

serial number DR0051, certificated in any category.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent an uncommanded engine shutdown in a critical phase of flight due to leakage of air from a loose clamp on the anti-ice tubing joint, accomplish the following:

Inspection

(a) Within 45 days after the effective date of this AD, perform a detailed inspection of the anti-ice tubing in the engine nacelle at the joint between the anti-ice tubing adapter and duct, and also between the joint of the anti-ice shutoff valve and the same duct, to detect any air leakage at the joints, as specified in the Accomplishment Instructions of Dornier Service Bulletin SB-328J-71-107, Revision 1, dated July 4, 2001. If no leakage is detected, no further action is required by this AD.

Note 1: For the purposes of this AD, a detailed inspection is defined as: "An intensive visual examination of a specific structural area, system, installation, or assembly to detect damage, failure, or irregularity. Available lighting is normally supplemented with a direct source of good lighting at intensity deemed appropriate by the inspector. Inspection aids such as mirror, magnifying lenses, etc., may be used. Surface cleaning and elaborate access procedures may be required."

Modification

(b) If air leakage is found during the detailed inspection required by paragraph (a) of this AD, before further flight, modify the joint by doing the applicable actions specified in the Accomplishment Instructions of Dornier Service Bulletin SB-328J-71-107, Revision 1, dated July 4, 2001.

Alternative Methods of Compliance

(c) In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, is authorized to approve alternative methods of compliance for this AD.

Note 2: The subject of this AD is addressed in German airworthiness directive 2001-296, dated October 18, 2001.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on July 9, 2003.

Ali Bahrami,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane
Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.
[FR Doc. 03-17817 Filed 7-14-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 165

[CGD13-03-018]

RIN 1625-AA00

Security and Safety Zone; Protection of Large Passenger Vessels, Puget Sound, WA

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard proposes to establish regulations for the security and safety of large passenger vessels in the navigable waters of Puget Sound and adjacent waters, Washington. This proposed security and safety zone, when enforced by the Captain of the Port Puget Sound, would provide for the regulation of vessel traffic in the vicinity of large passenger vessels in the navigable waters of the United States.

DATES: Comments and related material must reach the Coast Guard on or before August 14, 2003.

ADDRESSES: You may mail comments and related material to Commanding Officer, Marine Safety Office Puget Sound, 1519 Alaskan Way South, Seattle, Washington 98134. Marine Safety Office Puget Sound maintains the public docket [CGD13-03-018] for this rulemaking. Comments and material received from the public, as well as documents indicated in this preamble as being available in the docket, will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection or copying at Marine Safety Office Puget Sound between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: LT J. Morgan, c/o Captain of the Port Puget Sound, 1519 Alaskan Way South, Seattle, WA 98134, (206) 217-6232. For specific information concerning enforcement of this rule, call Marine Safety Office Puget Sound at (206) 217-6200 or (800) 688-6664.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Request for Comments

We encourage you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting comments and related material. If you do so, please include your name and address, identify the docket number for this rulemaking (CGD13-03-018), indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and give the reason for each comment. Please submit all comments and related material in an unbound

format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying. If you would like to know that your submission reached us, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope. We will consider all comments and material received during the comment period. We may change this proposed rule in view of them.

Public Meeting

We do not now plan to hold a public meeting. But you may submit a request for a meeting by writing to Marine Safety Office Puget Sound at the address under **ADDRESSES** explaining why one would be beneficial. If we determine that one would aid this rulemaking, we will hold one at a time and place announced by a separate notice in the **Federal Register**.

Background and Purpose

Hostile entities continue to operate with the intent to harm U.S. National Security. The President has continued the national emergencies he declared following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks (67 FR 58317, Sept. 13, 2002) (continuing national emergency with respect to terrorist attacks)), and (67 FR 59447, Sept. 20, 2002) (continuing national emergency with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit or support terrorism). The President also has found pursuant to law, including the Act of June 15, 1917, as amended August 9, 1950, by the Magnuson Act (50 U.S.C. 191 *et seq.*), that the security of the United States is and continues to be endangered following the attacks (E.O. 13,273, 67 FR 56215, Sept. 3, 2002) (security endangered by disturbances in international relations of U.S. and such disturbances continue to endanger such relations).

