



**BILLING CODE: 4910-81-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Maritime Administration**

Docket Number MARAD-2011-0163

**Use of Foreign-Flag Anchor Handling Vessels in the Beaufort Sea  
or Chukchi Sea Adjacent to Alaska**

**AGENCY:** Maritime Administration, Department of Transportation.

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

**SUMMARY:** As authorized by Public Law 111-281, the Secretary of Transportation, as represented by the Maritime Administration, is authorized to make determinations permitting the use of foreign-flag anchor handling vessels in certain cases (and for a limited period of time) if no U.S.-flag vessels are found to be suitable and reasonably available.

A request for such a determination regarding anchor handling vessels with a minimum ice class A3 has been received by the Maritime Administration. If the Maritime Administration determines that U.S.-flag vessels are not suitable and reasonably available for the proposed service, a determination will be granted allowing for the conditional use of these vessels, within a set time frame. Those interested in providing the names of suitable and available vessels for the proposed service should refer to the docket number, and identify the U.S.-flag vessels available.

**DATES:** Submit U.S.-flag anchor handling ice class A3 or above vessel nominations on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** U.S.-flag vessel nominations should refer to docket number MARAD-2011-0163. Written nominations may be submitted by hand or by mail to the Docket Clerk, U.S.

Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30 West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001. You may also send documents electronically via the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>. All submissions will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection and copying at the above address between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., E.T., Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. An electronic version of this document, and all documents entered into this docket, is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Michael Hokana, U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration, MAR-730 Room W21-304, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590. Telephone 202-366-0760.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

The Maritime Administration has received a request from an attorney on behalf of a client seeking permission to charter a foreign-flag ice-classed A3 anchor handling vessel adjacent to the coast of Alaska. The foreign-flag anchor handling vessel (TOR VIKING II 9199622) would operate in the Beaufort Sea or Chukchi Sea adjacent to Alaska, under certain conditions, and for a limited period of time. Section 306 of Public Law 111-281 allows the use of foreign-flag vessels in this regard if the Maritime Administration determines that U.S.-flag vessels are not suitable or reasonably available.

The Maritime Administration is posting this notice in the Federal Register providing the public 30 days notice of our intention to provide a determination allowing for the use of a foreign-flag vessel in this regard, if suitable and available U.S.-flag vessels are not otherwise identified. Our determination will be for a period of one year from April 30, 2012 through April 30, 2013, but

may be extended based on the demonstration of a binding commitment to acquire U.S.-flag replacement vessels. Foreign-flag anchor handling vessels may not be employed for the setting, relocation or recovery of anchors or other mooring equipment of a mobile offshore drilling unit after December 31, 2017.

By Order of the Maritime Administrator.

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Julie P. Agarwal  
Secretary  
Maritime Administration

Dated: December 15, 2011

[FR Doc. 2011-32809 Filed 12/21/2011 at 8:45 am; Publication Date: 12/22/2011]