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§ 12301. Numbering vessels

(a) An undocumented vessel equipped with propulsion machinery of any kind shall have a number issued by the proper issuing authority in the State in which the vessel principally is operated.

(b) The Secretary may require an undocumented barge of more than 100 gross tons operating on the navigable waters of the United States to be numbered.

(Pub. L. 98–89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 590; Pub. L. 102–587, title V, § 5305, Nov. 4, 1992, 106 Stat. 5083; Pub. L. 115–282, title V, § 513, Dec. 4, 2018, 132 Stat. 4276.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
12301	46:1466

Section 12301 requires that undocumented vessels that are propelled by machinery be issued an identification number by the proper issuing authority in the State in which the vessel is primarily operated.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2018—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 115–282 substituted “may” for “shall” and inserted “of” after “barge”.

1992—Pub. L. 102–587 designated existing provisions as subsec. (a) and added subsec. (b).

§ 12302. Standard numbering system

(a) The Secretary shall prescribe by regulation a standard numbering system for vessels to which this chapter applies. On application by a State, the Secretary shall approve a State numbering system that is consistent with the standard numbering system. In carrying out its numbering system, a State shall adopt any definitions of relevant terms prescribed by regulations of the Secretary.

(b) A State with an approved numbering system is the issuing authority within the meaning of this chapter. The Secretary is the issuing authority in a State in which a State numbering system has not been approved.

(c) When a vessel is numbered in a State, it is deemed in compliance with the numbering system of a State in which it temporarily is operated.

(d) When a vessel is removed to a new State of principal operation, the issuing authority of that State shall recognize the validity of the number issued by the original State for 60 days.

(e) If a State has a numbering system approved after the Secretary issues a number, the State shall recognize the validity of the number issued by the Secretary for one year.

(f) When the Secretary decides that a State numbering system is not being carried out con-

sistent with the standard numbering system or the State has changed the system without the Secretary’s approval, the Secretary may withdraw approval after giving notice to the State, in writing, stating the reasons for the withdrawal.

(Pub. L. 98–89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 590.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
12302	46:1467

Section 12302 provides for a standard numbering system for undocumented vessels and for approval of State numbering systems by the Secretary. It also requires that a State, when implementing its numbering system, adopt any relevant terms required by the Secretary. In States without approved numbering systems, the Federal Government issues the numbers. This section also provides for the operation of a vessel in a State other than the one in which it was numbered.

§ 12303. Exemption from numbering requirements

(a) When the Secretary is the authority issuing a number under this chapter, the Secretary may exempt a vessel or class of vessels from the numbering requirements of this chapter under conditions the Secretary may prescribe.

(b) When a State is the issuing authority, it may exempt from the numbering requirements of this chapter a vessel or class of vessels exempted under subsection (a) of this section or otherwise as permitted by the Secretary.

(Pub. L. 98–89, Aug. 26, 1983, 97 Stat. 591.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
12303	46:1468

Section 12303 permits the Secretary and any State, when it is the issuing authority, to exempt vessels from the numbering requirements.

§ 12304. Certificates of numbers

(a) A certificate of number is granted for a number issued under this chapter. The certificate shall be at all times available for inspection on the vessel for which issued when the vessel is in operation, and may be in hard copy or digital form. Any certificate issued in hard copy under this section shall be pocket-sized. The certificate shall be valid for not more than 3 years. The certificate of number for a vessel less than 26 feet in length and leased or rented to another for the latter’s noncommercial operation of less than 7 days may be retained on shore by the vessel’s owner or representative at the place from which the vessel departs or returns to the possession of the owner or the owner’s representative. A vessel that does not have the certificate of number on board shall be identified when in operation, and comply with requirements, as the issuing authority prescribes.

(b) The owner of a vessel numbered under this chapter shall provide—

(1) the issuing authority notice of the transfer of any part of the owner’s interest in the vessel or of the destruction or abandonment of