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an officer in charge of the towing vessel must have completed 12 round trips over this route as an observer, with at least 3 of those trips during hours of darkness, and at least 1 round trip of the 12 within the last 5 years.

(2) To operate a towing vessel without barges, or a tow of uninspected barges, an officer in charge of the towing vessel must have completed at least four round trips over this route as an observer, with at least one of those trips during hours of darkness, and at least one round trip of the 12 within the last 5 years.

[USCG-1999-6224, 66 FR 20944, Apr. 26, 2001, as amended at 68 FR 35818, June 17, 2003; USCG-2008-0906, 73 FR 56508, Sept. 29, 2008; USCG-2006-24371, 74 FR 11261, Mar. 16, 2009]

Subpart F—Limitations and Qualifying Factors

§ 15.701 Officers Competency Certificates Convention, 1936.

(a) This section implements the Officers Competency Certificates Convention, 1936, and applies to each vessel documented under the laws of the United States navigating seaward of the Boundary Lines in part 7 of this chapter, except:

- (1) A public vessel;
- (2) A wooden vessel of primitive build, such as a dhow or junk;
- (3) A barge; and,
- (4) A vessel of less than 200 gross tons.

(b) The master, mates and engineers on any vessel to which this section applies must hold a license or MMC officer endorsement to serve in that capacity issued by the Coast Guard under parts 10 and 11 of this chapter.

(c) A vessel to which this section applies, or a foreign flag vessel to which the Convention applies, may be detained by a designated official until that official is satisfied that the vessel is in compliance with the Convention. *Designated official* includes Coast Guard officers, Coast Guard petty officers and officers or employees of the Customs and Border Protection Service.

(d) Whenever a vessel is detained, the owner, charterer, managing operator, agent, master, or individual in charge may appeal the detention within five

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days under the provisions of § 2.01-70 of this chapter.

[CGD 81-059, 52 FR 38652, Oct. 16, 1987, as amended by USCG-2006-24371, 74 FR 11261, Mar. 16, 2009]

§ 15.705 Watches.

(a) Title 46 U.S.C. 8104 is the law applicable to the establishment of watches aboard certain U.S. vessels. The establishment of adequate watches is the responsibility of the vessel's master.

The Coast Guard interprets the term *watch* to be the direct performance of vessel operations, whether deck or engine, where such operations would routinely be controlled and performed in a scheduled and fixed rotation. The performance of maintenance or work necessary to the vessel's safe operation on a daily basis does not in itself constitute the establishment of a watch. The minimum safe manning levels specified in a vessel's certificate of inspection take into consideration routine maintenance requirements and ability of the crew to perform all operational evolutions, including emergencies, as well as those functions which may be assigned to persons in watches.

(b) Subject to exceptions, 46 U.S.C. 8104 requires that when a master of a seagoing vessel of more than 100 gross tons establishes watches for the officers, sailors, coal passers, firemen, oilers and watertenders, the personnel shall be *divided, when at sea, into at least three watches and shall be kept on duty successively to perform ordinary work incident to the operation and management of the vessel*. The Coast Guard interprets *sailors* to mean those members of the deck department other than officers, whose duties involve the mechanics of conducting the ship on its voyage, such as helmsman (wheelsman), lookout, etc., and which are necessary to the maintenance of a continuous watch. *Sailors* is not interpreted to include able seamen and ordinary seamen not performing these duties.

(c) Subject to exceptions, 46 U.S.C. 8104(g) permits the officers and crew members (except the coal passers, firemen, oilers, and watertenders) to be divided into two watches when at sea and engaged on a voyage of less than 600

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miles on the following categories of vessels:

- (1) Towing vessel;
- (2) Offshore supply vessel; or,
- (3) Barge.

(d) Subject to exceptions, 46 U.S.C. 8104(h) permits a master or mate (pilot) operating a towing vessel that is at least 26 feet in length measured from end to end over the deck (excluding sheer) to work not more than 12 hours in a consecutive 24 hour period except in an emergency. The Coast Guard interprets this, in conjunction with other provisions of the law, to permit masters or mates (pilots) serving as operators of towing vessels that are not subject to the provisions of the Officers' Competency Certificates Convention, 1936, to be divided into two watches regardless of the length of the voyage.

(e) Fish processing vessels are subject to various provisions of 46 U.S.C. 8104 concerning watches.

(1) For fish processing vessels that entered into service before January 1, 1988, the following watch requirements apply to the officers and deck crew:

(i) If over 5000 gross tons—three watches.

(ii) If more than 1600 gross tons and not more than 5000 gross tons—two watches.

(iii) If not more than 1600 gross tons—no watch division specified.

(2) For fish Processing vessels which enter into service after December 31, 1987, the following watch requirements apply to the officers and deck crew:

(i) If over 5000 gross tons—three watches.

(ii) If not more than 5000 gross tons and having more than 16 individuals on board primarily employed in the preparation of fish or fish products—two watches.

(iii) If not more than 5000 gross tons and having not more than 16 individuals on board primarily employed in the preparation of fish or fish products—no watch division specified.

(f) Properly manned uninspected passenger vessels of at least 100 gross tons—

(1) Which are underway for no more than 12 hours in any 24-hour period, and which are adequately moored, anchored, or otherwise secured in a harbor of safe refuge for the remainder of

that 24-hour period may operate with one navigational watch;

(2) Which are underway more than 12 hours in any 24-hour period must provide a minimum of a two-watch system;

(3) In no case may the crew of any watch work more than 12 hours in any 24-hour period, except in an emergency.

[CGD 81-059, 52 FR 38652, Oct. 16, 1987, as amended by USCG-1999-6224, 64 FR 63235, Nov. 19, 1999; USCG-1999-5040, May 15, 2002; USCG-2004-18884, 69 FR 58343, Sept. 30, 2004; USCG-2006-24371, 74 FR 11261, Mar. 16, 2009]

§ 15.710 Working hours.

In addition to prescribing watch requirements, 46 U.S.C. 8104 sets limitations on the working hours of credentialed officers and crew members, prescribes certain rest periods, and prohibits unnecessary work on Sundays and certain holidays when the vessel is in a safe harbor. It is the responsibility of the master or person in charge to ensure that these limitations are met. However, under 46 U.S.C. 8104(f), the master or other credentialed officer can require any part of the crew to work when, in his or her judgment, they are needed for:

(a) Maneuvering, shifting berth, mooring, unmooring;

(b) Performing work necessary for the safety of the vessel, or the vessel's passengers, crew, or cargo;

(c) Saving of life on board another vessel in jeopardy; or,

(d) Performing fire, lifeboat, or other drills in port or at sea.

[CGD 81-059, 52 FR 38652, Oct. 16, 1987, as amended by USCG-2004-18884, 69 FR 58343, Sept. 30, 2004; USCG-2006-24371, 74 FR 11261, Mar. 16, 2009]

§ 15.715 Automated vessels.

(a) Coast Guard acceptance of automated systems to replace specific personnel or to reduce overall crew requirements is predicated upon the capabilities of the system, the system's demonstrated and continuing reliability, and a planned maintenance program that ensures continued safe operation of the vessel.