



16710
October 22, 2020

CAPTAIN OF THE PORT, WESTERN ALASKA NAVIGATION SAFETY ADVISORY

Subj: **OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR SEVERE WEATHER IN THE ALEUTIAN ISLANDS AND PRIBILOF ISLANDS**

OVERVIEW:

1. The Captain of the Port (COTP), Western Alaska, through consultation with the Aleutian Islands Waterways Safety Committee, marine pilot associations, vessel operators, and port authorities, developed these operating procedures (hereafter, *Procedures*) for vessels in port or at anchor in the Aleutian or Pribilof Islands, with an emphasis on Dutch Harbor, Alaska. These *Procedures* were developed to address the frequent and severe storms that impact both the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands. They are based on safety recommendations from a Coast Guard investigation of the M/V KUROSHIMA – a marine casualty that involved the dragging of anchor, vessel grounding, two deaths, and a major oil spill.
2. For these *Procedures*, **severe weather** is defined as: sustained winds that exceed 45 knots, wind gusts that exceed 60 knots, or a “winter storm warning” by the National Weather Service for any part of the Aleutian or Pribilof Islands.
3. These *Procedures* **automatically go into effect whenever** severe weather occurs or is forecasted to occur within 48 hours.
4. The master is ultimately responsible for the safe operation of their vessel at all times. Adherence to appropriate risk mitigation measures in accordance with these jointly developed *Procedures* demonstrates forehandedness on the part of the master, and is in keeping with prudent seamanship. It is always the master’s responsibility to take all necessary steps to effectively mitigate risks in circumstances where these operating *Procedures* may fall short.
5. The COTP may order a vessel to operate or anchor in the manner directed when there is reasonable cause to believe the vessel is not in compliance with any regulation, law, or treaty, or it has been determined that such order is necessary in the interest of safety by reason of weather, visibility, sea conditions, temporary port congestion, other temporary hazardous circumstances, or the condition of the vessel as defined under Title 33, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 160.111.

VESSELS IN SEVERE WEATHER AREAS:

1. Factors considered in determining whether a vessel poses excessive risk include, but are not limited to: vessel location, on scene weather, machinery/equipment status, dragging anchor, vessel load status (to determine draft/free surface area), cargo stowage (ready for sea), number of vessels alongside or scheduled alongside, estimated duration of cargo operation and availability of resources (tugs, pilots, available dock space, etc.).
2. Vessels at anchor shall terminate cargo loading/offloading operations and separate when sustained winds exceed 45 knots or an opposite rolling moment in excess of 10 degrees occurs between the vessels.
3. The master shall use all available means to detect dragging of the vessel's anchor. A proper anchor watch shall be maintained at all times in accordance with 33 CFR 164.19.
4. Whenever a vessel drags anchor during cargo operations, loading/offloading shall be terminated until more favorable conditions prevail.
5. Agents should monitor VHF channel 16 to facilitate rapid communication in the event their vessel is adversely impacted by severe weather.
6. The master shall ensure engineering plants remain in ready condition and machinery is not taken out of service for maintenance during severe weather. In addition, the anchor winch must also remain in a ready status.

VESSELS PLANNING TO ANCHOR IN UNALASKA:

1. The master must ensure vessel operations are consistent with City of Unalaska ordinances. Both anchors on the vessel shall have 10 useable shots of chain for the vessel to anchor.
2. A secondary anchor shall be available for immediate deployment.

NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR VESSELS DRAGGING ANCHOR AND COMING WITHIN 3 NAUTICAL MILES:

1. A deep-draft ocean going vessel (greater than or equal to 500 gross tons and subject to the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention)* dragging anchor during severe weather in the Aleutian or Pribilof Islands may constitute a hazardous condition. In these instances, the agent, master, operator, or person in charge shall notify the Coast Guard as soon as practicable in accordance with 33 CFR 160.215.

* The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea is an international maritime treaty which sets minimum safety standards in the construction, equipment and operation of merchant ships. The convention requires signatory flag states to ensure that ships flagged by them comply with at least these standards.

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2. A deep-draft vessel that intends to come within 3 nautical miles of the Aleutian or Pribilof Islands and anchor to avoid severe weather shall notify the Coast Guard as soon as practicable in accordance with 33 CFR 160.215:

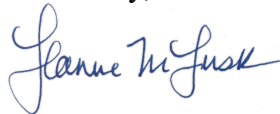
CONTACT INFORMATION:

<u>Coast Guard Unit</u>	<u>Office Number</u>	<u>After Hours Number</u>
Sector Anchorage	(907) 428-4189	(907) 428-4100
Marine Safety Detachment Dutch Harbor	(907) 581-3466	(907) 359-1575

Email: Sector.Anchorage@uscg.mil

These Procedures supersede all previous advisories for the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands. I invite your feedback and proposed revisions. As best practices evolve and lessons are learned, I anticipate and welcome changes to these Procedures.

Sincerely,



L. M. LUSK
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Commander, Sector Anchorage

Enclosure: National Weather Service Alaska Region Marine Zones

Copy: Commander, Seventeenth Coast Guard District (dp)
Supervisor, Marine Safety Detachment Dutch Harbor

