



Press Release

Date: August 25, 2015
Contact: Lt. Ben Bauman
(907) 835-7209

COAST GUARD TO CONDUCT COMMERCIAL FISHING VESSEL EXAMS IN CORDOVA

VALDEZ, Alaska – Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Valdez will be sending a team of commercial fishing vessel examiners to Cordova September 17-21, 2015.

This will be the third and final visit made by MSU Valdez to conduct exams for this year. The Coast Guard encourages mariners to schedule their free commercial fishing vessel safety exams to improve preparedness and ensure they are in compliance with current regulations.

"Having an exam completed ensures vessels meet the minimum required standards of safety, and that the appropriate lifesaving, firefighting, navigation and signaling gear are aboard prior to operation of the vessel," said Petty Officer Billy Rogers, MSU Valdez commercial fishing vessel examiner. "Beginning October 15th, 2015 Commercial Fishing Vessels operating beyond three nautical miles from the territorial sea baseline will be required to have a current Commercial Fishing Vessel Exam Decal."

A successful exam will earn the vessel a Coast Guard commercial fishing vessel safety decal. Some vessels, including those used to pursue halibut individual fishing quotas, are required by the National Marine Fisheries Service to have a valid decal prior to carrying their mandatory NMFS observer aboard.

"One of the more common discrepancies we find during these exams is when a vessel over 5 net tons has only state registration when they are actually required to have a Certificate of Documentation," said Rogers.

"Mariners can visit the National Vessel Documentation Center website to help determine their Net Tonnage and seek additional guidance on this issue."

Examinations in Cordova are conducted on a limited basis, so vessel owners should be prepared for their scheduled exam by reviewing applicable requirements and purchasing the necessary equipment for their vessel in advance. Fishermen are encouraged to visit www.fishsafe.info and click the link to the checklist generator. This application accepts input on the fishing vessel, such as length, persons aboard, where it operates, etc., and generates a list of requirements that apply to that specific fishing vessel. This allows owners to know exactly what Coast Guard dockside examiners will look at before their official examination.

Mariners wishing to complete their annual exam in Cordova should contact MSU Valdez examiners before September 15, 2015 either via email (pwsfish@gmail.com) or telephone (907-255-8724). Information required to schedule an exam includes preferred date and time, slip number, type of vessel (i.e., bow picker, seiner, etc.), size, name, color of vessel, and owner contact information.

Please feel free to contact Petty Officer Adam Rodd at pwsfish@gmail.com or (907) 835-7226 or cell (907) 255-8724 for additional information on the Coast Guard commercial fishing vessel safety program in Valdez and Cordova.

###