



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 100

[Docket Number USCG-2025-1120]

RIN 1625-AA08

Special Local Regulation; 4th of July Fireworks, East River and Upper New York Bay, Manhattan, Queens, and Brooklyn, NY

AGENCY: Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security.

ACTION: Temporary final rule.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard is establishing a temporary special local regulation (SLR) for certain navigable waters of the East River and Upper New York Bay, in New York Harbor, NY. The SLR is needed to provide for the safety of life on these highly congested waterways immediately before, during, and after a 4th of July fireworks display. The rule controls vessel movement, creates spectator zones, establishes an exclusion zone near launch sites and prohibits entry into moving protection zones around transiting fireworks barges unless specifically authorized by the Captain of the Port, Sector New York, or their designated representative.

DATES: This rule is effective from 4 p.m. on July 4, 2026, through 11:30 p.m. on July 5, 2026. It will only be enforced from 4:00 p.m. until 11:30 p.m. on July 4, 2026, unless the event is delayed because of weather conditions, in which case it will be subject to enforcement during those same hours on July 5, 2026.

ADDRESSES: To view available documents go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and search for USCG-2025-1120.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions about this rule, contact MST1 Scott Baumgartner, Sector New York Waterways Management Division, U.S. Coast Guard; telephone 718–801–2932, or email Scott.A.Baumgartner@uscg.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Table of Abbreviations

CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COTP	Captain of the Port, Sector New York
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
FR	Federal Register
NPRM	Notice of proposed rulemaking
§	Section
SLR	Special Local Regulation
U.S.C.	United States Code
VHF FM	Very High Frequency Modulated Radio Transmission

II. Background and Authority

Macy’s has hosted an annual 4th of July fireworks display in varying locations in New York Harbor since 1976. The display typically involves multiple barges concurrently launching fireworks as part of a nationally recognized celebration that draws significant audiences on land, on water, and via national television broadcasts. In 2022, the Coast Guard established a permanent special local regulation (SLR) for the event, codified at 33 CFR 100.110. This SLR was established to address the safety hazards of a barge-based fireworks display located near Roosevelt Island on the East River and the resulting congestion of spectator vessels in the adjacent waters. However, the number of fireworks barges used in the display, the location of launch sites, and the scale of the event have changed each year since the SLR was established.

On October 23, 2025, the Coast Guard received an Application for Marine Event, under 33 CFR 100.15, in which Macy’s proposed to launch fireworks from multiple locations in a significantly larger event in 2026 than in past years. On January 16, 2026, Macy’s updated their fireworks launch location to include five barges on the East River south of Roosevelt Island, NY, three barges on the East River southwest of the Brooklyn

Bridge, near Manhattan, NY, and one land-based location on the deck of the Brooklyn Bridge over the East River.

On April 6, 2026, the Coast Guard published in the Federal Register a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) titled “Special Local Regulation; 4th of July Fireworks, East River and Upper New York Bay, Manhattan, Queens, and Brooklyn, NY” (91 FR 17170) based on the proposed fireworks event of this scale and at these planned fireworks launch locations. The Coast Guard explained why the Macy’s fireworks display NPRM was issued and invited comments on the proposed regulatory actions related to this event.

In that NPRM, the Coast Guard also discussed that this year’s Macy’s fireworks display will take place concurrently with an International Naval Review and Sail 4th 250 event in New York Harbor. A temporary final rule for these events was published in the Federal Register on May 18, 2026, titled “Special Local Regulation, Temporary Anchorage Ground Suspension, and Security Zones: Sail 4th 250, International Naval Review 250; Port of New York and New Jersey” (91 FR 28407). Any waterway restrictions established as a result of that temporary final rule will also apply during the Macy’s fireworks display.

On May 1, 2026, Macy’s informed the Coast Guard that they would no longer be launching fireworks from any of the five barges planned near Roosevelt Island. Instead, Macy’s would be reducing the overall footprint of the fireworks display to a single launch area near the Brooklyn Bridge. However, the details regarding the number and positions of individual launch locations, and the types and sizes of fireworks to be used in those locations were not available before the comment period for the NPRM ended on May 6, 2026. On May 14, 2026, Macy’s confirmed the fireworks show would use four barges in the East River between the Brooklyn Bridge and Governors Island along with a single land-based launch location spanning major portions of the Brooklyn Bridge.

Unfortunately, it was impracticable to reopen the comment period on the proposed rule at

that time to provide notice of these changes, given that the final rule would have to be in effect by July 4, 2026.