The ongoing hostilities in Afghanistan and Iraq have made it prudent for U.S. ports and waterways to be on a higher state of alert because the al Qaeda organization and other similar organizations have declared an ongoing intention to conduct armed attacks on U.S. interests worldwide. On February 8, 2003, the Captain of the Port Puget Sound issued a temporary final rule (TFR) (68 FR 15375, March 31, 2003; CGD13-03-003, 33 CFR 165.T13-002) establishing a large passenger vessel security and safety zone, which expires on August 8, 2003. The Coast Guard, through this action, intends to continue to assist large passenger vessels by establishing a permanent security and safety zone that when enforced by the Captain of the Port would exclude persons and vessels from the immediate vicinity of all large passenger vessels.

Entry into this zone will be prohibited unless authorized by the Captain of the Port or his designee. The Captain of the Port may be assisted by other federal, state, or local agencies.

Discussion of Proposed Rule

This proposed rule, for security and safety concerns, would control vessel movement in a regulated area surrounding large passenger vessels. As a result of the request for comments in our TFR creating § 165.T13-002, the Coast Guard received several comments regarding the scope and impact of the TFR. We have considered these comments in drafting this proposed rule. The following is a summary of the comments the Coast Guard received.

One letter voiced concerns that the security and safety zone established in the TFR denied the use of the commercial and recreational facilities at Bell Harbor Marina, Shilshole Bay Marina, Fisherman's Terminal and the Maritime Industrial Center when the security and safety zone was enforced. In both the TFR and this proposed rule, the Coast Guard is attempting to balance adequate security around large passenger vessels against the impacts these security and safety zones have on waterway users. In response to this comment, the Coast Guard has made two changes to this proposed rule. First, the definition of Large Passenger Vessel in paragraph (b)(2) of this proposed rule was modified and now excludes small passenger vessels (vessels inspected and certificated under 46 CFR Subchapter T). In other words, the number of vessels with security and safety zones around them will decrease. Second, when a large passenger vessel is moored, the exclusionary zone in this proposed rule will shrink from 100 yards to 25 yards.

The Coast Guard received one comment regarding the "rules of the road." The commenter stated that they believed that the TFR deviated from specific navigation rules, which apply to the "stand-on" vessel. The Coast Guard disagrees. Like the TFR, this proposed rule specifically states that the Navigation Rules shall apply at all times within a large passenger vessel security and safety zone. The duties of a stand-on vessel are in part to keep her course and speed. Both the TFR and this proposed rule require vessels operating within the large passenger security and safety zone to operate at the minimum speed necessary to maintain a safe course. Hence, if a vessel is within the large passenger security and safety zone and is a stand-on vessel, the requirements of the navigation rules and this proposed rule are the same—to

maintain course and speed unless action to avoid a collision is necessary.

We also received comments in reference to the non-compliance or inability for some vessels without VHF radios to communicate as required with the large passenger vessel master and/or official patrol. The commenters also noted that required communication with large passenger vessels entering and exiting marinas rarely occurred and caused a distraction for the large passenger vessels during critical evolutions. Commenters also stated the required radio communications were unnecessary and would clutter an important working channel. A vessel is only required to contact the large passenger vessel master if it desires to operate within 100 yards of a large passenger vessel that is underway or at anchor. Vessels desiring to operate within 100 yards of a large passenger vessel that is underway or at anchor should first contact the on-scene official patrol. Once moored the exclusionary zone around large passenger vessels will shrink from 100 yards to 25 yards.

Many comments discuss the need for greater public education and awareness efforts. The Coast Guard intends to continue its practice of notifying the public by a variety of means, including Broadcast Notice to Mariners, Local Notice to Mariners, posting on Marine Safety Office Puget Sound's Web site, press releases, and a telephone line manned 24 hours a day to answer questions.

