

September 26, 2007.

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*Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison
Officer, DoD.*

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 117

[Docket No. CGD08-07-023]

RIN 1625-AA09

Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Milhomme Bayou, Stephenville, LA

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard proposes to change the regulation governing the operation of the Stephenville Bridge across Milhomme Bayou, mile 12.2, at Stephenville, St. Martin Parish, Louisiana. Currently the bridge opens on signal, but due to the minimal waterway traffic, the bridge owner requested this change. The proposed rule will require the draw of the bridge to open on signal if at least one hour of advance notice is given. During the advance notice period, the draw shall open on less than one hour notice for an emergency, and shall open on demand should a temporary surge in waterway traffic occur.

DATES: Comments and related material must reach the Coast Guard on or before December 3, 2007.

ADDRESSES: You may mail comments and related material to Commander (dpb), Eighth Coast Guard District, 500 Poydras Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130-3310. The Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District, Bridge Administration Branch maintains the public docket for this rulemaking. Comments and material received from the public, as well as documents indicated in this preamble as being available in the docket, will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection or copying at the Bridge Administration office between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bart Marcules, Bridge Administration Branch, telephone (504) 671-2128.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Request for Comments

We encourage you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting

comments and related material. If you do so, please include your name and address, identify the docket number for this rulemaking [CGD08-07-023], indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and give the reason for each comment. Please submit all comments and related material in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying. If you would like to know they reached us, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope. We will consider all comments and material received during the comment period. We may change this proposed rule in view of them.

Public Meeting

We do not now plan to hold a public meeting. You may submit a request for a meeting by writing to Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District, Bridge Administration Branch at the address under **ADDRESSES** explaining why one would be beneficial. If we determine that one would aid this rulemaking, we will hold one at a time and place announced by a later notice in the **Federal Register**.

Background and Purpose

St. Martin Parish has requested that the operating regulation on the Stephenville Bridge be changed in order to operate the bridge more efficiently. The Stephenville Bridge locate on Milhomme Bayou at mile 12.2 in Stephenville, St. Martin Parish, Louisiana has a vertical clearance of 5.8 feet above mean high water, elevation 3.5 feet Mean Sea Level (MSL) in the closed position and unlimited in the open position. The Stephenville Bridge opens on signal as required by 33 CFR 117.5, and this operating schedule has been in effect since 2002 when the current bridge replaced an existing bridge in the area. The previous bridge's operating schedule was, "shall open on signal; except that, from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. the draw shall open on signal if at least two hours notice is given. During the advance notice period, the draw shall open on less than two hours notice for an emergency and shall open on demand should a temporary surge in waterway traffic occur."

Since the completion of the current bridge, the waterway traffic has been minimal and during the past twelve months an average of 5 boats per day have requested an opening. Most of the boats requesting openings are commercial vessels consisting of tugboats with barges and shrimp trawlers that routinely transit this waterway and are able to give advance notice.

Concurrent with the publication of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, a Test Deviation [CGD08-07-022], has been issued to allow St. Martin Parish to test the proposed schedule and to obtain data and public comments. The test period will be in effect during the entire Notice of Proposed Rulemaking comment period. The Coast Guard will review the logs of the drawbridge and evaluate public comments from this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and the above referenced Temporary Deviation to determine if a permanent special drawbridge operating regulation is warranted.

The Test Deviation allows the draw of the Stephenville Bridge to open on signal if at least one hour of advance notice is given. During the advance notice period, the draw shall open on less than one hour notice for an emergency and shall open on demand should a temporary surge in waterway traffic occur.

Discussion of Proposed Rule

The proposed rule change to 33 CFR part 117 would require that a one hour advance notice be given for St. Martin parish to open the Stephenville Bridge. Presently and historically the waterway has minimal waterway traffic and the bridge owner could use the tenders more efficiently if at least one hour notice is required. During emergencies, the bridge owner will open the bridge as soon as possible and open on demand when a surge in waterway traffic occurs.

