

SafeStat can be accessed through the SafeStat Online portion of FMCSA's A&I Online Web site: <http://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/SafeStat/SafeStatMain.asp>. The Agency has proposed improvements to the SafeStat system that would simplify the Accident Safety Evaluation Area (SEA), increase the relevance of moving violations in the Driver SEA, include in the Vehicle SEA vehicle out-of-service violations from inspections marked as driver-only, and shorten the data exposure time period considered by SafeStat from 30 months to 24 months. The proposed changes are also consistent with FMCSA's Comprehensive Safety Analysis 2010 (CSA 2010) reform initiative. The ultimate goal of CSA 2010 is development of an optimal operational model that will allow FMCSA to focus its limited resources on improving the performance of high-risk operators. For more information about CSA 2010, visit <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety-security/safety-initiatives/csa2010listening.htm>.

Revisions to the SafeStat system are exempt from notice and comment under the Administrative Procedure Act because they are both matters "relating to agency management" and "general statements of policy, or rules of agency * * * procedure, or practice" under 5 U.S.C. 553(a)(2) and (b)(A), respectively. Nonetheless, FMCSA encourages the public to review the details of the proposed SafeStat improvements by accessing SafeStat Online, and to submit comments directly to the Web site. The Agency will give careful consideration to all comments received, and provide appropriate notice regarding the changes to its safety measurement system at <http://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/SafeStat/SafeStatMain.asp>.

Issued on: April 24, 2006.

William A. Quade,

Acting Associate Administrator, Enforcement and Program Delivery.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Transit Administration

[Docket No. FTA-2006-23636]

Notice of Clarification of Effective Date for Guidance on New Starts Policies and Procedures

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration (FTA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of clarification.

SUMMARY: This notice clarifies the effective date set forth in the notice of availability and request for comments for the Guidance on New Starts Policies and Procedures published on January 19, 2006, in the **Federal Register**. The Proposed Guidance on New Starts Policies and Procedures did not become effective on April 30, 2006, as stated in the January 19, 2006 notice. FTA will publish an additional notice in the **Federal Register** before new requirements are to become effective.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ron Fisher, Office of Planning and Environment, telephone (202) 366-4033, Federal Transit Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590 or Ronald.Fisher@fta.dot.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In the notice of availability for the proposed Guidance on New Starts Policies and Procedures issued on January 19, 2006 (71 FR 3149), FTA noted that the proposed changes "will become effective April 30, 2006." With today's notice, FTA seeks to clarify that none of the changes in the proposed Guidance on New Starts Policies and Procedures became effective on April 30, 2006. Further, none of those changes shall otherwise become effective until FTA publishes notice in the **Federal Register**, in accordance with the applicable requirements of 49 U.S.C. 5334(1), responding to comments received and explaining any changes, if appropriate, to the proposed guidance based on those comments.

Issued in Washington, DC this 27th day of April, 2006.

Sandra K. Bushue,

Deputy Administrator.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement (VISA)

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of open season for enrollment in the VISA program.

Introduction

The VISA program was established pursuant to section 708 of the Defense Production Act of 1950, as amended (DPA), which provides for voluntary agreements for emergency preparedness programs. VISA was approved for a two year term on January 30, 1997, and published in the **Federal Register** on

February 13, 1997, (62 FR 6837).

Approval is currently extended through September 30, 2007, as published in the **Federal Register** on September 23, 2005 (70 FR 55947).

As implemented, the VISA program is open to U.S.-flag vessel operators of oceangoing militarily useful vessels. Operators include vessel owners and bareboat charter operators if satisfactory signed agreements are in place committing the assets of the owner to the bareboat charterer for purposes of VISA. While tug/barge operators must own or bareboat charter barges committed to the VISA program, it is not required that these operators commit tug service through bareboat charter or ownership arrangements. Time charters of U.S.-flag tugs will satisfy tug commitments to the VISA program. However, participation in the VISA program is not satisfied by tug commitment only. Tug/barge VISA participants must commit capacity of at least one barge to the VISA program. Voyage and space charterers are not considered U.S.-flag vessel operators for purposes of VISA eligibility.

VISA Concept

The mission of VISA is to provide commercial sealift and intermodal shipping services and systems, including vessels, vessel space, intermodal systems and equipment, terminal facilities, and related management services, to the Department of Defense (DOD), as necessary, to meet national defense contingency requirements or national emergencies.

VISA provides for the staged, time-phased availability of participants' shipping services/systems to meet contingency requirements through prenegotiated contracts between the Government and participants. Such arrangements are jointly planned with the Maritime Administration (MARAD), U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), and participants in peacetime to allow effective and best valued use of commercial sealift capacity, to provide DOD assured contingency access, and to minimize commercial disruption, whenever possible.

There are three time-phased stages in the event of VISA activation. VISA Stages I and II provide for prenegotiated contracts between DOD and participants to provide sealift capacity to meet all projected DOD contingency requirements. These contracts are executed in accordance with approved DOD contracting methodologies. VISA Stage III will provide for additional capacity to the DOD when Stage I and II commitments or volunteered capacity