

THE VRP REVIEW

WINTER 2010

Commandant, USCG (CG-5431) • Vessel Response Plan Team • 2100 2nd Street SW, Rm. 2100 • Washington, DC 20593-0001

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VRP Statistics

Active plan totals as of December 2, 2009

Tank	694 plans 5,226 vessels
Nontank	2,200 plans 12,396 vessels
Combined	69 plans 650 vessels
SOPEP	684 plans 2,581 vessels
SMPEP	131 plans 761 vessels

Sustainable 21st Century VRP Programs

By Patricia Adams

The VRP Program is facing an onslaught of vessel response plan submissions to meet the planning requirements for the CAPS and Salvage and Marine Firefighting Final Rules, and in due course the Nontank VRP final rule. A significant VRP Program modernization effort is underway by the VRP Team as they leverage technology in all facets of plan submission and plan review, tracking and communication of VRP approvals to industry and Coast Guard field units, and increase the number of VRP verification activities.

In addition, Coast Guard VRP program personnel welcomed contracted plan review staff members when they moved from their Alexandria location to Coast Guard Headquarters in November 2009. For the first time in the fourteen-year VRP program history, all members of the VRP staff are co-located under one roof, facilitating internal communication and plan review oversight. The VRP team benefits in many ways including streamlined VRP review processes, reduced review times, and improved review quality.

The VRP team is also modernizing information and technology management to improve program productivity, the efficiency and effectiveness of planning operations, and service to the public. As an example, the recent change from reliance on postal mail to electronic communications during all phases of the plan approval process has improved customer response times significantly. Even a simple change like communicating by email instead of by post reduces the lead time required for ships to come into compliance with US regulations, thereby facilitating commerce.

Completed modernization measures are already contributing to VRP Program cost reductions: reduced personnel requirements due to improved processes, lower office space and plan storage requirements, and reduced postage, labor, and mailing material costs by using email as the preferred means of correspondence.

An initiative that is tremendously significant to the future sustainability of the Vessel Response Plan Program is data migration from external software and hardware systems to Coast Guard systems. As an example, our customers have been informed of a change in the link to the E-VRP database, found at <http://evrp.uscg.mil>. More significantly, future use of the electronic plan database for plan submission and approvals will greatly advance turnaround for vessel response plan reviews and approvals, and integrate plan information into a format that meshes with response needs.

LCDR Allain and the VRP staff are committed to public outreach through electronic communications or phone inquiries, and by means of industry partnerships, public meetings, or industry visits. We can best be reached at vrp@uscg.mil or (202) 372-1229.



Back row, left to right: Mr. Michael Margelos, Ms. Seeta Jagoonanan, LT Kelly Hartshorn, Ms. Oneika Stevenson, LCDR Ryan Allain, Ms. Michelle Carns, LT Xochitl Castaneda, ADM Thad Allen, Ms. Patricia Adams, Mr. Timothy Brown, Mr. Marlon Philpott, Mr. Eric Westerfelt, MST2 Matthew Ferraro, Mr. Joe Marflak, MST1 Christopher Johnston
Front row: Ms. Noelle Slager, Ms. Bethany Ezell, Mr. David Gibson, Mr. Tim Marflak



The Move

By Patricia Adams



The Vessel Response Plan Program recently moved to the fifth floor of the Coast Guard Headquarters building. The November 2009 move to newly renovated spaces included the relocation from offsite locations of 12 VRP staffers and 3000+ paper VRPs covering 22,000+ vessels. Seven VRP staffers also moved from other locations within the Coast Guard Headquarters building, bringing the whole 19-person team together.

Purging of outdated and obsolete paper records in preparation for the physical move to Headquarters from our offsite office reduced library storage of the paper-based VRPs by over twenty percent. Nonetheless, three moving trucks full of VRPs were a graphic reminder of one of the future benefits of electronic planning initiatives. Fewer trees, less storage space, less carbon expended to move and house the paper plans!

Electronic Approval Letters

By Tim Brown

As part of our effort to reduce review and processing times as much as possible by using electronic processes we have transitioned to sending electronic copies of approval letters by email. No hard copy correspondence will be sent through the mail unless electronic delivery fails. The electronic approval letters are equivalent to the hard copy letters, and can be printed out by your office or further forwarded electronically to your plan holders as necessary.

