

List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 165

Harbors, Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Security measures, and Waterways.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard amends 33 CFR part 165 as follows:

PART 165—REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS AREAS

■ 1. The authority citation for part 165 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1231; 50 U.S.C. 191; 33 CFR 1.05–1, 6.04–1, 6.04–6, and 160.5; Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 0170.1.

■ 2. In § 165.921:

■ a. Revise paragraph (b);

■ b. In paragraph (c), remove the words “*Inland River Vessel Movement Center or (IRVMC)*” and add in their place the words “*Ninth District CDC Reporting Unit or (D9 CDCRU)*”;

■ c. In paragraph (d) introductory text, remove the words “*Inland River Vessel Movement Center (IRVMC)*” and add in their place the words “*Ninth District CDC Reporting Unit Eighth District (D9 CDCRU)*”;

■ d. In paragraph (d)(1) introductory text and in paragraph (d)(1)(ii), remove the text “*IRVMC*” and add, in its place, the text “*D9 CDCRU*”;

■ e. In paragraph (d)(1)(ix), remove the text “*IRVMC*” and add in its place the text “*District Commander or designated representative*”;

■ f. In paragraph (d)(2) introductory text, remove the text “*IRVMC*” and add in its place the text “*D9 CDCRU*”;

■ g. In paragraph (d)(2)(iv), remove the text “*IRVMC*” and add in its place the text “*District Commander or designated representative*”;

■ h. Revise paragraph (d)(4).

■ i. In the introductory text to paragraph (e), remove the text “*the Inland River Vessel Movement Center*” and add in its place the text “*D9 CDCRU*”;

■ j. In paragraph (e), the introductory text to paragraphs (f) and (g), and the headings of Tables 165.921(f) and (g), remove the text “*IRVMC*” and add in its place the text “*D9 CDCRU*”;

■ k. In paragraphs (f)(9) and (g)(4), remove the text “*IRVMC*” and add in its place the text “*District Commander or designated representative*”;

■ l. In paragraph (i), remove the text “*the IRVMC*” and add in its place the text “*designated representative*”.

The revisions read as follows:

§ 165.921 Regulated Navigation Area; Reporting Requirements for Barges Loaded with Certain Dangerous Cargoes, Illinois Waterway System located within the Ninth Coast Guard District.

* * * * *

(b) *Enforcement and applicability.* (1) Beginning January 1, 2016, reporting requirements under this RNA will be enforced only when directed by the District Commander or designated representative under paragraphs (d)(1)(ix), (d)(2)(iv), (f)(9), and (g)(4) of this section. Reporting points as listed in paragraph (e) of this section may be used to determine and inform where reporting is required. Compliance under other parts of this section is stayed until a future date published in the **Federal Register**, if determined necessary.

(2) This section applies to towing vessel operators and fleeting area managers responsible for CDC barges in the RNA. This section does not apply to:

(i) Towing vessel operators responsible for barges not carrying CDCs barges, or

(ii) Fleet tow boats moving one or more CDC barges within a fleeting area.

* * * * *

(d) * * * * *
(4) When required, reports under this section must be made either by email at *d09-smb-cdcru@uscg.mil* or via phone or fax as provided in the notification as directed by the District Commander or designated representative through the D9 CDCRU. Notification of when and where reporting is required may be made through Marine Safety Information Bulletins, Notices of Enforcement, email and/or through industry outreach. At all other times, reporting under this section is not required and communications should be directed to the Captain of the Port.

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Dated: December 22, 2015.

J.E. Ryan,

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

[FR Doc. 2015–32616 Filed 12–28–15; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**Coast Guard****33 CFR Part 165**

[Docket Number USCG–2015–1083]

RIN 1625–AA00

Safety Zone; Closure of Morro Bay Harbor Bar Entrance; Morro Bay, CA

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Temporary final rule.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard proposes to establish a temporary safety zone in the navigable waters of the Morro Bay Harbor Entrance. This temporary safety zone is being established to reduce significant hazards subject to the vessels, the harbor, and the public during periods of poor weather conditions. This proposed rulemaking would prohibit persons and vessels from being in this temporary safety zone unless specifically authorized by the Captain of the Port, Los Angeles—Long Beach, or her designated representative.

DATES: This rule is effective without actual notice from December 29, 2015 February 29, 2016 11:59 p.m. For the purposes of enforcement, actual notice will be used from 12:01 a.m. December 9, 2015, until December 29, 2015. The safety zone will only be enforced when the COTP or her designated representative deems it necessary because of hazardous, breaking, or rough bar conditions.

