment to approvals of lifesaving equipment by the Secretary; and

(ii) otherwise ensures that lifesaving equipment approved by the Secretary may be used on vessels that are documented and subject to inspection under the laws of that country.

(c) In prescribing regulations for sailing school vessels, the Secretary shall consult with representatives of the private sector having experience in the operation of vessels likely to be certificated as sailing school vessels. The regulations shall--

(1) reflect the specialized nature of sailing school vessel operations, and the character, design, and construction of vessels operating as sailing school vessels; and

(2) include requirements for notice to sailing school instructors and sailing school students about the specialized nature

of sailing school vessels and applicable safety regulations.

(d) In prescribing regulations for nautical school vessels operated by the United States Merchant Marine Academy or by a State maritime academy (as defined in section 1302(3) of the Merchant Marine Act, 1936 (46 App. U.S.C. 1295a(3))), the Secretary shall consider the function, purpose, and operation of the vessels, their routes, and the number of individuals who may be carried on the vessels.

(e) When the Secretary finds it in the public interest, the Secretary may suspend or grant exemptions from the requirements of a regulation prescribed under this section related to lifesaving and firefighting equipment, muster lists, ground tackle and hawsers, and bilge systems.

(f) In prescribing regulations for offshore supply vessels, the Secretary shall consider the characteristics, methods of operation, and the nature of the service of offshore supply vessels.

(g) In prescribing regulations for fish processing or fish tender vessels, the Secretary shall consult with representatives of the private sector having experience in the operation of these vessels. The regulations shall reflect the specialized nature and economics of fish processing or fish tender vessel operations and the character, design, and construction of fish processing or fish tender vessels.

(h) The Secretary shall establish appropriate structural fire protection, manning, operating, and equipment requirements for vessels of at least 100 gross tons but less than 300 gross tons as measured under section 14502 of this title, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of this title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of this title carrying not more than 150 passengers on domestic voyages, which meet the eligibility criteria of section 2113(4) of this title.

(i) The Secretary shall establish appropriate structural fire protection, manning, operating, and equipment requirements for former public vessels of the United States of at least 100 gross tons but less than 500 gross tons as measured under section 14502 of this title, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of this title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of this title carrying not more than 150 passengers on domestic voyages, which meet the eligibility criteria of section 2113(5) of this title.

(Pub. L. 98-89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 513; Pub. L. 98-364, title IV, Sec. 402(5), July 17, 1984, 98 Stat. 446; Pub. L. 103-206, title V, Sec. 512(a), Dec. 20, 1993, 107 Stat. 2442; Pub. L. 104-324, title VI, Sec. 604(a), (c), title VII, Sec. 712, Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3930, 3931, 3936.)

Historical and Revision Notes

Revised section	Source section (U.S. Code)
3306.....	46:366
	46:369
	46:375
	46:390b
	46:392
	46:404
	46:408
	46:411
	46:412
	46:416
	46:420
	46:445
	46:459
	46:473
	46:477
	46:478

46:479  
46:481  
46:482  
46:483  
46:489  
46:526p  
46:1295f(c)

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Section 3306 contains broad authority to prescribe regulations for the proper inspection and certification of vessels. It provides regulatory flexibility for meeting technological changes. The section also permits flexibility in prescribing regulations for nautical school vessels operated by the United States Merchant Marine Academy or by a State maritime academy. The Secretary may suspend or grant exemptions to certain limited inspection requirements when the Secretary finds that this is necessary in the public interest. It also contains the requirement that in regulating offshore supply vessels consideration must be given to the special nature of their operations.

#### Amendments

1996--Subsec. (a)(4). Pub. L. 104-324, Sec. 604(c), substituted ``paragraphs (1), (2), and (3)'' for ``clauses (1)-(3)''.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 104-324, Sec. 604(a), amended subsec. (b) generally. Prior to amendment, subsec. (b) read as follows: ``Equipment subject to regulation under this section may not be used on any vessel without prior approval as prescribed by regulation.''

Subsec. (h). Pub. L. 104-324, Sec. 712(1), inserted ``as measured under section 14502 of this title, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of this title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of this title'' after ``300 gross tons''.

Subsec. (i). Pub. L. 104-324, Sec. 712(2), inserted ``as measured under section 14502 of this title, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of this title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of this title'' after ``500 gross tons''.

1993--Subsecs. (h), (i). Pub. L. 103-206 added subsecs. (h) and (i).

1984--Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 98-364 added subsec. (g).

#### Regulations

Section 512(b), (c) of Pub. L. 103-206 provided that:

``(b) The Secretary of Transportation shall, within twenty-four months of the date of enactment of this Act [Dec. 20, 1993], prescribe regulations establishing the structural fire protection, manning, operating, and equipment requirements for vessels which meet the requirements of subsections (h) and (i) of section 3306 of title 46, United States Code, as amended by this Act.

``(c) Before the Secretary of Transportation prescribes regulations under subsections (h) and (i) of section 3306 of title 46, United States Code, as amended by this Act, the Secretary may prescribe the route, service, manning, and equipment for those vessels based on existing passenger vessel and small passenger vessel regulations.''

#### Foreign Approvals

Section 604(b) of Pub. L. 104-324 provided that: ``The Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with other interested Federal agencies, shall work with foreign governments to have those governments approve the use of the same equipment and materials on vessels documented under the laws of those countries that the Secretary requires on United States documented vessels.''

International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea

For International Conventions for the Safety of Life at Sea to which the United States has been a party, see section 1602 of Title 33, Navigation and Navigable Waters, and notes thereunder.

Section Referred to in Other Sections

This section is referred to in sections 3313, 3318 of this title.