




16721
17 Mar 2017

MEMORANDUM

From: S.A. VANEENENAAM, LT
CG SECTOR Anchorage (spia)

Reply to: LT VanEenenaam
Attn of: 907-428-4164

To: CG SECTOR Anchorage (s)

Thru: CG SECTOR Anchorage (sp)  (Acting)

Subj: DECISION MEMORANDUM, RESTRICTED OPERATOR FOR UNINSPECTED PASSENGER VESSELS (ROUPV) FOR BRISTOL BAY

Ref: (a) 46 CFR §11.467(g)
(b) Western Alaska OCMi Marine Safety Information Bulletin of 11 May 15/MSIB 04-15, *New Application Process for ROUPV MMC on Inland Waters in Western Alaska*
(c) COMDT (CG-MMC) letter 16721 of 30 Nov 16/Policy Letter 01-16, *ROUPV Endorsements*

1. BACKGROUND:

- a. Beginning in the late 1990s, guides and other operators of Uninspected Passenger Vessels could obtain a Restricted or Limited “Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels Guide License on the Freshwaters and Rivers of Western Alaska” that permitted operation on all freshwater rivers or lakes in Western Alaska. The ROUPV endorsement encompassed the entire Western Alaska area.
- b. In 2008, the Coast Guard centralized its Mariner License Document program and renamed it the Merchant Mariner Credentialing program, administered by the National Maritime Center.
- c. In 2010, the Coast Guard promulgated CG-543 Policy Letter 10-03 “*Restricted Endorsements for Merchant Mariner Credentials (MMC) as Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels (OUPV)*” to ensure nation-wide consistency in the application of credentialing regulations. The policy redefined the parameters for ROUPV endorsements, making them more restrictive in defining body of water. This substantially increased the number ROUPV endorsements for Western Alaska. Today there are nine approved ROUPV endorsements within the Bristol Bay watershed.
- d. In 2014, 46 CFR §11.467(g) took effect, requiring 90 days sea service on a body of water to qualify for the governing ROUPV endorsement.

- e. In May 2016, a coalition of lodges and guide businesses operating on the inland waters of Bristol Bay petitioned the Coast Guard to amend the regulations. They reported extreme difficulties for applicants in accruing 90 days sea service for each ROUPV endorsement in Bristol Bay.
- f. In July 2016, the Coast Guard Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy confirmed 46 CFR §11.467(g) provides flexibility to broadly interpret the term “body of water” to include waters consisting of a collection of lakes or rivers (including tributaries) that may be navigated as a single “body of water.” This flexibility allows the Coast Guard to consider and determine what constitutes the geographic extent of a body of water for the purpose of the ROUPV endorsement.

2. WORKGROUP:

- a. Purpose: On 29 November 2016 at 13:00 AKST an ROUPV workgroup held a conference call to discuss re-grouping and combining bodies of water in the Bristol Bay watershed to achieve some relief from the 90-day sea service requirement for ROUPV endorsements in 46 CFR §11.467(g)(1).
- b. Attendees: CAPT Williams (CG-CVC), CDR Franklin (CG SECANC), LCDR Boyer (CGD17), LT VanEenaam (CG SECANC), Luke Harden (CG-CVC), Dan Reyes (CG REC Chief), Steve Murphy (CGD17), Bud Hodson, Bryan Crouse, Scott Schumacher, Sonny Peterson, Brian Kraft, Nancy Lyon, Steve Laurent, Chad Bride, Amy McElroy (CG Fellow, Senator Lisa Murkowski).
- c. Consensus: The workgroup unanimously agreed on combining bodies of water in the Bristol Bay watershed – specifically, those with approved ROUPV endorsements – into a single body of water, subject to Officer in Charge of Marine Inspection (OCMI) approval. The workgroup determined that combining the nine ROUPV endorsements currently identified for the Bristol Bay watershed would provide a flexible solution for lodge owners and guides that still satisfied public safety concerns. The workgroup desires a final decision in time for mariners to apply for the endorsement in spring 2017.