ADDRESSES: To view documents mentioned in this preamble as being available in the docket, go to <http://www.regulations.gov>, type USCG–2015–1803 in the “SEARCH” box and click “SEARCH.” Click on Open Docket Folder on the line associated with this rule.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions on this rule, call or email LT Jevon James, Waterways Management, U.S. Coast Guard Sector Los Angeles—Long Beach; telephone (310) 521–3860, email Jevon.L.James2@uscg.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Table of Abbreviations**

CFR Code of Federal Regulations
DHS Department of Homeland Security
E.O. Executive order
FR Federal Register
LLNR Light List Number
NPRM Notice of proposed rulemaking
Pub. L. Public Law
§ Section
U.S.C. United States Code

II. Background Information and Regulatory History

The Coast Guard proposes to issue this temporary rule without prior notice and opportunity to comment pursuant to authority under section 4(a) of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 553(b)). This provision authorizes an agency to issue a rule without prior notice and opportunity to comment when the agency for good cause finds that those procedures are “impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest.” Under 5 U.S.C.

553(b)(B), the Coast Guard finds that good cause exists for not publishing a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) with respect to this rule.

The bar located in Morro Bay, California, is unique to the Southern California coastline. Throughout the year, the bar produces extremely hazardous navigation conditions for all types of maritime traffic within a small waterway. It is predicted that the Southern California coast will be impacted by a strong El Niño, in which abnormally large waves will be observed. On December 7, 2015, a 53' commercial fishing vessel requested to transit the bar during extremely hazardous conditions, to include seas exceeding 20'. The COTP issued a COTP Order to restrict the fishing vessel from crossing the bar until the weather subsided, to prevent a potentially hazardous transit. Thus, waiting for the publishing of the NPRM would be impracticable because immediate action is needed to minimize potential danger to all vessels transiting across the bar. For these reasons, the Coast Guard finds that good cause exists for implementing this rule less than thirty days before the effective date.

III. Legal Authority and Need for Rule

The Coast Guard is issuing this rule under the authority of 33 U.S.C. 1231. The Captain of the Port Los Angeles—Long Beach has determined that a potential hazard exists during certain weather conditions for all recreational and commercial vessels operating in the vicinity of the Morro Bay Harbor Entrance. This temporary safety zone is necessary to ensure the safety of, and reduce the risk to, the persons and vessels that operate on and in the vicinity of the Morro Bay Harbor Entrance.

IV. Discussion of the Rule

The U.S. Coast Guard has established a temporary safety zone encompassing all navigable waters near the inside and outside of the mouth of the Morro Bay Harbor entrance, from December 9, 2015, to February 29, 2016. When the Safety Zone is being enforced, the Coast Guard will turn on the Morro Bay Rough Bar Warning Light (LLNR 3877; 35°22.256' N., 120°51.526' W.). This indicates that rough bar conditions are taking place at the entrance. In addition, a Broadcast Notice to Mariner will be used to inform mariners of the enforcement of the safety zone. No vessel or person will be permitted to operate in the safety zone without obtaining permission from the Captain of the Port (COTP) or the COTP's designated representative. Sector Los

Angeles—Long Beach may be contacted on VHF—FM Channel 16 or 310—521—3801.

V. Regulatory Analyses

We developed this rule after considering numerous statutes and executive orders (E.O.s) related to rulemaking. Below we summarize our analyses based on a number of these statutes and E.O.s, and we discuss First Amendment rights of protestors.

A. Regulatory Planning and Review

E.O.s 12866 and 13563 direct agencies to assess the costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits. E.O. 13563 emphasizes the importance of quantifying both costs and benefits, of reducing costs, of harmonizing rules, and of promoting flexibility. This rule has not been designated a “significant regulatory action,” under E.O. 12866. Accordingly, it has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget.

The implementation of this temporary safety zone is necessary for the protection of all waterway users. The size of the zone is the minimum necessary to provide adequate protection for the waterways users, adjoining areas, and the public. Any hardships experienced by persons or vessels are considered minimal compared to the interest in protecting the public.

B. Impact on Small Entities

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, 5 U.S.C. 601–612, as amended, requires Federal agencies to consider the potential impact of regulations on small entities during rulemaking. 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 rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

This rule will affect the following entities, some of which may be small entities: the owners or operators of vessels intending to transit or anchor within the designated area during the designated enforcement times. This temporary safety zone will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities for the following reasons: (i) This zone will support the safety of vessel traffic through the area, (ii) this zone is limited in scope and duration, (iii) the Coast

Guard will issue Broadcast Notice to Mariners via VHF—FM marine channel 16 while the safety zone is enforced.

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 rule. 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 person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

Small businesses may send comments on the actions of Federal employees who enforce, or otherwise determine compliance with, Federal regulations to the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman and the Regional Small Business Regulatory Fairness Boards. The Ombudsman evaluates these actions annually and rates each agency's responsiveness to small business. If you wish to comment on actions by employees of the Coast Guard, call 1–888–REG–FAIR (1–888–734–3247). 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.

C. Collection of Information

This rule will not call for a new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520).

D. Federalism and Indian Tribal Governments

A rule has implications for federalism under E.O. 13132, Federalism, if it has a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. We have analyzed this rule under that Order and have determined that it is consistent with the fundamental federalism principles and preemption requirements described in E.O. 13132.