This proposed rule would be enforced from time to time by the Captain of the Port Puget Sound for such time as he deems necessary to prevent damage or injury to any vessel or waterfront facility, to safeguard ports, harbors, territories, or waters of the United States or to secure the observance of the rights and obligations of the United States. The Captain of the Port Puget Sound will cause notice of the activation of this security and safety zone to be made by all appropriate means to effect the widest publicity among the affected segments of the public, including Marine Safety Office Puget Sound's Internet web page located at <http://www.uscg.mil/d13/units/msopuget>. In addition, Marine Safety Office Puget Sound maintains a telephone line that is manned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The public can contact Marine Safety Office Puget Sound at (206) 217-6200 or (800) 688-6664 to obtain information concerning enforcement of this rule. For the purpose of this regulation, a large passenger vessel means (i) any cruise ship over 100 feet in length carrying passengers for hire, and (ii) any auto ferries and passenger ferries over 100

feet in length carrying passengers for hire such as the Washington State Ferries, M/V COHO and Alaskan Marine Highway Ferries. Large Passenger Vessel does not include vessels inspected and certificated under 46 CFR Subchapter T such as excursion vessels, sight seeing vessels, dinner cruise vessels, and whale watching vessels.

All vessels within 500 yards of a large passenger vessel shall operate at the minimum speed necessary to maintain a safe course, and shall proceed as directed by the official patrol. No vessel, except a public vessel as defined in paragraph (b)(7), is allowed within 100 yards of a large passenger vessel that is underway or at anchor, unless authorized by the official patrol or large passenger vessel master. No vessel or person is allowed within 25 yards of a large passenger vessel that is moored. Vessels requesting to pass within 100 yards of a large passenger vessel that is underway or at anchor must contact the official patrol on VHF-FM channel 16 or 13. The on-scene official patrol or large passenger vessel master may permit vessels that can only operate safely in a navigable channel to pass within 100 yards of a large passenger vessel that is underway or at anchor in order to ensure a safe passage in accordance with the Navigation Rules. In addition, measures or directions issued by Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound pursuant to 33 CFR Part 161 shall take precedence over the regulations in this proposed rule. Similarly, vessels at anchor may be permitted to remain at anchor within 100 yards of passing large passenger vessel. Public vessels for the purpose of this Rule are vessels owned, chartered, or operated by the United States, or by a State or political subdivision thereof.

Regulatory Evaluation

This proposed rule is not a "significant regulatory action" under section 3(f) of Executive Order 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review, and does not require an assessment of potential costs and benefits under section 6(a)(3) of that Order. The Office of Management and Budget has not reviewed it under that Order. It is not "significant" under the regulatory policies and procedures of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

We expect the economic impact of this proposed rule to be so minimal that a full Regulatory Evaluation under the regulatory policies and procedures of DHS is unnecessary.

Although this proposed rule would restrict access to the regulated area, the effect of this proposed rule will not be

significant because: (i) Individual large passenger vessel security and safety zones are limited in size; (ii) the official on-scene patrol or large passenger vessel master may authorize access to the large passenger vessel security and safety zone; (iii) the large passenger vessel security and safety zone for any given transiting large passenger vessel will effect a given geographical location for a limited time; (iv) the Coast Guard will make notifications via maritime advisories so mariners can adjust their plans accordingly; (v) the reduction in the number and types of vessels covered by this proposed rule as a result of comments received in response to the Large Passenger Vessel Security Zone TFR; and (vi) the size of the exclusionary zone was reduced from 100 yards to 25 yards for large passenger vessels that are moored.

Small Entities

Under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601–612), we have considered whether this proposed rule would have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. The term “small entities” comprises small businesses, not-for-profit organizations that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000.

The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this proposed rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

This proposed rule would affect the following entities, some of which may be small entities: The owners or operators of vessels intending to operate near or anchor in the vicinity of large passenger vessels in the navigable waters of the United States.

This proposed rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities for the following reasons: (i) Individual large passenger vessel security and safety zones are limited in size; (ii) the official on-scene patrol or large passenger vessel master may authorize access to the large passenger vessel security and safety zone; (iii) the large passenger vessel security and safety zone for any given transiting large passenger vessel will effect a given geographical location for a limited time; and (iv) the Coast Guard will make notifications via maritime advisories so mariners can adjust their plans accordingly.

If you think that your business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction qualifies as a small entity

and that this rule would have a significant economic impact on it, please submit a comment (*see ADDRESSES*) explaining why you think it qualifies and how and to what degree this rule would economically affect it.

