

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION****Coast Guard****[USCG-1999-5451]****Waiver Application; Tank Vessel;  
Reduction of Gross Tonnage****AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DOT.**ACTION:** Notice; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Coast Guard is requesting comments on the Reinauer Transportation Companies' waiver application to reduce the gross tonnage of the tank barge R.T.C. 90, Official Number 625082. Approval of this waiver application will change the vessel's double hull compliance date prescribed by 46 U.S.C. 3703a. The company has met all the requirements for issuance of a waiver and this document provides the required public notice and sixty-day comment period concerning the application. The Coast Guard will consider all comments received during the comment period before taking final action on the Reinauer Transportation Companies application.

**DATES:** Comments and related material must reach the Docket Management Facility on or before July 2, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit your comments and related material by only one of the following methods:

(1) By mail to the Docket Management Facility, (USCG-1999-5451), U.S. Department of Transportation, room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001.

(2) By hand to room PL-401 on the Plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is 202-366-9329.

(3) By fax to Docket Management Facility at 202-493-2251.

(4) Electronically through the Web Site for the Docket Management System at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

The Docket Management Facility maintains the public docket for this notice. Comments and materials referred to in this notice will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection or copying at room PL-401 on the Plaza level of the Nassif Building at the same address between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. You may also find this docket on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For questions on this notice, call Mr. Bob Gauvin, Project Manager, Office of

Operating and Environmental Standards, Commandant (G-MSO-2), Coast Guard, telephone 202-267-1053. For questions on viewing, or submitting material to the docket, call Dorothy Walker, Chief, Dockets, Department of Transportation, telephone 202-366-9329.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****Request for Comments**

The Coast Guard encourages interested persons to submit written data, views, or arguments concerning the waiver application. Please include your name and address, identify the docket number (USCG-1999-5451), indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and give the reason for each comment. You may submit your comments and material by mail, hand, fax, or electronic means to the Docket Management Facility at the address under **ADDRESSES**; but please do not submit the same comment or material by more than one means. Submitted materials should be in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. If you submit them by mail and would like to know they were received, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope. We will consider all comments and material received during the comment period.

We do not now plan to hold a public meeting. But, you may request one by submitting a request to the Docket Management Facility at the address under **ADDRESSES** explaining why one would be beneficial. If we determine that one would be helpful, we will hold one at a time and place announced by a later notice in the **Federal Register**.

**Background**

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90) requires most single hull tank vessels carrying oil in bulk as cargo or cargo residue to either convert to double hull configuration or to stop operating in U.S. waters by the dates specified in the statute. These dates, in 46 U.S.C. 3703a, are based on the vessel's age, gross tonnage, and hull configuration. In general, the latest operational date for single hull tank vessels is January 1, 2010, and for tank vessels with double sides or double bottoms is January 1, 2015.

Before July 1, 1997, a tank vessel owner could extend a single hull tank vessel's operational life by converting cargo tanks into voids or segregated ballast tanks and reducing its gross tonnage. If the reduction in gross tonnage placed the vessel under a different subsection of 3703a, the vessel

then had a later date for double hull compliance.

In 1997, Pub. L. 105-85 added a new subsection (e) to 46 U.S.C. 3703a mandating that after July 1, 1997, a tank vessel's gross tonnage could not be altered for the purpose of determining its double hull compliance date without a waiver from the Secretary of Transportation. The new provision required that all waiver applications be received by January 1, 1998. We received requests from six U.S. and one foreign tank vessel owners for conversions of fourteen tankships, two integrated tug-barge units (ITBs), and fifteen barges. On January 6, 1998, the Secretary of Transportation delegated his authority to the Commandant to act on these waiver requests.

In February 1998, we contracted a study entitled *An Investigation Into the Re-Admeasurement of Single Hull Tankships and Barges By Means of Protectively Located Segregated Ballast Tanks*. The study determined which conversions of cargo tanks into protectively-located segregated ballast tanks (PL/SBT) would result in a significant reduction in oil outflow when specific parameters are met. The study, looking at three sizes of tankships and tank barges, evaluated the risk of oil discharge and used the probabilistic oil outflow applications we had previously established under the OPA 90 requirements of § 3703a to evaluate new tank vessel hull designs. The study found that in order for tank vessels to significantly reduce the risk of oil discharge, enough cargo tanks must be converted to PL/SBT to meet an equivalent oil spill (EOS) number of at least 15% less than the vessel's existing outflow signature.

We provided a copy of the study and the conversion parameters to each waiver applicant so they could submit their plans for modifications and complete the supporting materials for their waiver applications. A copy of the Coast Guard study is available for review in the public docket at the address under **ADDRESSES**.

**Requirements for issuance of a waiver**

As required by § 3703a, a completed waiver application package consists of—

- An application received by January 1, 1998;
- Reliable evidence that the tank vessel had not undergone, nor contracted to undergo, alterations that reduce the gross tonnage of the vessel before July 1, 1997; and
- Supplementary materials that demonstrate the proposed alterations to the tank vessel will result in a

significant reduction in the risk of a discharge of oil.

