

USCG Vessel Documentation

The United States Code for vessel documentation is cited (below) and is followed by the rationale for publishing these data.

46 U.S.C. 12119. List of documented vessels

The Secretary of Transportation shall publish periodically a list of all documented vessels and information about those vessels that the Secretary considers pertinent or useful. The list shall contain a notation clearly indicating all vessels classed by the American Bureau of Shipping.

The above law requires the Coast Guard to periodically publish a list of all documented vessels and information about those vessels. To meet this requirement, a determination was made by the Secretary of Transportation as to what information should be published about these vessels. That determination included the name and address of the vessel owner as information that should be published about these vessels. That information has always been included in CG-408 Merchant Vessels of the United States, which was last published in 1994. It is now published via CD-ROM and distributed to the public by the National Technical Information Service. Once such information is published and made available to the public, it is no longer protected under either the Freedom of Information Act or Privacy Act. Thus would be appropriate for inclusion on an Internet site.

There are a number of reasons for publishing the name and address of vessel owners. Those reasons include:

- Documentation is a public process

- To make it more difficult for ineligible persons to document vessels (i.e., someone who does not meet U.S. citizenship requirements)

- To deter theft and trade in stolen vessels.