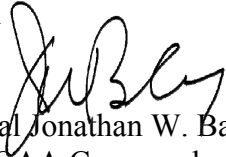




**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
**OFFICE OF MARINE AND AVIATION OPERATIONS**  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3282

February 18, 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR: Distribution

FROM:   
Rear Admiral Jonathan W. Bailey, NOAA  
Director, NOAA Corps and  
Office of Marine and Aviation Operations

SUBJECT: Charter Vessel Clearance Procedures

The purpose of this memorandum is to ensure all NOAA programs continue to follow the procedures and meet the requirements for obtaining charter vessel support.

On February 13, 2009 a near-miss occurred aboard a chartered vessel with several NOAA employees onboard. After this incident was reported, OMAO learned that the program which used the charter vessel did not follow all of the procedures for obtaining a charter vessel.

Although proper emergency procedures were followed and there were no injuries, the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO) had no record on file for this charter or any indication that NOAA employees were onboard. OMAO is responsible for coordinating and monitoring charter vessel activities to ensure proper application of U.S. Coast Guard marine safety standards and other applicable regulations before NOAA personnel are allowed to embark a chartered vessel.

All line offices that have a requirement for charter vessel operations are required to follow the procedures and submit the form as outlined on the OMAO website. Copies of NOAA Form 75-91 - *Charter Vessel Clearance and Report*, along with instructions and procedures for filling out and submitting the form, are posted on OMAO's website and can be found directly at <http://www.oma.noaa.gov/charterreq.html>. Upon receipt of the form, OMAO will review the documentation and either approve the charter operation or provide guidance should there be any concerns. Charter vessel operations shall not be authorized until the form has been received and the operation approved.

Contact Bill Cunningham, OMAO, Acting Chief, Safety and Environmental Compliance Division at 301-713-7666 or [bill.cunningham@noaa.gov](mailto:bill.cunningham@noaa.gov) if you require additional information.

cc: Assistant Administrators  
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