

distress frequency watch receiver meeting Section 80.269 and an automatic radio alarm signal generator meeting Section 80.221 of the Rules.

**Station Radio Log** – 47 CFR 80.409(e) & (f) – SPV must have a radio station log containing entries: Summary of all distress, urgent, and safety traffic; reference to important service incidents; position of the vessel at least once a day; name of the operator on duty and the beginning and ending of watch period; time watch begins when vessel leaves port, the time it ends when the vessel returns to port; time the watch is discontinued, including reason, and the time the watch is resumed; times when storage batteries provided as part of the required radiotelephone installation are placed on charge and taken off charge; results of required equipment tests, including specific gravity of lead-acid storage batteries and voltage readings of other types of storage batteries provided as a part of the compulsory radio installation; daily statement about the condition of the required radiotelephone equipment, as determined by normal communication.

If the vessel is subject to the Bridge-to-Bridge Radiotelephone Act (more than 20 meters in length or more than 100 gross tons and carrying at least one passenger), the radio log must also show when the master is notified about any improperly operating radiotelephone equipment.

**Radio Inspection** - The vessel's radio log must also include an easily identifiable section reserved for recording the details of the radio inspection as follows: date the inspection was conducted; date by which the next inspection needs to be completed; inspector's printed name, address and class of FCC license (including the serial number). results of the inspection, including a list of any repairs made; inspector's signed and

dated certification that the vessel meets the requirements of Subpart S of Part 80 of FCC Rules (and Subpart U if the vessel is subject to the Bridge-to-Bridge Act). The vessel owner, operator, or ship's master's signed and dated certification that the inspection was satisfactory.

**SOLAS SPV's** – Passenger vessels sailing to foreign countries are subject to SOLAS regulations in addition to Communications Act. A foreign voyage is defined as docking or anchoring at a foreign port. A vessel sailing into foreign territorial waters and returning to a United States port without docking or anchoring in a foreign harbor or port is not making a foreign voyage.

FCC Rules [Section 80.933] exempt most small passenger vessels making certain foreign voyages from most SOLAS requirements (except the annual inspection requirement), provided they meet the Section 80.933 technical requirements. These requirements include carriage of:

- A Category I, 406 MHz EPIRB;
- A NAVTEX receiver;
- Three survival craft portable radiotelephones;
- Two radar transponders.

SPV's on foreign voyages must be inspected once every 12 mo rather than once in 5 yrs.

Vessels subject to SOLAS but exempted from all but the annual inspection requirement must have all equipment, including the extra equipment required to qualify for the exemption, inspected annually. If the inspector discovers technical deficiencies that cannot be corrected during the course of the inspection, the inspector should decline to certify the inspection in the ship's log and should withhold issuance of a renewal certificate until the deficiencies are corrected.

*Updated: Dec 2013*



## FCC RADIO REQUIREMENTS FOR SMALL PASSENGER VESSELS (SPV)

<http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/ot/hrcoms/fcc.htm>

<http://www.fcc.gov/eb/ShipInsp/small.html>



## *Inspections*

The Coast Guard's vessel inspection division is responsible for conducting all required commercial vessel inspections to determine their fitness for service. Among the commercial vessels the inspection division performs annual inspections and biennial hull examinations on are small passenger vessels regulated under 46 CFR 175-185 & 46 CFR 117-121.

The small passenger vessel regulations refer to the FCC Regulations in 47 CFR Part 80.901-.935 for compliance. During the Coast Guard Inspections the CG inspector will enforce the requirements of the FCC regulations. This pamphlet will provide a quick reference for most of these requirements.

**No Station Radio License Required** - SPV's of less than 50 gross tons that sail in the open ocean or in bays, sounds, and other tidewater areas bordering on the open sea but never more than 1,000' from shore as endorsed on their COI are exempt from radio carriage regulations. If vessels of this class carry a radio, no inspection of the radio is required and, if the radio operates only on VHF frequencies and if the vessel does not sail to a foreign port, the radio is exempt from the licensing requirement.

