



## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### Coast Guard

### 33 CFR Part 117

### Docket No. USCG-2019-0911

### Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Mobile River, Hurricane, AL

**AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DHS.

**ACTION:** Notice of temporary deviation from regulations; request for comments.

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**SUMMARY:** The Coast Guard has issued a temporary deviation from the operating schedule that governs the CSX Transportation Railroad drawbridge across the Mobile River, mile 13.3 near Hurricane, Mobile County, Alabama. This deviation will test a change to the drawbridge operation schedule to determine whether a permanent change to the schedule is needed. The Coast Guard is seeking comments from the public regarding these proposed changes.

**DATES:** This deviation is effective without actual notice from 7:01 a.m. [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER] through 7 a.m. July 8, 2021. For the purposes of enforcement, actual notice will be used from 7 a.m. January 8, 2021 through 7 a.m. [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]. Comments and related material must reach the Coast Guard on or before July 8, 2021.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments identified by docket number USCG-2019-0911 using Federal eRulemaking Portal at <https://www.regulations.gov>.

See the “Public Participation and Request for Comments” portion of the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section below for instructions on submitting comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** If you have questions on this test deviation, call or e-mail Mr. Doug Blakemore. Eighth Coast Guard District Bridge Administration Branch Chief; telephone (504) 671-2128, email Douglas.A.Blakemore@uscg.mil.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. Background, Purpose and Legal Basis**

The CSX Transportation Railroad drawbridge has a vertical clearance of 5.5' in the closed to navigation position and operates in accordance with 33 CFR 117.5. The CSX Railroad Company, the owner of the bridge requested to change operation of the bridge from a tended drawbridge to a remotely operated drawbridge.

CSX has completed installation of a remote operation system at the bridge and a remote control center, located in Mobile, AL. At the bridge, CSX has installed infrared cameras, closed circuit cameras and TVs, communication systems and information technology systems on the bridge that allow an operator from Mobile to monitor and control the bridge. They have also developed an operations manual that remote operators use to control each bridge.

The purpose of this test is to evaluate the impact to navigation safety and vessels reasonable ability to use the waterway while the drawbridge is operated from the CSX remote control center in Mobile, AL. The bridge's operation schedule and methods to contact the bridge to open will remain the same.

The waterway users include recreational vessels and commercial tows; which combined requires approximately six openings a day.

The Coast Guard will inform the users of the waterways through our Local and Broadcast Notices to Mariners of the change in operating schedule for the bridge so that vessel operators can arrange their transits to minimize any impact caused by the temporary deviation.

In accordance with 33 CFR 117.35(e), the drawbridge must return to its regular operating schedule immediately at the end of the effective period of this temporary deviation. This deviation from the operating regulations is authorized under 33 CFR 117.35.

## **II. Public Participation and Request for Comments**

We view public participation as essential to effective rulemaking, and will consider all comments and material received during the comment period. Your comment can help shape the outcome of this rulemaking. If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this rulemaking, indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation.

We encourage you to submit comments through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <https://www.regulations.gov>. If your material cannot be submitted using <https://www.regulations.gov>, contact the person in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section of this document for alternate instructions.

We accept anonymous comments. All comments received will be posted without change to <https://www.regulations.gov> and will include any personal information you have provided. For more about privacy and submissions in response to this document, see DHS's eRulemaking System of Records notice (85 FR 14226, March 11, 2020).

Documents mentioned in this test deviation as being available in this docket and all public comments, will be in our online docket at <https://www.regulations.gov> and can be viewed by following that website's instructions. Additionally, if you go to the online docket and sign up for email alerts, you will be notified when comments are posted or a final rule is published.

Dated: January 11, 2021

Douglas Allen Blakemore, Sr.,

Chief, Bridge Administration Branch,

Eighth Coast Guard District.

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