Regulatory Evaluation

This proposed rule is not a "significant regulatory action" under section 3(f) of Executive Order 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review, and does not require an assessment of potential costs and benefits under section 6(a)(3) of that Order. The Office of Management and Budget has not reviewed it under that Order. It is not "significant" under the regulatory policies and procedures of the Department of Homeland Security.

We expect the economic impact of this proposed rule to be so minimal that a full Regulatory Evaluation is unnecessary.

A special regulation existed on the replaced bridge and the Coast Guard did not receive complaints regarding the drawbridge operating schedule during the many years that bridge was operated under a special regulation. The current and historical waterway traffic is very minimal with an average of 5 signals to open a day and most signals come from commercial vessels able to schedule an opening. The bridge is also only requiring a one hour advance notice,

and will open as soon as possible for emergencies. Also the bridge will open on demand should a temporary surge in waterway traffic occur.

Small Entities

Under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601–612), we have considered whether this proposed rule would have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. The term “small entities” comprises small businesses, not-for-profit organizations that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000.

The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this proposed rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. This proposed rule would affect a limited number of small entities. These entities include operators of tug boats and trawlers using the waterway. This proposed rule will have no impact on any small entities because they are able to give notice prior to transiting through this bridge and most vessel operators that require an opening are currently providing advance notice.

If you think that your business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction qualifies as a small entity and that this rule would have a significant economic impact on it, please submit a comment (see **ADDRESSES**) explaining why you think it qualifies and how and to what degree this rule would economically affect it.

Assistance for Small Entities

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104–121), we want to assist small entities in understanding this proposed rule so that they can better evaluate its effects on them and participate in the rulemaking. If the rule would affect your small business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions concerning its provisions or options for compliance, please contact the Eighth Coast Guard District Bridge Administration Branch at the address above. The Coast Guard will not retaliate against small entities that question or complain about this rule or any policy or action of the Coast Guard.

Collection of Information

This proposed rule would call for no new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520.).

Federalism

A rule has implications for federalism under Executive Order 13132, Federalism, if it has a substantial direct effect on State or local governments and would either preempt State law or impose a substantial direct cost of compliance on them. We have analyzed this proposed rule under that Order and have determined that it does not have implications for federalism.

Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531–1538) requires Federal agencies to assess the effects of their discretionary regulatory actions. In particular, the Act addresses actions that may result in the expenditure by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector of \$100,000,000 or more in any one year. Though this proposed rule will not result in such an expenditure, we do discuss the effects of this rule elsewhere in this preamble.

Taking of Private Property

This proposed rule would not affect a taking of private property or otherwise have taking implications under Executive Order 12630, Governmental Actions and Interference with Constitutionally Protected Property Rights.

Civil Justice Reform

This proposed rule meets applicable standards in sections 3(a) and 3(b)(2) of Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform, to minimize litigation, eliminate ambiguity, and reduce burden.

Protection of Children

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Executive Order 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks. This rule is not an economically significant rule and would not create an environmental risk to health or risk to safety that might disproportionately affect children.

Indian Tribal Governments

This proposed rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, because it would not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes.

Energy Effects

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Executive Order 13211, Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use. We have determined that it is not a “significant energy action” under that order because it is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866 and is not likely to have a significant adverse effect on the supply, distribution, or use of energy. The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs has not designated it as a significant energy action. Therefore, it does not require a Statement of Energy Effects under Executive Order 13211.

Technical Standards

The National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act (NTTAA) (15 U.S.C. 272 note) directs agencies to use voluntary consensus standards in their regulatory activities unless the agency provides Congress, through the Office of Management and Budget, with an explanation of why using these standards would be inconsistent with applicable law or otherwise impractical. Voluntary consensus standards are technical standards (*e.g.*, specifications of materials, performance, design, or operation; test methods; sampling procedures; and related management systems practices) that are developed or adopted by voluntary consensus standards bodies.

This proposed rule does not use technical standards. Therefore, we did not consider the use of voluntary consensus standards.