Duplicate Letters

By Tim Brown

If an approval or interim operating authorization letter is lost, destroyed or damaged, please contact the VRP staff at vrp@uscg.mil or at the numbers listed on the last page of this newsletter to request a duplicate. The duplicate letter will be sent electronically and will have the same expiration date as the original letter.



TOP TEN BEST VRP PRACTICES

By David Gibson

1. SAVE PAPER – SUBMIT FLEET PLANS

Fleet plans not only save paper by reducing the amount of information duplicated for each vessel, it is also a time saver for both plan holders/preparers and the Coast Guard reviewers.

2. USE THE APPLICATION FORM

Proper use of the optional application form (CG-6083) ensures that the Coast Guard is fully aware of your intent for any given submission. You can download this form from HOMEPORT (<http://homeport.uscg.mil/vrp> under VRP Program > Important Documents > Application for Approval/Revision of Response Plans). Use of this form eliminates the possibility of misinterpretations and any delays associated with misinterpretations.

3. NUMBER THE PAGES IN YOUR PLAN

When submitting revisions to your plan, you only need to submit those pages that have changed. By numbering your pages, you will ensure that these revised pages are properly inserted into your plan.

4. CHECK HOMEPORT FOR STATUS UPDATES

The Coast Guard is no longer updating the correspondence log on the evrp database. Instead, a report from our internal correspondence database is posted on our Homeport site at

<http://homeport.uscg.mil/vrp> (under EVRP/ Revision Reports > Revision Reports).

5. EMAIL US AT vrp@uscg.mil

The vrp@uscg.mil email address has been established for VRP/IMO questions and submissions (less than 15 pages and 1.5 MB). Since the entire VRP staff has access to this email folder, this ensures that your email will be received regardless of who may be on vacation.

6. USE THE VRP CONTROL NUMBER IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE.

The Coast Guard uses VRP Control Numbers to track all tank and non-tank vessel plans and revisions. If your submissions or questions either do not include the control number, or do not include the correct control number, this could potentially delay our review or response time and could possibly result in errors or misinformation.

7. SUBMIT DOCUMENTS TO VERIFY IMO NUMBERS.

Submitting official documents with your new plans and added vessels could eliminate delays in cases where the vessel name and vessel identification number from your plan don't match that in the Coast Guard's MISLE database. When you are unsure of what information the Coast Guard has on file in MISLE concerning VINs, IMO numbers, vessel names or Official Numbers, you can check it at <http://psix.uscg.mil/PSIX/PSIXSearch.aspx>.

8. BATCH CHANGES RATHER THAN SENDING SEVERAL SMALL CHANGES.

For ease of review, it is preferred that plan holders/preparers submit one large revision rather than multiple smaller revisions all within a one to two week window.

9. WHEN REQUESTING GSA APPROVAL FOR REMOTE ZONES, SEND CONTRACTS.

Submitting official OSRO contract(s) with your Alaska, Guam, American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, and Saipan Zone submission(s) would eliminate delays caused by the need for us to request, and you to send, the information later.

10. PREPARE TO TRANSITION TO ELECTRONIC PLANNING BY REGISTERING ON HOMEPORT.

Available as of June 23, 2009, all owners, operators, and third party plan preparers are encouraged to register with Homeport as soon as possible at <http://homeport.uscg.mil>.





Vessel Response Plan Process Changes

DEAN'S LIST

By MST1 Christopher Johnston

To better serve our customers by leveraging technology, we have developed a Microsoft Access program to track the progress of incoming VRP correspondence. Dean's List allows us to accurately track incoming correspondence, plan reviews and other responses, and outgoing correspondence. This program has already significantly reduced correspondence tracking time.

One of the benefits Dean's List affords the VRP program is the enhanced ability to turn out approval and interim operating authorization letters. By the way, it takes us the same amount of time to generate an authorization or approval letter for a fleet plan as it does for a single vessel (see Best Practice Number One on Page 2).

The new database enables the use of stored information to respond to status-related questions about the plans we are reviewing, and to track review time. For those who wish to track the progress of their plans and inquiries directly and at their own convenience, we have developed a report, updated each workday, on the Coast Guard Homeport website at <http://homeport.uscg.mil>. You can track correspondence received by the Vessel Plan Review Team. After plan reviews or other tasks are completed, the correspondence is automatically removed from the report of pending plans or issues. These items are added to the completed items report

Prior information management methods required two full time employees to keep pace with the flow of communications. Dean's List accomplishes the same objective using less than half of the time it used to take. Where it used to take two full time employees, it now requires less than one full time employee to accomplish the same task. We know that procedural change is difficult in the initial stages, and we thank you for your patience during our continuous effort to streamline VRP Program processes.