3. RISK MITIGATION: The workgroup considered the following risk mitigation factors:

- a. Vessel Traffic: Waterway risk assessments deemed each of the nine inland navigable waters low risk.
- b. Waterway Characteristics: Each of the Bristol Bay bodies of water considered underwent a waterway risk assessment based on five factors (area of operation, navigational complexity, characteristics of the waterway, vessel traffic, and availability of emergency resources), which deemed them low risk.

Subj: DECISION MEMORANDUM, RESTRICTED OPERATOR FOR 16721
UNINSPECTED PASSENGER VESSELS (ROUPV) FOR BRISTOL BAY 17 Mar 2017

- c. Emergency Resources: The Bristol Bay region has similar communication and emergency response availability throughout. Affected lodge owners maintain a training program that gives instruction on appropriate safety, awareness, procedures, and proficiency.

4. APPROVED ROUPV ENDORSEMENTS FOR BRISTOL BAY: The nine endorsements below are current as of 17 March 2017. Visit the website under “Approved Endorsements” to see the most up to date list: <https://www.uscg.mil/d17/SectorAnchorage/roupv.asp>.

- a. Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels Restricted to the navigable portions of Lake Clark and Sixmile Lake (sent to HQ on April 17, 2015; approved on April 24, 2015).
- b. Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels Restricted to Lake Iliamna east of a line drawn between Squirrel Point and Chekok Point (sent to HQ on April 17, 2015; approved on April 24, 2015).
- c. Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels Restricted to Intricate Bay west of a line drawn due south of Tommy Point on Lake Iliamna (sent to HQ on April 21, 2015; approved on April 24, 2015)
- d. Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels Restricted to the Kvichak River from its origin at Lake Iliamna downstream to no more than one statutory river mile below Otter Island (sent to HQ on April 15, 2015); approved on April 24, 2015).
- e. Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels Restricted to the Alagnak River up to the confluence with Nonvianuk River; Nonvianuk River; and Nonvianuk Lake (sent to HQ on April 21, 2015; approved on April 24, 2015).
- f. Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels Restricted to the navigable portions of Nushagak River from Black Point up to confluence with the Nuyakuk River, the Nuyakuk River, the Tikchik River, Tikchik Lake, Nuyakuk Lake, the Northwest Passage, Lake Chauekuktuli, the Wood River, the Agulukpak River, Lake Nerka, the Agulowak River, and Lake Aleknagik.
- g. Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels Restricted to navigable portions of Nushagak River from Black Point up to the confluence with the Nuyakuk River, the Nuyakuk River, the Tikchik River, Tikchik Lake, Nuyakuk Lake, Northwest Passage, Lake Chauekuktul, the Wood River, Lake Aleknagik, the Agulowak River, Lake Nerka, the Agulukpak River, Lake Beverly, the Peace River, Milchalk Lake, the Wind River, and Lake Kulik, AK (sent to HQ on June 8, 2015; approved on July 22, 2015, expanded on May 18, 2016).
- h. Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels Restricted to the Togiak River, AK from the village of Togiak to Togiak Lake (approved on January 18, 2017).

Subj: DECISION MEMORANDUM, RESTRICTED OPERATOR FOR UNINSPECTED PASSENGER VESSELS (ROUPV) FOR BRISTOL BAY 16721 17 Mar 2017

- i. Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels Restricted to Naknek Lake and Naknek River upstream of Naknek River’s confluence with Paul’s Creek (sent to HQ on June 8, 2015; approved on July 22, 2015).

*Special Note: Per reference (b), Bristol Bay at the Nushagak River up to Back Point is NOAA charted and considered high risk. The ROUVP endorsement **will not include high risk areas** and this portion of the river and will require the proper endorsement per the National Maritime Center.

5. RECOMMENDATION: Pursuant to 46 CFR §11.467(g) in consideration of industry input, workgroup consensus, and risk mitigation factors above, combine the nine approved endorsements above into a single ROUPV endorsement issued to applicants to be employed on the inland navigable waters of the Bristol Bay watershed. Upon completion of subsequent waterway risk assessments for the Bristol Bay watershed, amend this “body of water” and ROUPV endorsement as appropriate, subject to Western Alaska OCMI approval.

Approved	Not Approved	DATE
_____	_____	March 17, 2017
	#	

Copy: CG National Maritime Center