

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Coast Guard**

[USCG-1998-4271]

Application for Recertification of Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council**AGENCY:** Coast guard, DOT.**ACTION:** Notice of availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard announces the availability of the application for recertification submitted by the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council (PWSRCAC) for September 1, 1998, through August 31, 1999. Under the Oil Terminal and Oil Tanker Environmental Oversight and Monitoring Act of 1990 (33 U.S.C. 2732), the Coast guard may certify, on an annual basis, an alternative voluntary advisory group in lieu of Regional Citizens' Advisory Councils for Prince William Sound.

DATES: Comments must reach the Docket Management Facility on or before September 21, 1998.

ADDRESSES: You may mail your comments to the Docket Management Facility. (USCG-1998-4271), U.S. Department of Transportation, room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington DC 20590-0001, or deliver them to room PL-401 on the Plaza level of the Nassif Building at the same address between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The Docket Management Facility maintains the public docket for this recertification process. Comments regarding recertification, and documents as indicated in this preamble, 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 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. You may also access this docket on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

A copy of the application is also available for inspection at the prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council's Offices, at 750 W. 2nd Ave., Suite 100, Anchorage, Alaska, 99502 or 154 Fairbanks Dr., P.O. Box 3089, Valdez, Alaska, 99686, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is (907) 277-7222 in Anchorage, Alaska and (907) 835-5957 in Valdez, Alaska.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For general information regarding the PWSRCAC contact LT Pittman, Marine

Safety and Environmental Protection Directorate, Office of Response, (G-MOR-1), (202) 267-0426. For questions on viewing, or submitting material to, the docket, contact Dorothy Walker, Chief, Dockets, Department of Transportation, telephone 202-366-9329.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Request for Comments**

The Coast Guard encourages interested persons to submit written data, views, or arguments. It solicits comments from interested groups including oil terminal facility owners and operators, owners and operators of crude oil tankers calling at terminal facilities, and fishing, aquacultural, recreational and environmental citizens groups, concerning the recertification application of PWSRCAC. Persons submitting comments should include their names and addresses, identify this rulemaking (USCG-1998-XXXX) and the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and give the reason for each comment. Please submit two copies of all comments and attachments in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. Persons wanting acknowledgment of receipt of comments should enclose stamped, self-addressed postcards or envelopes.

The Coast Guard will consider all comments received during the comment period. It may change this recertification application or application process in view of the comments.

The Coast Guard plans no public hearing. Persons may request a public hearing by writing to the docket Management Facility at the address under ADDRESSES. The request should include the reasons why a hearing would be beneficial. If it determines that the opportunity for oral presentations will aid this recertification process, the Coast guard will hold a public hearing at a time and place announced by a later notice in the **Federal Register**.

Background and Purpose

The Coast Guard published guidelines on December 31, 1992, to assist groups seeking recertification under the Oil Terminal and Oil Tanker Environmental Oversight and Monitoring Act of 1990 (33 U.S.C. 2732) (the Act) (57 FR 62600). The coast Guard issued a policy statement on July 7, 1993 (58 FR 36505), to clarify the factors that the Coast guard would be considering in making its determination as to whether advisory groups should be certified in accordance with the Act; and the procedures which the coast guard would follow in meeting

its certification responsibilities under the Act.

The Coast Guard has received an application for recertification of PWSRCAC, the currently certified advisory group for the Prince William Sound region. In accordance with the review and certification process contained in the policy statement, the Coast Guard announces the availability of that application.

At the conclusion of the comment period, the Coast Guard will review all application materials and comments received and will take one of the following actions:

(a) Recertify the advisory group under 33 U.S.C. 2732(o).

(b) Issue a conditional recertification for a period of 90 days, with a statement of any discrepancies which must be corrected to qualify for recertification for the remainder of the year.

(c) Deny recertification of the advisory group if the Coast Guard finds that the group is not broadly representative of the interests and communities in the area or is not adequately fostering the goals and purposes of the Act.

The Coast Guard will notify PWSRCAC by letter of the action taken on its application. A notice will be published in the **Federal Register** to advise the public of the Coast Guard's determination.

Dated: July 29, 1998.

R.C. North,

Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard, Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety and Environmental Protection.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Coast Guard**

[USCG 1998-4273]

Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee**AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DOT.**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (MERPAC) and its working groups will meet to discuss various issues relating to the training and fitness of merchant marine personnel. MERPAC advises the Secretary of Transportation on matters relating to the training, qualifications, licensing, certification and fitness of seamen serving in the U.S. merchant marine. All meetings will be open to the public.

DATES: MERPAC will meet on Wednesday, September 2, 1998, from 8