

yards in all directions around the Cove Point LNG Terminal.

DATES: This rule is effective from 8 a.m. local time on July 25, 2003 until September 26, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Comments and material received from the public, as well as documents indicated in this preamble as being available in the docket, are part of docket [CG05-03-103] and are available for inspection or copying at Commander, U.S. Coast Guard Activities, 2401 Hawkins Point Road, Building 70, Port Safety, Security and Waterways Management Branch, Baltimore, Maryland, 21226-1791 between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lieutenant Charles Bright, at Coast Guard Activities Baltimore, Port Safety, Security and Waterways Management Branch, at telephone number (410) 576-2676.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Regulatory Information

On May 15, 2003, we published a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM); notice of public meeting; reopening of comment period entitled *Safety and Security Zone; Cove Point Natural Gas Terminal, Chesapeake Bay, MD*, in the **Federal Register** (68 FR 26247). We received 6 letters commenting on the proposed rule. A public hearing was requested, and was held on June 5, 2003, and the comment period was re-opened and extended to June 12, 2003. Under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3), the Coast Guard finds that good cause exists for making this rule effective less than 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register**. The Coast Guard is currently reviewing the additional comments received during the re-opened comment period and public meeting and requires more time to develop the final rule based on these additional comments. Additionally, the Coast Guard believes it is in the best interest of public safety to establish this temporary rule while it continues to consider comments that may affect the final rule.

Background and Purpose

In preparation for the re-opening of the LNG terminal at Cove Point, MD, the Coast Guard is evaluating the current safety zone established in 33 CFR 165.502. This safety zone was established during the initial operation of the terminal in 1979 and includes both the terminal and associated vessels. To better manage the safety and security of the LNG terminal, this temporary rule incorporates necessary security provisions and changes the size

of the zone. This rule establishes a 500 yard combined safety zone and security zone in all directions around the LNG terminal at Cove Point.

Based on the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center buildings in New York, NY and the Pentagon building in Arlington, VA, there is an increased risk that subversive activity could be launched by vessels or persons in close proximity to the Cove Point LNG Terminal. As part of the Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act of 1986 (Pub. L. 99-399), Congress amended section 7 of the Ports and Waterways Safety Act (PWSA), 33 U.S.C. 1226, to allow the Coast Guard to take actions, including the establishment of security and safety zones, to prevent or respond to acts of terrorism against individuals, vessels, or public or commercial structures. The Coast Guard also has authority to establish security zones pursuant to the Espionage Act of June 15, 1917, as amended by the Magnuson Act of August 9, 1950 (50 U.S.C. 191 *et seq.*) ("Magnuson Act"), section 104 of the Maritime Transportation Security Act of November 25, 2002, and by implementing regulations promulgated by the President in subparts 6.01 and 6.04 of Part 6 of Title 33 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Discussion of Rule

The Coast Guard is establishing a temporary safety and security zone on specified waters of the Chesapeake Bay near the Cove Point Liquefied Natural Gas Terminal to reduce the potential threat that may be posed by vessels or persons that approach the terminal. The zone will extend 500 yards in all directions from the terminal. The effect will be to prohibit vessels or persons entry into the security zone, unless specifically authorized by the Captain of the Port, Baltimore, Maryland. Federal, state and local agencies may assist the Coast Guard in the enforcement of this rule.

Regulatory Evaluation

This rule is not a "significant regulatory action" under section 3(f) of Executive Order 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review, and does not require an assessment of potential costs and benefits under section 6(a)(3) of that Order. The Office of Management and Budget has not reviewed it under that Order. It is not "significant" under the regulatory policies and procedures of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). This regulation is of limited size, and vessels may transit around the zone.

There may be some adverse effects on the local maritime community that has

been using the area as a fishing ground. Since the terminal has not been in operation, the Coast Guard has not enforced the current zone under 33 CFR 165.502. Commercial vessel operators have been using the area on a regular basis for commercial fishing, passenger tours, and fishing parties. Enforcement of the proposed zone or the current zone would prohibit these commercial vessel operators from using this area.

Small Entities

Under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601-612), we have considered whether this rule would have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. The term "small entities" comprises small businesses, not-for-profit organizations that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000.

The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. This proposed rule would affect the following entities, some of which might be small entities: the owners or operators of vessels intending to transit or anchor in a portion of the Chesapeake Bay near the Cove Point LNG Terminal.

Assistance for Small Entities

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-121), we offered to assist small entities in understanding the rule so that they could better evaluate its effects on them and participate in the rulemaking process.

Small businesses may send comments on the actions of Federal employees who enforce, or otherwise determine compliance with, Federal regulations to the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman and the Regional Small Business Regulatory Fairness Boards. The Ombudsman evaluates these actions annually and rates each agency's responsiveness to small business. If you wish to comment on actions by employees of the Coast Guard, call 1-888-REG-FAIR (1-888-734-3247).

Collection of Information

This rule calls for no new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520).

Federalism

A rule has implications for federalism under Executive Order 13132,