The Current State of Electronic Planning

By LT Jarrod DeWitz

We are developing a database that is capable of housing electronic vessel response plans for submission, revision, and all other plan management functions. This will improve the Coast Guard plan review process and overall plan management, as well as reduce the volume of paper and the mailing costs associated with the current system of response plan management. We anticipate a significant reduction in processing and review time.

The electronic VRP submission web-enabled process allows the Coast Guard to receive planning information instantly. The electronic VRP review and approval system is expected to be more efficient as it will allow for significant automation through the use of various database back-checks (Response Resource Inventory, National Vessel Movement Center, Emergency



Response Corporations, Coast Guard Maritime Information for Safety and Law Enforcement, real-time Geographic Information System (GIS) functionality, etc.).

One electronic planning design feature provides plan preparers with the ability to maintain plans through a common database that allows plans to be changed immediately for those items that do not require Coast Guard review. This system will provide greater transparency as to current plan status as well as improve review efficiency.

Additionally, owners and operators may receive interim operating authorization letters soon after plan submission, provided that specific requirements have been met. Finally, those with the proper password protected log-in would be able to download the most current approved plan immediately after Coast Guard review is completed.

During response, the instant availability of VRP planning information will enhance Federal on Scene Coordinator risk-based decision processes and facilitate response coordination and oversight responsibilities.

The Coast Guard web supported software located at <http://homeport.uscg.mil> will be the user interface, and interested users will be required to complete a registration process which guides the submitter through a series of screening questions. Subsequently, the VRP staff will verify the validity of each request and approve or deny the prospective user. Prospective users can now register!

The Coast Guard is striving to obtain a more balanced approach toward environmental stewardship and facilitating maritime commerce, and the implementation of our electronic planning database will assist in achieving that goal. Ultimately, the migration to an electronic VRP submission, review, approval, and management system will greatly improve Coast Guard service to its stakeholders.

Revision Timeframes

Submission Type	Regulatory Lead Time	VRP Staff Target
IMO New Plans	90 days	30 days
Tank & Nontank New Plans	60 days	30 days
Plan Revisions (all plan types)	30 days	21 days
Nontank Plan Recertifications & Tank/IMO Plan Resubmissions	180 days	21 days



Salvage and Firefighting FAQ

By Patricia Adams



1. Will there be guidance for the Salvage and Marine Firefighting Rules? When can we expect it?

We are currently working on providing guidance on the following issues: VRP submissions, description of major plan revisions, response time requirements, resource provider adequacy, contracts and funding agreements, and deviation from the plan during response. Some specific issues that we are still developing policy for include: operating area identification, various firefighting requirements, changes

to Area Contingency Plans and the Response Resource Inventory, among others. As soon as these issues are finalized internally, the guidance will be provided for comment before finalization.

2. When do we need to submit our SMFF VRP updates?

SMFF VRP updates for existing VRPs must be submitted by the regulatory compliance date, February 22, 2011.

VRPs requiring 5-year revisions by the compliance date or afterwards, should be submitted as early as 90 days in advance of the plan approval anniversary date and include SMFF revisions.

3. We understand that there is a new electronic planning capability being developed by the Coast Guard that will speed up review times. Will we be able to submit our SMFF updates using this system?

Yes. When the new electronic planning system is released, it will include the required SMFF revisions. The Coast Guard's Homeport website <http://homeport.uscg.mil> describes the system and provides periodic status reports on its development. You may register in advance of its release through Homeport.

4. Will the Coast Guard issue a Salvage and Marine Firefighting classification system like the one in place for Oil Spill Removal Organizations?

No. There is a fundamental difference between SMFF and OSRO resource identification requirements in that there will be no Coast Guard classification of SMFF resources. The onus is on the planholder to certify that the SMFF resource provider meets the 15 selection criteria to the maximum extent possible, as contained in 33 CFR 155.4050.

It is anticipated that the vessel owner or operator will do the necessary due diligence to enable him or her to certify that these factors were considered when they chose their resource provider, and that the resource is the best option to fill the planning requirement.