Assistance for Small Entities

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–121), we want to assist small entities in understanding this proposed rule so that they can better evaluate its effects on them and participate in the rulemaking. If the rule would affect your small business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions concerning its provisions or options for compliance, please contact one of the points of contact listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Small businesses may send comments on the actions of Federal employees who enforce, or otherwise determine compliance with, Federal regulations to the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman and the Regional Small Business Regulatory Fairness Boards. The Ombudsman evaluates these actions annually and rates each agency's responsiveness to small business. If you wish to comment on actions by employees of the Coast Guard, call 1–888–REG–FAIR (1–888–734–3247).

Collection of Information

This proposed rule would call for no new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520).

Federalism

A rule has implications for federalism under Executive Order 13132, Federalism, if it has a substantial direct effect on State or local governments and would either preempt State law or impose a substantial direct cost of compliance on them. We have analyzed this proposed rule under that Order and have determined that it does not have implications for federalism.

Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531–1538) requires Federal agencies to assess the effects of their discretionary regulatory actions. In particular, the Act addresses actions that may result in the expenditure by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector of \$100,000,000 or more in any one year. Though this proposed rule would not result in such an expenditure, we do discuss the effects of this rule elsewhere in this preamble.

Taking of Private Property

This proposed rule would not effect a taking of private property or otherwise have taking implications under Executive Order 12630, Governmental Actions and Interference with Constitutionally Protected Property Rights.

Civil Justice Reform

This proposed rule meets applicable standards in sections 3(a) and 3(b)(2) of Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform, to minimize litigation, eliminate ambiguity, and reduce burden.

Protection of Children

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Executive Order 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks. This rule is not an economically significant rule and would not create an environmental risk to health or risk to safety that might disproportionately affect children.

Indian Tribal Governments

The Coast Guard recognizes the rights of Native American Tribes under the Stevens Treaties. Moreover, the Coast Guard is committed to working with Tribal Governments to implement local policies to mitigate tribal concerns. Given the flexibility of this proposed rule to accommodate the special needs of mariners in the vicinity of large passenger vessels and the Coast Guard's commitment to working with the Tribes, we have determined that passenger vessel security and fishing rights protection need not be incompatible and therefore have determined that this proposed rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, because it does not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes. Nevertheless, Indian Tribes that have questions concerning the provisions of this proposed rule or options for compliance are encouraged to contact the point of contact listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Energy Effects

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Executive Order 13211, Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use. We have determined that it is not a “significant

energy action” under that order because it is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866 and is not likely to have a significant adverse effect on the supply, distribution, or use of energy. The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs has not designated it as a significant energy action. Therefore, it does not require a Statement of Energy Effects under Executive Order 13211.

Environment

The Coast Guard’s preliminary review indicates this proposed rule is categorically excluded from further environmental documentation under figure 2–1, paragraph 34(g) of Commandant Instruction M16475.1D. The environmental analysis and Categorical Exclusion Determination will be prepared and be available in the docket for inspection and copying where indicated under **ADDRESSES**. All standard environmental measures remain in effect.

List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 165

Harbors, Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and record keeping requirements, Security measures, Waterways.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard proposes to amend 33 CFR Part 165 as follows:

PART 165—REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS AREAS

1. The authority citation for Part 165 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1226, 1231; 46 U.S.C. Chapter 701; 50 U.S.C. 191, 195; 33 CFR 1.05–1(g), 6.04–1, 6.04–6, and 160.5; Pub. L. 107–295, 116 Stat. 2064; Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 0170.1.

2. Add § 165.1317 to read as follows:

§ 165.1317 Security and Safety Zone; Large Passenger Vessel Protection, Puget Sound and adjacent waters, Washington

(a) *Notice of enforcement or suspension of enforcement.* The large passenger vessel security and safety zone established by this section will be enforced only upon notice by the Captain of the Port Puget Sound. Captain of the Port Puget Sound will cause notice of the enforcement of the large passenger vessel security and safety zone to be made by all appropriate means to effect the widest publicity among the affected segments of the public including publication in the **Federal Register** as practicable, in accordance with 33 CFR 165.7(a). Such means of notification may also include but are not limited to, Broadcast Notice to Mariners or Local Notice to Mariners.

The Captain of the Port Puget Sound will issue a Broadcast Notice to Mariners and Local Notice to Mariners notifying the public when enforcement of the large passenger vessel security and safety zone is suspended.