**SPV's operating more than 1,000' from shore require;**

**Radio Station License** – Station license for the VHF-FM radio. Valid for 10 yrs. Shows current vessel owner, operator, or master as the licensee (A license issued to a previous owner is not valid, even though not yet expired.). A license indicating a recreational vessel is unacceptable.

**Operator license;**

The minimum class of licensed operator for compulsory vessels is the holder of a Marine Radio Operator Permit. Individuals holding a General Radiotelephone Operator License, a first or second class radiotelegraph operator certificate, or a GMDSS Radio Operator's License may also serve as radio operators aboard SPV's. *The holder of a Restricted Radiotelephone Operator Permit is not authorized to operate the radio.*

**Marine Radio Operator Permit (MROP)**

Valid indefinitely if issued after March 2008. Before March 25, 2008 - Valid for 5 yrs.

**Inspections – Radio equipment must be inspected once every 5 years** – The following certificates are issued;

**Safety Radiotelephony Certificate** (FCC Form 824) - Required for each SPV operating more than 1,000' from shore. A third party radio technician with an FCC

license must perform a survey and radio tests to issue this certificate. This certificate is for VHF-FM, HF, MF Radio, EPIRB and/or IMMARSAT certification. Valid for 5 years.

**Bridge-to-Bridge Radio Certificate** –

If vessel is larger than 100 gross tons or is more than 65' in length, it must also meet the requirements of the Bridge-to-Bridge Act. (Sections 80.1101 through 80.1023). The VHF radiotelephone must have operating capability on Channels 13 (156.650 MHz) and 22A (157.100 MHz).

Vessels carrying a bridge-to-bridge radio installation should have that installation inspected concurrently with the inspection of the other compulsory equipment. If deficiencies are discovered in the bridge-to-bridge installation and cannot be corrected immediately, the FCC inspector should note pertinent facts in the radio log. Since the bridge-to-bridge radio is also a Coast Guard requirement, the inspector should bring noted deficiencies to the attention of his local Coast Guard Sector Office. Deficiencies in the bridge-to-bridge radio equipment will not, however, affect approval of other compulsory radio components nor hinder issuing a safety radiotelephony certificate.

**EPIRB** - For SPV's operating beyond demarcation listed in 33 CFR Part 80 without primary lifesaving equipment, a Category I 406 mhz EPIRB may be required and for SPV's with primary lifesaving equipment operating beyond 3 miles from shore a Category I 406 mhz EPIRB is required. See 46 CFR Part 180.205 details.

**FCC Regulations 47 CFR Part 80** – copy may be kept either on board or at a convenient location on shore.

**VHF-FM Marine Radio** – with at least channels 6 and 16 and at least one frequency used by a local marine operator

serving the area that the vessel normally traverses. The control point must be protected from weather and located convenient to steering station. Protected when unmanned. Have 1 watt and between 20-25 watt capability and lighted dial.

**Radio Battery Power** – batteries capable of providing energy at full rated output. Securely mounted, a means to charge and either an ammeter or expanded scale voltmeter to indicate state of charge. At least 10" of headroom over the batteries, at least 3 hours of continuous operating power at rated output. Engine starting battery may be used, but must provide 3 hrs even if engine/electrical failures on the vessel.

**Emergency Broadcast Placard** – (46 CFR 184.506) posted next to the radio.

**MF or Single Side Band (SSB)** (HF, MF) – Required on SPV's operating on an Oceans route – beyond 20 miles from land. Medium frequency (MF) radio installation providing 60 watts capability on 2182, 2638, 2670 kHz and a public coast station frequency in the 1710-2850 kHz band with a transmitting meter.

**SPV's more than 100-200 miles from shore;** in addition to VHF and MF noted above, carry either a single sideband radiotelephone capable of operating on all medium frequency (MF) and high frequency (HF) channels used for distress and safety comms, or INMARSAT ship station capable of continuous distress alerting by satellite is available. The NAVTEX must include an EGC receiver to enable receipt of NAVTEX information when the vessel is beyond the range of stations transmitting NAVTEX on 518 kHz. A reserve source of power.

**SPV's operating more than 200 miles from shore;** in addition to all equipment specified previously, a radiotelephone