Certification statements should not be taken lightly. Within the SMFF Final Rule, the Coast Guard has gone to great lengths to convey that this regulation promulgates a planning standard, not a performance standard. Compliance with the regulations is based upon whether or not a covered response plan ensures that adequate response resources are available.

5. Will the Coast Guard verify the adequacy of SMFF resources in the VRP?

The vessel owner or operator bears the burden of vetting the qualifications of a salvage and marine firefighting resource provider and certifies to the Coast Guard that the resource provider meets the 15 selection criteria identified in the SMFF final rule to the maximum extent possible. The Coast Guard may choose to verify the vessel owner or operator's certification statement in order to confirm that he or she has vetted the resources listed in the VRP.

Alternate Planning Criteria

By LT Xochitl L. Castaneda
Policy Letter 09-02

The U.S. Coast Guard published Industry Guidelines for Requesting Alternate Planning Criteria (APC) Approval, One Time Waivers and Interim Operating Authorization: Policy Letter 09-02 in August of 2009. This was written to amplify the existing guidance on how to address compliance gaps.

Several areas under U.S. jurisdiction do not have sufficient resources to meet the national planning criteria as described in Appendix B to 33 CFR Part 155. In areas where response resources are not available or the available commercial resources do not meet the national planning criteria, the owner or operator may request acceptance of alternative planning criteria by the Coast Guard.

Vessel response plans can be approved by the Coast Guard using a lesser standard than what is required per 33 CFR 155 Subpart D. However, alternative planning criteria requests should contain prevention measures that are above and beyond existing requirements to mitigate the risk of a spill proportionate to the limited maximum available response resources in the remote area of operation.

Policy Letter 09-02 contains guidance for:

- a. Submitting Alternate Planning Criteria Requests
- b. Requesting a One-Time Port Waiver Request
- c. Requesting Interim Operating Authorization.

This policy is available via our website: www.uscg.mil/vrp under Tank Vessel Response Plans\Alternate Planning Criteria. We recommend e-mailing the APC requests to the cognizant COTP with VRP@uscg.mil in the copy.



Combining Vessel Response Plans (U.S. Flagged Vessels)

By David Gibson



Many plan holders own, operate, and/or manage vessels that require different types of response plans. They may be required to submit Tank Vessel Response Plans (TVRPs), Non-tank Vessel Response Plans (NTVRPs), Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plans (SOPEPs), and/or Shipboard Marine Pollution Emergency Plans (SMPEPs). These plan holders have the option of submitting separate plans for each vessel and/or requirement, or submitting a single combined plan. A single plan is the preferred option. It puts all emergency response plans in one place and streamlines the review process.

If a plan holder wishes to receive both TVRP and NTVRP approval, they may submit a plan which meets the requirements of 33 CFR Part 155. The tank vessels in the plan will receive approval letters valid for five years and the nontank vessels in the plan will receive Interim Operating Authorization letters valid for a period of 2 years.

If a plan holder wishes to receive both TVRP and SOPEP approval, they may submit a plan which meets the requirements of 33 CFR 155 and 33 CFR 151.27(d). The vessels in the plan will receive both tank and SOPEP approval letters valid for five years.

If a plan holder wishes to receive both NTVRP and SOPEP approval, they may submit a plan which meets the nontank requirements outlined in Title 33, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 1321 (j)(5) as amended by the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2004, as well as the SOPEP requirements outlined in 33 CFR 151.26. The nontank vessels will receive Interim Operating Authorization letters valid for two years, and the SOPEP vessels will receive approval letters valid for five years.

In addition, if a SMPEP is required in place of a SOPEP, the requirements outlined in 33 CFR 155.1030(j) must be met, along with the SMPEP requirements mandated by MARPOL 73/78 under regulation 17 of Annex II and outlined in NVIC 03-04. Also if a plan holder has some vessels that require TVRP and SOPEP/SMPEP approval, while others only require SOPEP/SMPEP approval, the plan holder may still take advantage of 33 CFR 155.1030(j) for all vessels in their fleet.

In order to avoid confusion and possible delay, plan holders are encouraged to use the optional application form CG-6083 (see Best VRP Practice Number Two on page 2), or clearly state which vessels are being submitted for TVRP, NTVRP, SOPEP and/or SMPEP approval. While the choice of how plans are submitted for review rests with the plan holder, the USCG has found that combining all vessels into a single plan streamlines the review process and reduces paperwork.

