

The logo of the Coast Guard Heartland District is a circular emblem. It features a central map of the United States with a yellow compass rose overlaid. The text "COAST GUARD HEARTLAND DISTRICT" is written in a grey arc at the top, and "PROTECTING THE GULF AND THE HEARTLAND" is written in a grey arc at the bottom. The background of the emblem is split into blue and red sections.

Radio Telecommunication Safety Requirements for Commercial Fishing Vessels

LT JACKSON MORTON

COAST GUARD HEARTLAND DISTRICT



NOAA Requirements to Carry Observers

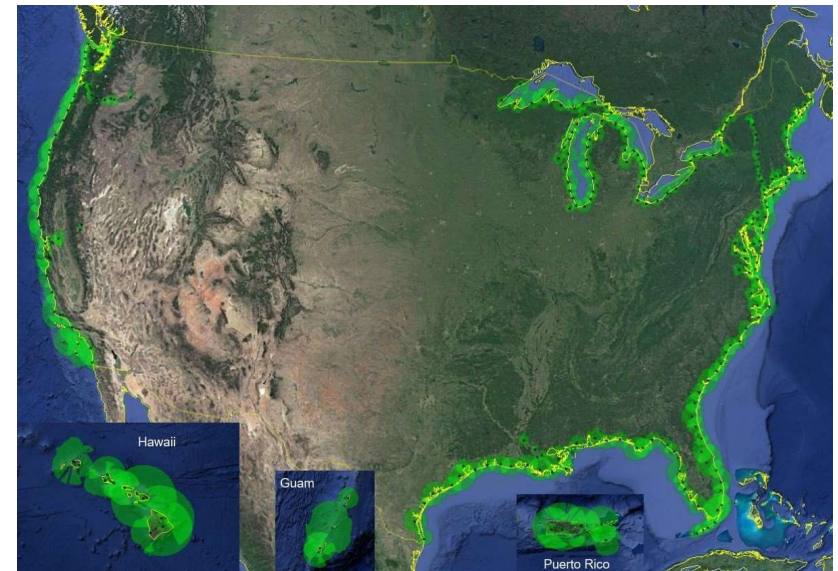
- During the last council meeting, there were comments made about Fishermen's inability to carry observers due to non-compliance with radio telecommunications safety requirements.
 - Per 50 CFR 600.746, NOAA requires a vessel pass a USCG dockside Safety Exam (CG-5587) and display a valid Dockside Safety Examination decal in order to carry observers.
- In General, passing the Dockside Safety Exam is represented by the Commercial Fishing Safety Examination decal.
- Each vessel will have different requirements based on their vessel characteristics, operating area, etc.
 - Fish Safe West's website has a user-friendly tool designed to assist vessel owner/operators prepare for their exam.
 - <https://www.fishsafewest.info/checklist/generator.html> or the [Fishing Vessel Safety CG-CVC-3](#) home page.
- For the purposes of this presentation, we will focus on the radio telecommunications requirements.



Short Range Communications - Rescue 21

From 46 CFR 28.245 (a), for documented vessels:

- Each vessel operating outside of the boundary line must be equipped with a radiotelephone transceiver capable of transmitting and receiving within the 156-162 MHz band.
- For example: channel 16 156.8 MHz





Long Range Communications – SAT

- For vessels operating more than 20 nautical miles from shore.
- Satellite phones that can operate on the Iridium/Inmarsat network in the area in which you are operating are sufficient to meet the requirements in 46 CFR 28.245.
- If you have cellular service, a cell phone can be sufficient
 - Onus is on the operator to have emergency communications in accordance with 46 CFR 28.245
 - Where are you operating? Will you have cellular signal?
 - Signals can change for a multitude of reasons





Starlink

CG-C5I-E3 is the lead office at the headquarters level for Starlink.

Currently Starlink is not an approved emergency radio telecommunication method in accordance with 46 CFR 28.245.

“Starlink is like an internet hotspot, it doesn’t have any direct services but may be able to perform certain communications related function. For Starlink to function it needs to be connected to another device to work properly (known as device to device / not a communications service). Unlike Iridium or Inmarsat, that have gone through the recognition process identified by IMO and administered by IMSO for participation in the GMDSS – these services can only have less than 8 hours of downtime per year before corrective action or to go through the recognition process again. Starlink does not maintain this level of availability making it questionable as a service to provide emergency communications. I would also recommend the users read the terms of service when they sign the contract to see what Starlink offers. I have been told that this changes frequently by IMSO and some of the SOLAS operators.”



Contact Information

The Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Coordinator should be the first stop for questions regarding safety regulations. CG-CVC-3 is the program office at Coast Guard headquarters responsible for commercial fishing vessel safety.

The Heartland district's Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Coordinator can provide guidance on scheduling examinations or putting you in touch with your local examiner.

POC: Mr. John Sherlock, John.P.Sherlock@uscg.mil

CG-C5I-E3 is the lead office for questions related to Starlink.

POCs: Mr. Patrick Geddes, Patrick.H.Geddes@uscg.mil (primary)

Mr. Jerry Ulcek, Jerry.L.Ulcek@uscg.mil (secondary)