Hazards from fireworks displays include those resulting from the potential for the accidental discharge of fireworks, and those resulting from the potential for being hit by dangerous projectiles, including falling hot embers or other debris. The COTP has therefore determined that these potential hazards are a safety concern for anyone within exclusionary area ECHO (“E”).

The COTP is establishing this rule under the authority of 46 U.S.C. 70041 to ensure the safety of participants, spectators, non-participants, and other transiting vessels by establishing multiple zones for viewing the event and ensuring a safe distance from the fireworks launch sites. The regulatory text appears at the end of this document.

The Coast Guard finds that, under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3), good cause exists for making this rule effective less than 30 days after publication in the Federal Register because it is impracticable to do so within the time remaining between now and July 4, 2026, when the rule must be in effect to protect personnel, vessels, and the marine environment.

III. Discussion of Comments, Changes, and the Rule

Discussion of Comments

During the comment period that ended on May 6, 2026, we received four comments.

Two comments supported the proposed rule for its potential to enhance public health and safety by restricting access to those waters potentially impacted by hazards associated with fireworks displays and by establishing spectator areas to reduce the risk of vessel collisions. These comments also recommended the Coast Guard expand the rule to address environmental and health concerns associated with fireworks displays including impacts on ambient air quality and ambient noise levels. While the Coast Guard

acknowledges these concerns, regulating public health impacts to air quality from fireworks displays and noise levels of fireworks displays are outside the scope of this rulemaking and beyond the Coast Guard's regulatory authority.

One comment had multiple recommendations to improve overall safety on the water for the event. First, among these was a recommendation to establish a harbor-wide no wake zone with no exceptions for ferries. The second recommendation was to have sufficient assets available and ready to respond to vessel operators not following regulations established to promote safe boating. The third recommendation was to eliminate “passenger-for-hire” operations not operating in compliance with existing regulation and eliminate “bareboat” or “demise” chartering during this event. The Coast Guard acknowledges the commenter’s concerns regarding vessel congestion, hazardous wakes, and operators not in compliance with existing regulations. However, establishing a harbor-wide No-Wake Zone would extend the geographic scope of this rulemaking beyond the rule’s focus on addressing safety issues arising from the fireworks display, which will only affect portions of the East River and Upper Bay in the vicinity of Governors Island.

Within the areas regulated by this rulemaking, Coast Guard Navigation rules codified in 33 CFR part 83 will continue to apply at all times. These rules provide that every vessel shall at all times proceed at a safe speed so that it can take proper and effective action to avoid collision and be stopped within a distance appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions, including visibility and traffic density. Additionally, we are requiring that vessels must operate at the minimum speed necessary to maintain safe course while crossing through area ECHO (“E”) and comply with all directions that may be provided by the Coast Guard COTP or their designated representative. To that end, there will be a mix of Official Patrol Vessels from the Coast

Guard and assisting Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies patrolling the waterways to respond to threats to safety and security.

Altering or suspending passenger-for-hire regulations is outside the scope of this regulatory action. Therefore, this rulemaking does not change any existing rules for vessel inspections, bareboat and demise chartering, charter agreements, or mariner licensing. Existing federal regulations regarding illegal passenger vessel operations remain strictly in effect and will be enforced under their respective statutory authorities.

The fourth comment was from the Staten Island Ferry-NYC DOT. They expressed concern regarding potential vessel congestion near ferry terminals, specifically Whitehall Terminal within Spectator Area FOXTROT (“F”), prior to the activation of the regulated areas. The commenter requested on-water law enforcement assets to manage early-arriving spectator traffic and prevent loitering vessels from impeding the safe maneuvering of ferries making their final approaches and departures.

The Coast Guard acknowledges the critical nature of these municipal ferry operations and the necessity of maintaining clear navigable waters around the terminals. To mitigate congestion and ensure the safe transit of the ferries, the regulatory text stipulates that Spectator Area FOXTROT (“F”) will not officially open to spectator vessels until 8:00 p.m. This timeline was deliberately established to ensure ferry operators can safely complete their scheduled runs into and out of the regulated areas before spectator vessels are authorized to congregate. Additionally, this rulemaking includes a provision requiring that vessels must depart Spectator Area FOXTROT (“F”) without delay following the conclusion of the fireworks display. This requirement ensures the waterways are swiftly cleared so that municipal ferry operations can resume their mandated schedules without delay. While the establishment of Spectator Area FOXTROT (“F”) does not occur until 8:00 p.m., the navigation rules codified in 33 CFR Part 83 will continue to apply at all times. To support these provisions, the Coast Guard

and assisting partner agency on-water assets will be actively patrolling the harbor prior to the 8:00 p.m. opening of Spectator Area FOXTROT (“F”), during the event, and immediately following the display to prevent unauthorized loitering, enforce the designated timelines, and safeguard commercial ferry transit.