Accessing Response Plan Information During Vessel Casualties

By MST2 Matt Ferraro

The Qualified Individual's (QI) responsibilities and authorities during vessel casualties include immediate communication with the Federal On-Scene Coordinator, and separate notification of oil spill removal organizations including salvage and firefighting resources [as referenced in 33 CFR 155.1035(d), 33CFR 155.1040(d) or 33 CFR 1045(d) – Shore-based response activities]. Based on these requirements, it makes practical sense for the QI to immediately send the specific response plan sections directly to the Coast Guard Unit during the initial phase of a spill response.

The Vessel Response Plans Program is frequently called by Coast Guard Units to send details of response plans either during an exercise, or for actual vessel casualties. Coast Guard field units don't have a copy of the plan readily accessible and therefore, during office hours, Headquarters will send key plan sections on request, including: the List of Contacts, the Vessel Specific Appendix including vessel diagrams, and the Geographic Specific Appendix for the particular COTP.

As a 'Best Practice', we recommend transmission of this primary response plan 'casualty package' as a matter of course directly from the QI to the Coast Guard COTP office. This practice is beneficial for the vessel owner/ operator and the Coast Guard unit because this ensures that the resources engaged are the most current resources under contract for the response plan. All responding parties would be working from the same specific response plan sections. In the chaotic first stages of a response it is vital that everyone be working from the same clear plan.

Deviation from the plan during response is possible. If the vessel owner/operator's response team finds that it will improve the response to deviate from the planned response procedures or substitute other resources, they must gain approval for the new plan of action from the Coast Guard Captain of the Port in their role as the Federal On-Scene Coordinator.

Minimum plan exercise requirements require that shore based spill-management team tabletop exercises be conducted annually [as referenced in 33 CFR 155.1060(a)(3)]. These exercises provide an opportunity to practice this suggested 'best practice' and also demonstrates the ability of the QI to access the vessel response plan during response.





Nontank Vessel Plans

By LT Kelly Hartshorn



Our Vessel Response Plan Program at HQ has been reviewing NTVRPs since 2005. In June 2008, noting that some nontank vessels still have not submitted an NTVRP, the Coast Guard issued an enforcement notice announcing that

effective August 22, 2008, we would begin enforcing the statutory requirement to prepare and submit an NTVRP for certain nontank vessels that pose a greater risk to the environment in the event of a worst case discharge, with a focus on vessels of 1,600 gross tons or greater. This enforcement measure will continue until the promulgation of the Nontank Vessel Response Plan Final Rule. NVIC 01-05 Change 1 remains the primary guidance to owners and operators of nontank vessels for preparing and submitting plans and for receiving interim authorization letters.

On August 31, 2009, the Coast Guard published the Proposed Rule for Nontank Vessel Response Plans and Other Response Plan Requirements. The public comment period for this proposed rule closed on November 30, 2009. The Coast Guard hosted three public meetings, located in D.C., Oakland and New Orleans, with a total of 79 people in attendance and with eight individuals making public comments. To view comments and all documents related to this rulemaking go to <http://www.regulations.gov>; enter the docket number USCG-2008-1070 in the keyword box.

Also as part of the VRP team's effort to reduce processing times we will no longer be sending acknowledgement correspondence/ emails when a vessel is being added to a plan. The status of a vessel can be verified through use of the e-vrp database at <http://evrp.uscg.mil>. A "pending" vessel status in the e-vrp database will confirm to Sectors and other interested parties that the plan review has been received by the VRP team and is currently under review. Acknowledgement correspondence will continue to be sent by our office for receipt of new plans.

