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September 5, 2012

TO: All State Boating Law Administrators

FROM: Chief, Boating Safety Division

SUBJ: Guidance relating to Changes to Standard Numbering System, Vessel Identification System, and Boating Accident Report Database Final Rule

The U. S. Coast Guard's Boating Safety Division (CG-BSX-2) has received several inquiries about the Final Rule published on March 28, 2012 entitled "Changes to Standard Numbering System, Vessel Identification System, and Boating Accident Report Database," docket number USCG-2003-14963. Enclosed for your easy reference is a copy of the final rule, a guide to HIN formats, and a list of Coast Guard state liaisons should you have any further questions.

Among the many provisions in this Final Rule is the addition of 33 CFR 174.16 which states:

"§ 174.16 Verification of hull identification numbers (HINs).

(a) As used in this section, "action" means an action by an issuing authority listed in 33 CFR part 173, Appendix A, to issue, renew, or update the ownership information for a certificate of number under this part but does not include the issuance of a temporary certificate under 33 CFR 174.21.

(b) As of January 1, 2017, before taking any action relating to a vessel imported or manufactured on or after November 1, 1972, the issuing authority must determine whether the vessel has a primary HIN meeting the requirements of 33 CFR part 181, subpart C.

(c) If, pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section, the issuing authority determines that the vessel does not have a primary HIN meeting the requirements of 33 CFR part 181, subpart C, then before taking any action the issuing authority must—

- (1) Assign such a primary HIN to the vessel; and
- (2) Verify that the owner of the vessel has permanently affixed the assigned primary HIN to the vessel in compliance with 33 CFR part 181, subpart C."

This paragraph means that as of **January 1, 2017** (33 CFR 174.16(b)), the states may not issue, renew or update a certificate of number without first validating that the vessel has a properly formatted hull identification number (HIN).

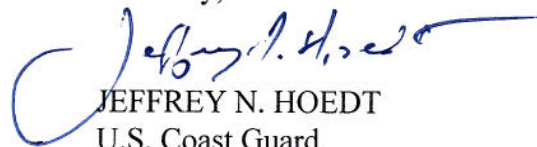
If the vessel does not have a primary HIN meeting the requirements of 33 CFR part 181, subpart C:

- And an individual built or imported the vessel for personal use after November 1, 1972, the issuing authority within the state must issue a properly formatted HIN specified in 33 CFR 181.25 and the enclosed guide.
- And was manufactured for sale after November 1, 1972 and the manufacturer is still in business, the issuing authority must contact Mr. Phil Cappel, Chief, Product Assurance Branch (CG-BSX-23) at 202-372-1076 or philip.j.cappel@uscg.mil for further guidance. These situations will be handled on a case by case basis dependent on the specific facts of each case.
- And was manufactured for sale after November 1, 1972 and the manufacturer is no longer in business, the issuing authority may either issue a properly formatted HIN specified in 33 CFR 181.25 and the enclosed guide, or contact Mr. Phil Cappel, Chief, Product Assurance Branch (CG-BSX-23) at 202-372-1076 or philip.j.cappel@uscg.mil for further guidance.
- And was manufactured prior to November 1, 1972, the issuing authority within the state may issue a properly formatted HIN specified in 33 CFR 181.25 and the enclosed guide with the last four characters denoting the month and year issued.

If you have any additional questions, your state liaison listed below is my point of contact.

State Liaison	Phone/Email	State
Mike Baron	202-372-1063; michael.j.baron@uscg.mil	AL, CA, CO, ID, ME, MD, MA, NV, NM, OH, OR, SD, UT, PR, VI
Vann Burgess	202-372-1071; william.v.burgess@uscg.mil	AR, IL, IA, KY, MS, NE, NH, NC, OK, RI, TX, VT, WI, WY
Joe Carro	202-372-1068; joseph.j.carro@uscg.mil	AK, DC, HI, KS, MI, MO, NJ, PA, SC, WA, AS, GU, CNMI
Wayne Stacey	202-372-1067; wayne.a.stacey@uscg.mil	AZ, CT, DE, FL, GA, IN, LA, MN, MT, NY, ND, TN, VA, WV

Sincerely,



JEFFREY N. HOEDT
U.S. Coast Guard
Chief, Boating Safety Division

- Encl: (1) USCG-2003-14963 "Changes to Standard Numbering System, Vessel Identification System, and Boating Accident Report Database"
(2) Guide to HIN Formats