Discussion of Changes to the Rule

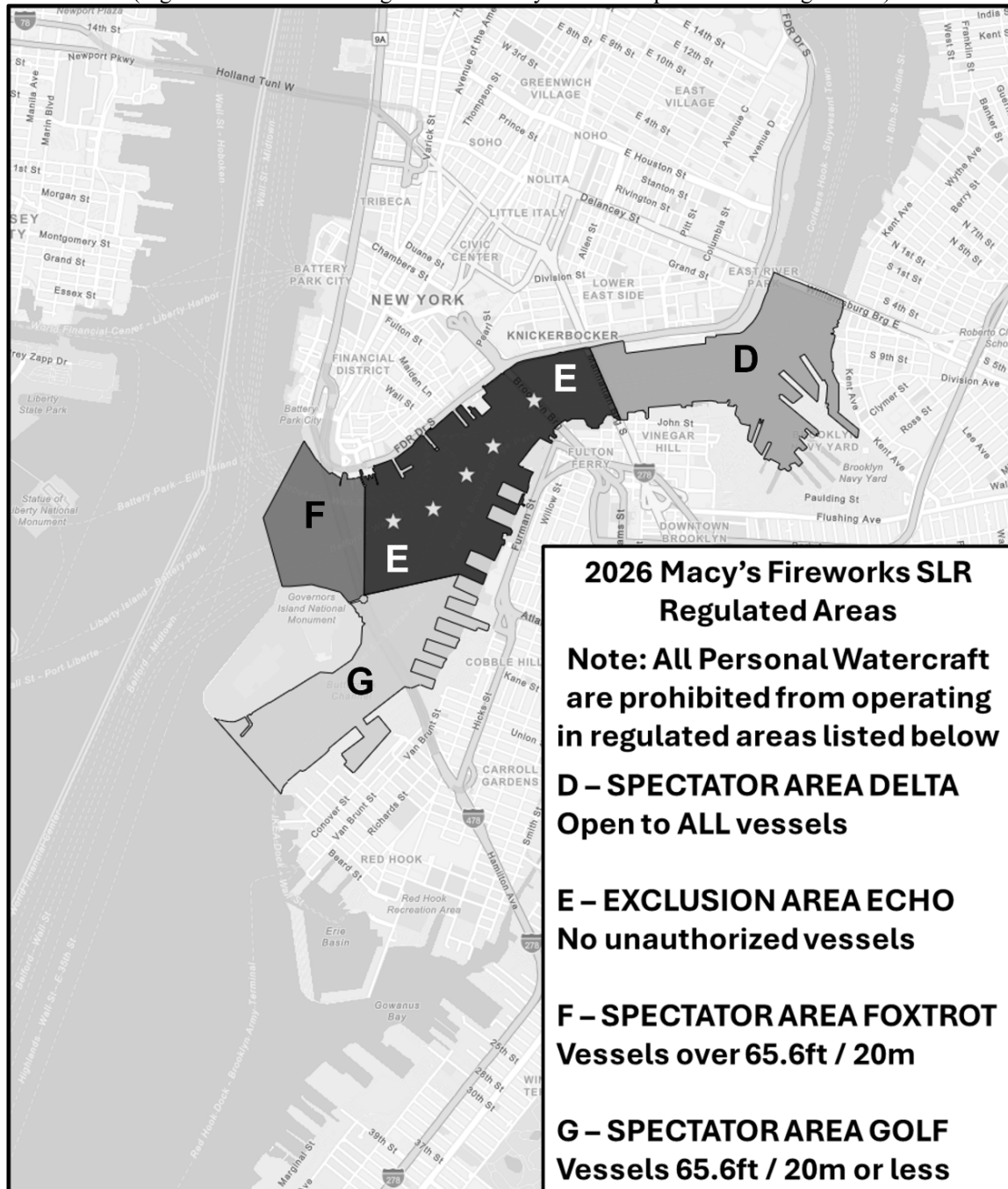
While there are no changes to the regulatory text based on the comments received, there are changes to the rule that was previously proposed. The changes to the fireworks launch locations made by the event sponsor on May 14, 2026, has made Spectator Areas ALPHA (“A”) and BRAVO (“B”) and Exclusion Area CHARLIE (“C”) unnecessary. Additionally, the northern extent of Spectator Area DELTA (“D”) was reduced in size and now terminates at the Williamsburg Bridge on the Manhattan and Brooklyn sides of the East River as the portions of the East River north of the bridge are not expected to have significant spectator traffic for a single fireworks launch area between the Brooklyn Bridge and Governors Island. The enforcement period of this rulemaking was extended to begin at 4:00 p.m. instead of 5:30 p.m. to match the updated movement schedule of the fireworks barges from their staging area to their launch locations. Exclusion Area ECHO (“E”) and Spectator Areas FOXTROT (“F”) and GOLF (“G”) are unchanged from the proposed rulemaking. Also, there were no changes to the sizes of vessels allowed in the spectator areas in this rulemaking.