(b) *Definitions.* The following definitions apply to this section:

(1) *Federal Law Enforcement Officer* means any employee or agent of the United States government who has the authority to carry firearms and make warrantless arrests and whose duties involve the enforcement of criminal laws of the United States.

(2) *Large Passenger Vessel* means any cruise ship over 100 feet in length carrying passengers for hire, and any auto ferries and passenger ferries over 100 feet in length carrying passengers for hire such as the Washington State Ferries, M/V COHO and Alaskan Marine Highway Ferries. Large Passenger Vessel does not include vessels inspected and certificated under 46 CFR chapter I, subchapter T such as excursion vessels, sight seeing vessels, dinner cruise vessels, and whale watching vessels.

(3) *Large Passenger Vessel Security and Safety Zone* is a regulated area of water established by this section, surrounding large passenger vessels for a 500-yard radius to provide for the security and safety of these vessels.

(4) *Navigation Rules* means the Navigation Rules, International-Inland.

(5) *Navigable waters of the United States* means those waters defined as such in 33 CFR Part 2.

(6) *Official Patrol* means those persons designated by the Captain of the Port to monitor a large passenger vessel security and safety zone, permit entry into the zone, give legally enforceable orders to persons or vessels within the zone and take other actions authorized by the Captain of the Port. Persons authorized in paragraph (l) of this section to enforce this section are designated as the Official Patrol.

(7) *Public vessel* means vessels owned, chartered, or operated by the United States, or by a State or political subdivision thereof.

(8) *Washington Law Enforcement Officer* means any General Authority Washington Peace Officer, Limited Authority Washington Peace Officer, or Specially Commissioned Washington Peace Officer as defined in Revised Code of Washington section 10.93.020.

(c) *Security and safety zone.* There is established a large passenger vessel security and safety zone extending for a 500-yard radius around all large passenger vessels located in the navigable waters of the United States in Puget Sound, WA, east of 123°30' West Longitude. [Datum: NAD 1983]

(d) *Compliance.* The large passenger vessel security and safety zone established by this section remains in effect around large passenger vessels at all times, whether the large passenger vessel is underway, anchored, or moored. Upon notice of enforcement by the Captain of the Port Puget Sound, the Coast Guard will enforce the large passenger vessel security and safety zone in accordance with rules set out in this section. Upon notice of suspension of enforcement by the Captain of the Port Puget Sound, all persons and vessels are authorized to enter, transit, and exit the large passenger vessel security and safety zone, consistent with the Navigation Rules.

(e) *Navigation Rules.* The Navigation Rules shall apply at all times within a large passenger vessel security and safety zone.

(f) *Restrictions based on distance from large passenger vessel.* When within a large passenger vessel security and safety zone all vessels must operate at the minimum speed necessary to maintain a safe course and must proceed as directed by the on-scene official patrol or large passenger vessel master. No vessel or person is allowed within 100 yards of a large passenger vessel that is underway or at anchor, unless authorized by the on-scene official patrol or large passenger vessel master. No vessel or person is allowed within 25 yards of a large passenger vessel that is moored.

(g) *Requesting authorization to operate within 100 yards of large passenger vessel.* To request authorization to operate within 100 yards of a large passenger vessel that is underway or at anchor, contact the on-scene official patrol or large passenger vessel master on VHF–FM channel 16 or 13.

(h) *Maneuver-restricted vessels.* When conditions permit, the on-scene official patrol or large passenger vessel master should:

(1) Permit vessels constrained by their navigational draft or restricted in their ability to maneuver to pass within 100 yards of a large passenger vessel in order to ensure a safe passage in accordance with the Navigation Rules; and

(2) Permit vessels that must transit via a navigable channel or waterway to pass within 100 yards of an anchored large passenger vessel or within 25 yards of a moored large passenger vessel with minimal delay consistent with security.

(i) *Stationary vessels.* When a large passenger vessel approaches within 100 yards of any vessel that is moored or anchored, the stationary vessel must stay moored or anchored while it

remains within the large passenger vessel's security and safety zone unless it is either ordered by, or given permission by the Captain of the Port Puget Sound, his designated representative or the on-scene official patrol to do otherwise.

(j) *Exemption.* Public vessels as defined in paragraph (b) of this section are exempt from complying with paragraphs (c), (d), (f), (g), (h), and (i), of this section.