Response Resource Inventory

By Guest Columnist LCDR Tedd Hutley, NSFCC

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 mandated the creation of a national database of response resources that would be maintained by the National Strike Force Coordination Center (NSFCC). In 1993, the Response Resource Inventory (RRI) was developed in conjunction with the Coast Guard's Research and Development Center and the NSFCC. In 1995, the RRI was expanded to accommodate the needs of the Oil Spill Removal Organization (OSRO) classification initiative, turning the RRI into a tool primarily used for classifying OSROs with the main source of resource information originating from OSROs. In 2007, the NSFCC secured funding to update the technologically obsolete system to a web-based system and expand the resources in the system to meet the original mandate of the law. The RRI is now very user-friendly and has a Data Entry Module that allows the owners of response resources to easily add and update their resources online (Note: resource owners can only view their own resources within the system and are unable to view competitors). In addition, the RRI provides Coast Guard regulators, Federal On Scene Coordinators (FOSCs) and Captains of the Port (COTPs) the ability to query equipment inventories and analyze response capabilities throughout their areas of responsibility and beyond. They are able to see what resources are available and where resources are located. While the system mainly houses OSRO resources, it was designed to allow a wide variety of other resources to be added such as salvage, marine firefighting, chemical response and government owned equipment, resulting in a robust database of all-hazard response resources.

In November 2009, the NSFCC, working with the VRP Program, chartered a working group, made up of subject matter experts across multiple disciplines, including industry representatives, to develop a Data Entry Module within the RRI to accommodate Salvage and Marine Fire Fighting (SMFF) resources. The goal is to utilize the RRI to house SMFF resources in order to facilitate the review and approval of Vessel Response Plans (VRP) and provide COTPs and FOSCs a tool to assess the adequacy of SMFF resources specified in the response plans of vessel's operating within their AOR.

The regulations are framed in terms of capability categories based upon the salvage and marine firefighting services described in the regulations (Table 155.4030(b)). Therefore, the RRI data fields will likely mirror these categories. Service providers would enter their capabilities for

each category and be able to specify each of the 15 adequacy criteria, found in 155.4050, that pertained to each category of service they provide. It is important to understand that the RRI will not be used to calculate a classification or certify a service provider, as this is clearly the responsibility of the planholder. However, this system will be an important tool for CG regulators who are responsible for reviewing and approving vessel response plans. Therefore, the system must contain accurate and regularly validated/verified data and must be easily accessible and widely used throughout the USCG and the SMFF Industry.

The NSFCC is committed to working with CG5431 and the Salvage and Marine Firefighting Industry in an effort to build a comprehensive SMFF Data Entry Module within the RRI to best meet the informational requirements of the end user.

The USCG Response Resource Inventory system can be accessed at <https://cgrri.uscg.mil>.





FEDERAL REGISTER: Semiannual Regulatory Agenda, OPA 90 COAST GUARD RULEMAKING STATUS, December 2009

www.regulations.gov/public/custom/jsp/navigation/main.jsp

Select the Department of Homeland Security from the list of departments. Select Go.

Select 250 . . . Scroll to USCG items.

Completed Items (Selected)

Title	Action	Date	FR Cite
Vessel and Facility Response Plans for Oil: 2003 Removal Equipment Requirements and Alternative Technology Revisions (USCG-2001-8661)	Final Rule	08/31/2009	74FR45004*
Pollution Prevention Equipment (USCG-204-18939)	Final Rule Effective	11/12/2009	74FR52413

Proposed Rules

Title	Action	Date	FR Cite
Claims Procedure Under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (USCG-2004-17697)	Supplemental NPRM	10/00/2010	57FR41104
State Access to the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund (USCG-2004-19123)	Supplemental NPRM	09/00/2010	57FR53968
Implementation of the 1995 Amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW) for Seafarers, 1978 (USCG-1998-3868)	NPRM Comment Period End	02/16/2010	74FR59353
Outer Continental Shelf Activities (USCG-1998-3868)	Supplemental NPRM	09/00/2010	65FR40559
Standards for Living Organisms in Ships' Ballast Water Discharged in US Waters (USCG-2001-10488)	Final Rule	12/00/2010	74FR52941
Vessel Traffic Service Lower Mississippi River (USCG-1998-4399)	Supplemental NPRM		
	Comment Period End	1/11/2010	74FR58223
Commercial Fishing Industry Vessels (USCG-2003-16158)	NPRM	06/00/2010	73FR16815
Dry Cargo Residue Discharges in the Great Lakes (USCG-2004-19621)	Supplemental NPRM	02/00/2010	73FR56492
Notification of Arrival in US Ports; Certain Dangerous Cargoes; Electronic Submission (USCG-2004-19963)	NPRM	02/00/2010	73FR74663
Inspection of Towing Vessels (USCG-2006-24412)	NPRM	02/00/2010	- - -
Installation and Use of Engine Cut-off Switches (USCG-2009-0206)	NPRM	02/00/2010	- - -
Classification Society Approval	NPRM	02/00/2010	- - -
Marine Vapor Control Systems	NPRM	02/00/2010	- - -
Marine Security (MTSA II)	NPRM	03/00/2010	- - -