We must then determine if both—

- The owner of the tank vessel has entered into a binding agreement to alter the tank vessel in a shipyard in the United States to reduce the gross tonnage of the tank vessel by converting a portion of the cargo tanks of the vessel into PL/SBT; and

- The conversion will result in a significant reduction in the risk of a discharge of oil.

Section 3703a requires that we must then provide public notice and a sixty-day comment period on each application before we can issue a waiver.

Alterations under this waiver must be completed by the later of either July 1, 1999, or the date of the vessel's next special hull survey after November 18, 1997.

#### Application for the R.T.C. 90

Our records show that the Reinauer Transportation Companies (RTC) tank vessel R.T.C. 90, Official Number 625082, is a U.S. certificated single hull oil tank barge which was built in 1980. The barge was originally admeasured with a gross tonnage of 5,455. According to 46 U.S.C. 3703a(c)(3), the barge's double hull compliance date is January 1, 2005.

With an approved waiver, RTC will reduce its vessel's gross tonnage to less than 5,000 gross tons (GT). Its new double hull compliance date under § 3703a(e) would be January 1, 2008.

The application from RTC meets the requirements for a waiver under § 3703a(e) by having provided the following:

- Waiver application for the tank vessel R.T.C. 90, received on December 19, 1997;
- "Statement of Attestation" that the R.T.C. 90's gross tonnage was not reduced by a contract or shipyard alteration on or before July 1, 1997;
- Copy of its repair contract with Caddell Drydock and Repair Company Inc, of Staten Island, New York, to complete the modifications to the R.T.C. 90 by installing a new bulkhead at frame 6 and converting the spaces forward of this bulkhead to PL/SBT for the vessel's reduction of tonnage; and
- Appropriate supplementary materials.

Based on the supplementary materials provided by RTC for the tank vessel R.T.C. 90, we have determined the following:

- RTC can complete the tank barge modifications before September 2000, the date of the vessel's next classification society special survey.

- RTC's probabilistic oil outflow signature of the proposed vessel modifications will reduce the EOS by 21%.

RTC's complete waiver application has been placed in the docket for public review at the address under **ADDRESSES**. We will consider all comments received during the comment period before taking final action on the RTC waiver application for the modification and reduction of tonnage to the tank vessel R.T.C. 90.

Dated: April 25, 1999.

**R.G. North,**

*Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety and Environmental Protection.*

[FR Doc. 99-10952 Filed 4-30-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-15-P

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### Notice of Availability of a Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Potomac Consolidated Terminal Radar Approach Control (TRACON) Facility

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of a Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Potomac Consolidated TRACON.

**SUMMARY:** The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has released a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for construction of a new Terminal Radar Approach Control (TRACON) facility in the Baltimore-Washington area. The proposed action is to consolidate four stand-alone TRACONs located at Baltimore-Washington International Airport, Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, and Washington Dulles International Airport; and the FAA operated TRACON located at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland. The new Potomac Consolidated TRACON (PCT) would be located at a site in Northern Virginia. The preferred site is at the former Vint Hill Farms Station near Warrenton, VA.

**DATES:** Written comments on the FEIS will be accepted until June 1, 1999. Written comments may be sent to: FAA Potomac TRACON Project, c/o Mr. Fred Bankert, PRC Inc., 12005 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, VA 20191-3423.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Joseph Champley, Project Support Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, (800) 762-9531, Email:joe.champley@faa.gov.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** A TRACON facility provides radar air traffic control services to aircraft operating on Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) and Visual Flight Rules (VFR) procedures generally beyond 5 miles and within 50 miles of the host airport at altitudes from the surface to approximately 17,000 feet. These distances and altitudes may vary depending on local conditions and infrastructural constraints such as adequate radar and radio frequency coverage. The primary function of the TRACON is to provide a variety of air traffic control services to arrival, departure, and transient aircraft within its assigned airspace. These services include aircraft separation, in flight traffic advisories and navigational assistance. The four existing TRACON facilities provide terminal radar air traffic control services to the four major airports and a number of small reliever airports located within the Baltimore-Washington area.

In accordance with regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, a range of alternatives is considered in the FEIS including replacement or refurbishment of three of the four existing TRACONs, partial consolidation, No Action and full consolidation. The full consolidation alternative would not cause significant environmental impact in any of the 23 impact categories assessed.

Since there was minimal comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement during the 45-day comment period, the entire document has not been republished. Copies of the comments and responses are available for review at major libraries in the study area. A summary of the FEIS can be viewed on the Internet at <http://www.faa.gov/ats/potomac>.

Dated: April 19, 1999 in Washington, DC.

**John Mayrhofer,**

*Director, TRACON Development Program.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Maritime Administration

#### Reports, Forms and Recordkeeping Requirements; Agency Information Collection Activity Under OMB Review

**AGENCY:** Maritime Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44