

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**Coast Guard****33 CFR Part 117**

[USCG-2008-0015]

RIN 1625-AA09

Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Potomac River, Between Maryland and Virginia**AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DHS.**ACTION:** Notice of temporary deviation from regulations.

SUMMARY: The Commander, Fifth Coast Guard District, has approved a temporary deviation from the regulations governing the operation of the new Woodrow Wilson Memorial (I-95) Bridge, mile 103.8, across Potomac River between Alexandria, Virginia and Oxon Hill, Maryland. This deviation will allow the contractor to complete commissioning and final testing for the new Woodrow Wilson Bridge construction project. This deviation allows the new drawbridge to remain closed-to-navigation each day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. beginning on January 26, 2008 until and including March 1, 2008.

DATES: This deviation is effective from 10 a.m. on January 26, 2008, until 2 p.m. on March 1, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Materials referred to in this document are available for inspection or copying at Commander (dpb), Fifth Coast Guard District, Federal Building, 1st Floor, 431 Crawford Street, Portsmouth, VA 23704-5004 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is (757) 398-6222. Commander (dpb), Fifth Coast Guard District maintains the public docket for this temporary deviation.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Waverly W. Gregory, Jr., Bridge Administrator, Fifth Coast Guard District, at (757) 398-6222.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In June 2006, the southernmost portion of the bascule spans for the new Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge, at mile 103.8, across Potomac River between Alexandria, Virginia and Oxon Hill, Maryland was publicly placed into service, switching I-95 Northbound traffic onto the new Outer Loop portion of the bridge. The newly-constructed portion of the bridge will be required to open for vessels in accordance with the current drawbridge operating regulations set out in 33 CFR 117.255(a).

While the drawbridge is operational, coordinators for the construction of the new Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project indicated that the bascule span is not yet fully commissioned and cannot run at full speed, resulting in extended Interstate 95/495 traffic stoppages during openings. Opening the new bascule span for a vessel at this time would take approximately 45 minutes in a best case scenario. This has the potential to have a significant impact upon I-95 traffic, especially during the 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. bridge-opening time frame currently available for commercial vessels, in accordance with 33 CFR 117.255(a).

Coordinators requested a temporary deviation from the current operating regulation for the new Woodrow Wilson Memorial (I-95) Bridge set out in 33 CFR 117.255(a).

Though good progress has been made regarding commissioning of the north and south drawbridges (both now carrying I-95 vehicle traffic), the coordinators are requesting this deviation from the normal 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. opening period, to proceed with commissioning activities through March 1, 2008. From a river-user standpoint, the coordinators have received no requests from boaters or mariners for a bridge opening during the 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. timeframe since the passage of the tall ship "Gloria" in July 2007.

The coordinators requested that the new drawbridge not be available for openings for vessels each day between the hours of 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. from Saturday, January 26, 2008 through Saturday, March 1, 2008. The temporary deviation will only affect vessels with mast heights of 75 feet or greater. Management of the Federal and auxiliary channels will continue to be closely coordinated between the coordinators for the construction of the new Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project, the Coast Guard and vessels requesting transit through the construction zone. Furthermore, all affected vessels with mast heights greater than 75 feet will be able to receive an opening of the new drawbridge in the "off-peak" vehicle traffic hours (evening and overnight) in accordance with 33 CFR 117.255(a). Maintaining the new drawbridge in the closed-to-navigation position each day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on January 26, 2008 through March 1, 2008, will help reduce the impact to vehicular traffic during this phase of the new bridge construction.

The Coast Guard has informed the known users of the waterway of the closure period for the bridge so that these vessels can arrange their transits

to minimize any impact caused by the temporary deviation.

In accordance with 33 CFR 117.35(c), this work will be performed with all due speed in order to return the bridge to normal operation as soon as possible. This deviation from the operating regulations is authorized under 33 CFR 117.35.

Dated: January 14, 2008.

Waverly W. Gregory, Jr.,
Chief, Bridge Administration Branch, Fifth Coast Guard District.

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**Coast Guard****33 CFR Part 117**

[USCG-2008-0018]

Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Elizabeth River—Eastern Branch, at Norfolk, VA**AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DHS.**ACTION:** Notice of temporary deviation from regulations.

SUMMARY: The Commander, Fifth Coast Guard District, has approved a temporary deviation from the regulations governing the operation of the Norfolk Southern Railroad Bridge, at mile 2.7, across the Elizabeth River—Eastern Branch at Norfolk, VA. This deviation allows the drawbridge to remain closed-to-navigation beginning at 7 a.m. on Monday, February 4, 2008 until and including 6 p.m. on Saturday, March 8, 2008, to facilitate rehabilitation of the operating machinery of the swing span.

DATES: This deviation is effective from 7 a.m. on February 4, 2008 to 6 p.m. on March 8, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Materials referred to in this document are available for inspection or copying at Commander (dpb), Fifth Coast Guard District, Federal Building, 1st Floor, 431 Crawford Street, Portsmouth, VA 23704-5004 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is (757) 398-6222. Commander (dpb), Fifth Coast Guard District maintains the public docket for this temporary deviation.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bill H. Brazier, Bridge Management Specialist, Fifth Coast Guard District, at (757) 398-6422.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Norfolk Southern Railroad Bridge (NS#