Environment

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Commandant Instruction M16475.ID and Department of Homeland Security Management Directive 5100.1, which guide the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321–4370f), and have made a preliminary determination that there are no factors in this case that would limit the use of a categorical exclusion under section 2.B.2 of the Instruction. Therefore, we believe that this rule should be categorically excluded, under figure 2–1, (32)(e), of the Instruction, from further environmental documentation. Under figure 2–1, paragraph (32)(e), an “Environmental Analysis Check List” or “Categorical Exclusion Determination” is not required for this rule. Comments on this section will be considered before we make the final decision on whether

to categorically exclude this rule from further environmental review.

List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 117 Bridges.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard proposes to amend 33 CFR part 117 as follows:

PART 117—DRAWBRIDGE OPERATION REGULATIONS

1. The authority citation for part 117 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 33 U.S.C. 499; 33 CFR 1.05–1(g); Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 0170.1.

2. Section 117.481 is added to read as follows:

§ 117.481 Milhomme Bayou

The draw of the Stephenville Bridge, mile 12.2 (Landside Route) at Stephenville, LA shall open on signal if at least one hour of advance notice is given. During the advance notice period, the draw shall open on less than one hour notice for an emergency, and shall open on demand should a temporary surge in waterway traffic occur.

Dated: September 21, 2007.

Joel R. Whitehead,

Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard, Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District.

[FR Doc. E7–19422 Filed 10–1–07; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

49 CFR Part 565

[Docket No. NHTSA–2007–27830]

RIN 2127–AJ99

Vehicle Identification Number Requirements

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: Based on concerns that the supply of unique available Vehicle Identification Numbers is diminishing, NHTSA is proposing to amend the agency's Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) regulation. The amendment would ensure that there will be a sufficient number of unique manufacturer identifiers and VINs for the current 17-character VIN system to use for at least another 30 years. This NPRM also proposes other changes to

the VIN requirements, such as proposing to require that certain vehicle characteristics of low speed vehicles (LSVs) must be reflected in the VIN of LSVs. This rulemaking also responds to a petition for rulemaking from SAE International (SAE).

DATES: You should submit your comments early enough to ensure that Docket Management receives them not later than November 16, 2007. Proposed effective date of final rule: assuming that a final rule is issued, NHTSA proposes that the changes adopted by the rule would be mandatory beginning with model year 2010 and later model year vehicles manufactured on or after September 1, 2009.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by the above DOT Docket Number by any of the following methods:

If filing comments by September 27, 2007, please use:

- **Web Site:** <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Follow the instructions for submitting comments on the Department of Transportation Docket Management System electronic docket site. No electronic submissions will be accepted between September 28, 2007, and October 1, 2007.

If filing comments on or after October 1, 2007, use:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

Alternatively, you can file comments using the following methods:

- **Mail:** Docket Management Facility: U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, Washington, DC 20590–0001.

- **Hand Delivery or Courier:** West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

- **Fax:** 202–493–2251.

Instructions: For detailed instructions on submitting comments and additional information on the rulemaking process, see the Public Participation heading of the Supplementary Information section of this document. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.dms.dot.gov> or <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided. Please see the Privacy Act heading below.

Privacy Act: Anyone is able to search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if

submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477–78).

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to <http://dms.dot.gov> until September 27, 2007, or the street address listed above. The DOT docket may be offline at times between September 28 through September 30 to migrate to the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS). On October 1, 2007, the Internet access to the docket will be at <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for accessing the dockets.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For technical issues, you may call Mr. Ken Hardie, Office of Rulemaking (Telephone: 202–366–6987) (Fax: 202–493–2739). For legal issues, you may call Ms. Rebecca Schade, Office of Chief Counsel (Telephone: 202–366–2992) (Fax: 202–366–3820). You may send mail to these officials at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., West Building, Washington, DC 20590.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

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I. Background

NHTSA requires vehicles to be marked with vehicle identification numbers (VINs) to simplify vehicle identification information retrieval and to increase the accuracy and efficiency of vehicle recall campaigns (49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 565, "Vehicle Identification Number Requirements"). The VIN has become the key identifier in data systems that track compliance with Federal and state safety programs and that manage and analyze information on vehicle