Also, this rule does not have tribal implications under E.O. 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, because it does 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. If you believe this rule has implications for federalism or Indian tribes, please contact the person listed in the **FOR**

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section above.

E. 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 (adjusted for inflation) or more in any one year. Though this rule will not result in such an expenditure, we do discuss the effects of this rule elsewhere in this preamble.

F. Environment

We have analyzed this rule under Department of Homeland Security Management Directive 023–01 and Commandant Instruction M16475.ID, which guide the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321–4370f), and have determined that this action is one of a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. This rule is categorically excluded from further review under paragraph 34(g) of Figure 2–1 of the Commandant Instruction. An environmental analysis checklist supporting this determination and a Categorical Exclusion Determination are available in the docket where indicated under **ADDRESSES**. We seek any comments or information that may lead to the discovery of a significant environmental impact from this rule.

G. Protest Activities

The Coast Guard respects the First Amendment rights of protesters. Protesters are asked to contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section to coordinate protest activities so that your message can be received without jeopardizing the safety or security of people, places or vessels.

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PART 165—REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS AREAS

■ 1. The authority citation for part 165 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1231; 50 U.S.C. 191; 33 CFR 1.05–1, 6.04–1, 6.04–6, and 160.5; Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 0170.1.

■ 2. Add § 165.T11–750 to read as follows:

§ 165.T11–750 Safety Zone; Morro Bay Breaking Bar; Morro Bay Harbor Entrance; Morro Bay, CA.

(a) *Location.* The following area is a safety zone: All navigable waters of the Morro Bay Harbor Entrance in approximate coordinates: from a point on the shoreline at 35°22.181' N. 120°52.207' W., thence westward to 35°22.181' N. 120°52.538' W., thence southward to 35°21.367' N. 120°52.538' W., thence eastward to a point on the shoreline at 35°21.366' N. 120°51.717' W., thence northward along the shoreline to a point inside the Morro Bay Harbor to 35°22.153' N. 120°51.698' W., thence northwestward to a point on land at 35°22.233' N. 120°51.847' W., thence southward along the shoreline to the beginning. These coordinates are based on North American Datum of 1983.

(b) *Definitions.* For the purposes of this section:

Designated representative means a Coast Guard Patrol Commander, including a Coast Guard coxswain, petty officer, or other officer operating a Coast Guard vessel and a Federal, State, and local officer designated by or assisting the Captain of the Port Los Angeles—Long Beach (COTP) in the enforcement of the safety zone.

Rough Bar means any swell, breaking surf, or wind conditions that create safety hazards. This includes but is not limited to, breaking surf 8 feet of greater or extreme steep or confused swell in the main channel or in the judgment of the COTP or the COTP's designated representative rough conditions exist.

(c) *Regulations.* (1) Under the general safety zone regulations in subpart C of this part, you may not enter the safety zone described in paragraph (a) of this section unless authorized by the COTP or the COTP's designated representative.

(2) To seek permission to enter, hail Coast Guard Station Morro Bay on VHF–FM Channel 16 or call at (805) 772–2167. Those in the safety zone must comply with all lawful orders or directions given to them by the COTP or the COTP's designated representative.

(d) *Enforcement period.* This rule is effective from 12:01 a.m. December 9, 2015 until February 29, 2016 11:59 p.m. The safety zone will only be enforced when the COTP or her designated representative deems it necessary because of the rough bar conditions, and

enforcement will cease immediately upon conditions returning to safe levels.

Dated: December 6, 2015.

J.F. Williams,

Captain, U.S. Coast Guard, Captain of the Port Los Angeles—Long Beach.

[FR Doc. 2015–32734 Filed 12–28–15; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

38 CFR Part 14

RIN 2900–AP28

Removal of Requirement To File Direct-Pay Fee Agreements With the Office of the General Counsel

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is amending its regulations concerning the payment of fees for representation by agents and attorneys in proceedings before VA. Specifically, this rule removes the requirement that an agent or attorney file a direct-pay fee agreement with both the VA Office of the General Counsel and the agency of original jurisdiction. The intended effect of this final rule is to require that direct-pay fee agreements be submitted only to the agency of original jurisdiction, thereby eliminating duplicate filings by agents and attorneys.

DATES: *Effective Date:* This rule is effective December 29, 2015.

Applicability Date: The provisions of this final rule shall apply to all fee agreements transmitted to VA on or after December 29, 2015.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dana Raffaelli, Staff Attorney, Office of the General Counsel (022O), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20420, (202) 461–7699. (This is not a toll-free telephone number.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This rule amends 38 CFR part 14 to remove the requirement that agents and attorneys file direct-pay fee agreements with the VA Office of the General Counsel in Washington, DC. Current provisions in 38 CFR 14.636(g) and (h) require agents and attorneys to file direct-pay fee agreements with both the Office of the General Counsel and the agency of original jurisdiction. Removal of this requirement will eliminate administrative burdens associated with these direct-pay fee agreements. Agents and attorneys will be relieved from filing direct-pay fee agreements with the Office of the General Counsel, and the