(k) *Exception.* 33 CFR part 161 contains Vessel Traffic Service regulations. Measures or directions issued by Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound pursuant to 33 CFR part 161 will take precedence over the regulations in this section.

(l) *Enforcement.* Any Coast Guard commissioned, warrant or petty officer may enforce the rules in this section. In the navigable waters of the United States to which this section applies, when immediate action is required and representatives of the Coast Guard are not present or not present in sufficient force to provide effective enforcement of this section in the vicinity of a large passenger vessel, any Federal Law Enforcement Officer or Washington Law Enforcement Officer may enforce the rules contained in this section pursuant to 33 CFR 6.04–11. In addition, the Captain of the Port may be assisted by other federal, state or local agencies in enforcing this section.

(m) *Waiver.* The Captain of the Port Puget Sound may waive any of the requirements of this section for any vessel or class of vessels upon finding that a vessel or class of vessels, operational conditions or other circumstances are such that application of this section is unnecessary or impractical for the purpose of port security, safety or environmental safety.

Dated: June 20, 2003.

Danny Ellis,

Captain, U.S. Coast Guard, Captain of the Port, Puget Sound.

[FR Doc. 03–17723 Filed 7–14–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–15–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

49 CFR Part 192

[Docket No. RSPA–98–4470]

Pipeline Safety: Meeting of the Technical Pipeline Safety Standards Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Office of Pipeline Safety, Research and Special Programs Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Meeting of Gas Technical Advisory Committee.

SUMMARY: The Research and Special Programs Administration's (RSPA) Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) will convene a meeting of the Technical Pipeline Safety Standards Committee (TPSSC) to discuss and vote on the cost-benefit analysis for the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, "Pipeline Integrity Management for Gas Transmission Pipelines in High Consequence Areas" (68 FR 4278) and discuss and vote on recommended guidance on how to clarify, in the final rule, the process of identifying certain sites as high consequence areas. RSPA/OPS will brief the TPSSC on the Department of Transportation's conceptual framework for a five-year research and development program to ensure the integrity of pipeline facilities as required by Section 12 of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002. RSPA/OPS staff will also brief the Committee and request their advice on a possible rulemaking to update the gas pipeline operator personnel qualification regulation.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Thursday, July 31, 2003, from 10 a.m. to 12 Noon. Advisory Committee members will participate via telephone conference call.

ADDRESSES: Members of the public may attend the meeting in room 4236 at the U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC.

An opportunity will be provided for the public to make short statements on the topics under discussion. Anyone wishing to make an oral statement should notify Jean Milam, (202) 493–0967, not later than July 18, 2003, on the topic of the statement and the length of the presentation. The presiding officer at the meeting may deny any request to present an oral statement and may limit the time of any presentation.

You may submit written comments by mail or deliver to the Dockets Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation

(DOT), Room PL–401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590–0001. It is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. You also may submit written comments to the docket electronically. To do so, log onto the following Internet Web address: <http://dms.dot.gov>. Click on "Help & Information" for instructions on how to file a document electronically. All written comments should reference docket number RSPA–98–4470. Anyone who would like confirmation of mailed comments must include a self-addressed stamped postcard.

You may search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (Volume 65, Number 70; pages 19477–78) or you may visit <http://dms.dot.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Cheryl Whetsel, OPS, (202) 366–4431 or Richard Huriaux, OPS, (202) 366–4565, regarding the subject matter of this document.

For information on facilities or services for individuals with disabilities or to request special assistance at the meeting, contact Jean Milam at (202) 493–0967.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The agenda for this meeting of the TPSSC will include:

1. A vote on the gas integrity management rule cost-benefit analysis.
2. A discussion and vote on recommended guidance on how to clarify, in the final rule, the process of identifying certain sites as high consequence areas.
3. A briefing and request for Committee input on the conceptual framework of our five-year research and development plan.
4. A briefing and request for advice on a possible rule change to the gas pipeline operator qualification regulation.
5. Further discussion and vote on a notice of proposed rulemaking on liquefied natural gas facilities published May 1, 2003 (68 FR 23272).

The TPSSC is a statutorily mandated advisory committee that advises RSPA/OPS on proposed safety standards for gas pipelines. The advisory committee is constituted in accordance with section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92–463, 5 U.S.C. App. 1). The committee consists of 15 members—five each representing