Final Rules

Title	Action	Date	FR Cite
Traffic Separation Schemes: in the Strait of Juan De Fuca and its Approaches; In Puget Sound and its Approaches; in Haro Strait, Boundary Pass, and in the Strait of Georgia (USCG-2002-12702)	Interim Final Rule	02/00/2010	67FR54981
Consumer Price Index Adjustments of Oil Pollution Act of 1990 Limits of Liability – Vessels and Deepwater Ports	Final Action	02/00/2010	74FR46367
Nontank Vessel Response Plans and Other Vessel Response Plan Requirements (USCG-2008-1070)	Final Rule	08/00/2010	74FR48891*
Notice of Arrival on the Outer Continental Shelf	Final Action	02/00/2010	74FR29439
Protection for Whistle Blowers in the Coast Guard (USCG-2009-10239)	Direct Final Rule	02/00/2010	- - -

* Items with an asterisk impact the VRP submissions directly.

The Salvage and Marine Firefighting Final Rule was addressed in a previous Semiannual Regulatory Agenda, and may be found at 73FR80618.



2010 RADM William M. Benkert Environmental Excellence Award

By LT Jarrod DeWitz

The Benkert Award is the most sought after environmental award by the maritime industry. This prestigious award recognizes outstanding achievements that extend far beyond mere compliance with industrial and regulatory standards. More than just a symbol of excellence, the award provides an avenue for creative exchanges of ideas and innovations that benefit both the industry and the public. It measures and assesses an organization's management strengths and weaknesses in environmental protection.

The 2008 Benkert Awards

On June 23, 2008, USCG Commandant Admiral Thad Allen presented the 2008 Benkert Awards to industry during the American Petroleum Institute (API) Tanker Conference in San Diego, California:

Dow Chemical received this award's highest honor, the OSPREY, for the second time in a row and continues to set the bar of environmental excellence.

GOLD honors were awarded to Alaska Chadux Corporation of Anchorage, Alaska, and Foss Maritime Company of Seattle, Washington.

SILVER awards were conferred on US Shipping Partners, LP of Edison, New Jersey, American Commercial Lines, Inc. of Jeffersonville, Indiana, Marathon Petroleum Company LLC of Nashville, Indiana.

Recipients of BRONZE awards included APL Maritime Ltd of Bethesda, Maryland, APL Maritime Ltd of Oakland, California, and Marathon Petroleum of Ashland, Kentucky.

HONORABLE MENTION was accorded to Todd Pacific Shipyards Corporation of Seattle, Washington, Seariver Maritime, Inc. of Houston, Texas.

Applications are being accepted for 2010 Benkert Awards

The 2010 award cycle began on December 1, 2009 and is open to any marine transportation-related commercial organization owning, operating, or otherwise managing vessels, facilities, fleeting areas, oil spill removal organizations, or other entities engaged in maritime operations are eligible. There are six categories in which a company can submit an application:

- Large Business – Facility Operations and Vessel Operations
- Small Business – Facility Operations and Vessel Operations
- Special Small Business
- Foreign Vessels

Applications will be accepted until March 1, 2010. Potential applicants should visit the award website for detailed application guidelines at <http://homeport.uscg.mil/benkert>. The 2010 Benkert award ceremony will be held during the API Tanker Conference in San Diego, California, on June 28-29, 2010.

Vessel Response Plan Program

Mailing Address

**COMMANDANT (CG-5431)
ATTN: VESSEL RESPONSE PLANS
US COAST GUARD
2100 2ND ST SW STOP 7581
WASHINGTON, DC 20593-7581**

VRP Contact Phone Numbers

**VRP Help Desk
MST2 Matthew C. Ferraro
202 372 1229**

**VRP Fax
202 372 1921**

**EVRP WEBSITE
<http://evrp.mil>**

**VRP Email
vrp@uscg.mil**

**VRP Help Desk/Data
MST1 Dean Johnston
202 372 1000**

**Nontank VRP
LT Kelly Hartshorn
202 372 2357**

**Tank VRP
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202 372 1225**

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