Discussion of the Rule

This rule establishes a special local regulation from 4:00 p.m. on July 4, 2026, until 11:30 p.m. on July 5, 2026. It will only be enforced from 4:00 p.m. until 11:30 p.m. on July 4, 2026, unless the event is delayed because of weather conditions, in which case it will be subject to enforcement during those same hours on July 5, 2026. The duration of the enforcement times is intended to ensure the safety of vessels, participants, spectators and non-participants, and other vessels transiting the area immediately before,

during, and after the fireworks display.

(Figure 1: Chartlet showing the area and layout of the Special Local Regulation.)



When large numbers of vessels operate in close proximity to one another, the potential for other hazards, such as collisions and allisions with persons, vessels, and infrastructure increases. The COTP has determined the high volume of commercial and recreational vessels expected to be operating in close proximity to one another in addition to the hazard areas around the fireworks displays warrant additional regulation to ensure the safety of participant and non-participant vessels. This rule also prohibits the operation

of all personal watercraft within the regulated areas during the enforcement period of the rule. Due to their high speed and maneuverability, coupled with a history of incursions into exclusion zones within New York harbor, personal watercraft pose a significant safety risk in congested waterways and are considered a risk to the safety and security of this event.

The Navigation Rules, 33 CFR Part 83, which are now in force, will continue to apply at all times within the regulated areas. The Coast Guard will provide notice of the special local regulation by Local Notice to Mariners, Broadcast Notice to Mariners, and on-scene designated representatives. The regulatory text we are enforcing appears at the end of this document.

IV. Regulatory Analyses

The Coast Guard developed this rule after considering numerous statutes and Executive Orders related to rulemaking. The Coast Guard's analyses based on a number of these statutes and Executive orders are summarized below.

A. Impact on Small Entities

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 (RFA), 5 U.S.C. 601-612, as amended, requires Federal agencies to consider the potential impact of regulations on small entities during rulemaking. 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. Section 605 of the RFA allows an agency to certify a rule, in lieu of preparing an analysis, if the rulemaking is not expected to have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

The Coast Guard certifies that, although some small entities may intend to transit through the regulated area established under this special local regulation, this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. Vessel

traffic will be able to safely transit around this regulated area using the Hudson River and Harlem River. Additionally, vessel traffic will only be restricted in the regulated area for approximately seven and a half hours on either July 4, 2026, or July 5, 2026. Finally, the Coast Guard will make advance public notification through a Broadcast Notice to Mariners (BNM) via VHF FM marine channel 16, a Local Notice to Mariners (LNM), a Marine Safety Information Bulletin (MSIB), and/or a Coast Guard Advisory Notice (CGAN) which will allow small entities to adjust their transit plans and operations. The rule also allows vessels to request permission to enter the regulated area from the COTP.

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-121), if this rule will affect your small business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions, contact the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

Small businesses may send comments to the Small Business and Agriculture Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman and the Regional Small Business Regulatory Fairness Boards by calling 1-888-REG-FAIR (1-888-734-3247).

B. Collection of Information

This rule will not call for a new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520).

C. Federalism and Indian Tribal Governments

We have analyzed this rule under Executive Order 13132, Federalism, and have determined that it is consistent with the fundamental federalism principles and preemption requirements described in that Order.

Also, this rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, because it does not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities

between the Federal Government and Indian tribes.

D. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

As required by The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531-1538), the Coast Guard certifies that this rule will not result in an annual expenditure of \$100,000,000 or more (adjusted for inflation) by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector.

E. Environment

We have analyzed this rule under Department of Homeland Security Directive 023-01, Rev. 1, associated implementing instructions, and Environmental Planning COMDTINST 5090.1 (series), which guide the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), and have determined that this action is one of a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment.

This rule is a special local regulation. It is categorically excluded from further review under paragraph L61 of Appendix A, Table 1 of DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01, Rev. 1. A Record of Environmental Consideration supporting this determination is available in the docket.

