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Title 33 — Navigation and Navigable Waters

Chapter I — Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security

Subchapter A — General

Part 23 Distinctive Markings for Coast Guard Vessels and Aircraft

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PART 23—DISTINCTIVE MARKINGS FOR COAST GUARD VESSELS AND AIRCRAFT

Authority: 14 U.S.C. 933, 934; E.O. 10707; 3 CFR, 1954-1958 Comp., p. 364.

§ 23.01 Basis and purpose.

- (a) This subpart establishes instructions for the display of distinctive markings of Coast Guard vessels and aircraft, including Coast Guard ensign and commission pennant and Coast Guard emblem.
- (b) Coast Guard vessels and aircraft are distinguished from other vessels and aircraft by an ensign; a personal flag, command pennant, or commissioned pennant, if so authorized; or other identifying insignia or marking.

[CGFR 57-35, 22 FR 6765, Aug. 22, 1957, as amended by CGFR 66-67, 31 FR 15239, Dec. 6, 1966]

§ 23.05 Where and when displayed.

- (a) The Coast Guard Ensign is a mark of authority and is required to be displayed whenever a Coast Guard vessel takes active measures in connection with boarding, examining, seizing, stopping or heaving to of a vessel for the purposes of enforcing the laws of the United States. The distinctive markings of Coast Guard aircraft serve the same purpose.
- (b) The Coast Guard Commission pennant indicates a Coast Guard cutter under the command of a commissioned officer or commissioned warrant officer.

- (c) When applicable, these distinctive marks shall be displayed, the Coast Guard Ensign at the masthead of the foremast, and the commission pennant at the after masthead. On ships having but one mast the Coast Guard Ensign and commission pennant shall be at the masthead on the same halyard. In mastless ships they shall be displayed from the most conspicuous hoist.

[CGFR 67-26, 32 FR 6576, Apr. 28, 1967]

§ 23.10 Coast Guard emblem.

- (a) The distinctive emblem of the Coast Guard shall be as follows:

On a disc the shield of the Coat of Arms of the United States circumscribed by an annulet edged and inscribed "UNITED STATES COAST GUARD 1790" all in front of two crossed anchors.

- (b) The emblem in full color is described as follows:

White anchors and white ring all outlined in medium blue (Coast Guard blue), letters and numerals medium blue (Coast Guard blue), white area within ring, shield with medium blue (Coast Guard blue) chief and 13 alternating white and red (Coast Guard red) stripes (7 white and 6 red) with narrow medium blue (Coast Guard blue) outline.

- (c) The Coast Guard emblem is intended primarily for use as identification on Coast Guard ensigns, flags, pennants, vessels, aircraft, vehicles, and shore units. It may also be reproduced for use on such items as stationery, clothing, jewelry, etc.
- (d) Any person who desires to reproduce the Coast Guard emblem for non-Coast Guard use must first obtain approval from the Commandant (CG-092), Attn: Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard Stop 7103, 2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20593-7103.

(Sec. 6(b)(1), 80 Stat. 937; 49 U.S.C. 1655(b)(1); 49 CFR 1.46(b))

[CGFR 67-26, 32 FR 6577, Apr. 28, 1967, as amended by CGFR 70-95, 35 FR 12541, Aug. 6, 1970; USCG-2010-0351, 75 FR 36278, June 25, 2010; USCG-2014-0410, 79 FR 38427, July 7, 2014]

§ 23.12 Coast Guard identifying insignia.

- (a) The distinctive identification insignia of the Coast Guard consists of a broad diagonal red stripe followed to the right or left by two narrow stripes, first a white stripe and then a blue stripe. The Coast Guard emblem, as described in § 23.10(b), is centered within the confines of the broad red diagonal stripe.
- (b) The Coast Guard identifying insignia is intended primarily for the identification of Coast Guard vessels, aircraft, vehicles, and shore units. It may also be reproduced for use on Coast Guard publications, stationery, jewelry, and similar items.
- (c) Any person who desires to reproduce the Coast Guard identifying insignia for non-Coast Guard use must first obtain approval from the Commandant (CG-092), Attn: Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard Stop 7103, 2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20593-7103.

(Sec. 6(b)(1), 80 Stat. 937; 49 U.S.C. 1655(b)(1); 49 CFR 1.46(b))

[CGFR 70-95, 35 FR 12541, Aug. 6, 1970, as amended by USCG-2010-0351, 75 FR 36278, June 25, 2010; USCG-2014-0410, 79 FR 38428, July 7, 2014]

§ 23.15 Coast Guard ensign.

The Coast Guard ensign has sixteen perpendicular stripes alternate red and white, beginning with the red at the hoist. In the upper quarter, next to the hoist, is the union, being the Coat of Arms of the United States, in dark blue on a white field, half of the length of the flag, and extending down the hoist halfway. The distinctive emblem of the Coast Guard in blue and white is placed with its center on a line with the lower edge of the union and over the center of the seventh vertical red stripe from the hoist of the flag, the emblem covering a horizontal space of three stripes.

[CGFR 57-35, 22 FR 6765, Aug. 22, 1957]

§ 23.20 Coast Guard commission pennant.

The Coast Guard commission pennant shall have the union part composed of thirteen blue stars in a horizontal line on a white field, one-fourth the length of the pennant; the remaining three-fourths shall consist of sixteen vertical stripes of equal width, alternate red and white, beginning with the red, and a tail piece of red about one-fifth the entire length of the pennant, ending in a swallow tail.

[CGFR 57-35, 22 FR 6765, Aug. 22, 1957, as amended by CGFR 71-75, 36 FR 13268, July 17, 1971]

§ 23.30 Penalty.

Section 933(b) of title 14 U.S.C. reads as follows:

No vessel or aircraft without authority shall carry, hoist or display any ensign, pennant or other identifying insignia prescribed for, or intended to resemble, any ensign, pennant or other identifying insignia prescribed for Coast Guard vessels or aircraft. Every person violating this provision shall be fined not more than \$5,000, or imprisoned for not more than two years, or both.

[CGFR 57-35, 22 FR 6765, Aug. 22, 1957, as amended by USCG-2020-0304, 85 FR 58276, Sept. 18, 2020]