List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 100

Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Waterways

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard amends 33 CFR Part 100 as follows:

PART 100—SAFETY OF LIFE ON NAVIGABLE WATERS

1. The authority citation for Part 100 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 46 U.S.C. 70041; 33 CFR 1.05-1.

2. Add § 100.T0199-1120 to read as follows:

§ 100.T0199-1120 Special regulated area; 4th of July Fireworks, East River and Upper New York Bay, Manhattan, Queens, and Brooklyn, NY

(a) *Regulated areas.* The regulations in this section apply to the following areas:

(1) *Spectator Area DELTA (“D”)*: All waters of the East River bounded by a line connecting the following points: starting at 40°42'52.75"N, 073°58'30.37"W (near Williamsburg Bridge, Manhattan); thence to 40° 42' 45.84"N, 073° 58' 07.63"W (near Williamsburg Bridge, Brooklyn); thence to 40°42'16.42"N, 073°59'20.13"W (near Manhattan Bridge; Brooklyn); thence to 40°42'34.43"N, 073°59'30.24"W (near Manhattan Bridge; Manhattan), then along the shore back to the point of origin.

(2) *Exclusion Area ECHO (“E”)*: All navigable waters of the East River bounded by a line connecting the following points: starting at 40°42'34.43"N, 073°59'30.24"W (near Manhattan Bridge; Manhattan); thence to 40°42'16.42"N, 073°59'20.13"W (near Manhattan Bridge; Brooklyn); thence along shore to 40°41'38.59"N, 074°00'12.43"W (near Pier 6, Brooklyn); thence to 40°41'33.44"N, 074°00'43.56"W (near the Hugh Carey Tunnel Ventilator Building, Governors Island); thence to 40°42'00.15"N, 074°00'43.06"W (near the Whitehall Ferry Terminal, Manhattan); then along shore back to the point of origin.

(3) *Spectator Area FOXTROT (“F”)*: All navigable waters of New York Harbor bounded by a line connecting the following points: starting at 40°42'00.15"N, 074°00'43.06"W (near the Whitehall Ferry Terminal, Manhattan); thence to 40°41'33.44"N, 074°00'43.56"W (near the Hugh Carey Tunnel Ventilator Building, Governors Island); thence along shore to 40°41'35.48"N, 074°01'10.57"W (near Castle Williams, Governors Island); thence to 40°41'52.28"N, 074°01'16.13"W (near Deep Water Channel Lighted Buoy "1"); thence to 40°42'11.45"N, 074°01'03.02"W (near Castle Clinton, Manhattan); then along shore back to the point of origin.

(4) *Spectator Area GOLF ("G")*: All navigable waters of New York Harbor bounded by a line connecting the following points: starting at 40°41'33.44"N, 074°00'43.56"W (near the Hugh Carey Tunnel Ventilator Building, Governors Island); thence to 40°41'38.59"N, 074°00'12.43"W (near Pier 6, Brooklyn); thence along shore to 40°40'44.32"N, 074°01'10.24"W (near Brooklyn Cruise Terminal, Brooklyn); thence to 40°41'03.13"N, 074°01'32.08"W (near the southern tip of Governors Island); then along shore back to the point of origin.

(5) *Moving Protection Zone*: A moving protection zone on all navigable waters within a 50-yard radius of the participating barges while they are loaded with explosive material will be enforced from the point of departure within the COTP New York zone until placement at the intended destination. The point of departure will be determined prior to enforcement of the moving protection zone, and the details will be released through a Broadcast Notice to Mariners.

(6) These coordinates are based on the World Geodetic System (WGS 84)/North American Datum 83 (NAD 83).

(b) *Definitions*. As used in this section –

(1) *Designated representative* means a Coast Guard Patrol Commander, including a Coast Guard coxswain, petty officer, or other officer operating a Coast Guard vessel and a Federal, State, and local officer designated by or assisting the Captain of the Port, Sector New York (COTP) in the enforcement of the regulated areas in this section.

(2) *Official Patrol Vessel* means any Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, Federal, State or local law enforcement vessel assigned or approved by the COTP to assist in the enforcement of the regulated areas in this section.

(3) *Participant* means all persons and vessels registered with the event sponsor as a participant in the event.

(4) *Personal watercraft* means any vessel propelled by a water-jet pump or

other machinery as its primary source of motive power and designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing, or kneeling on the vessel, rather than sitting or standing within the vessel's hull.

(5) *Non-participant* means a person or vessel, including a spectator or spectator vessel, not registered with the event sponsor as participants or official patrol vessels.

(c) *Regulations.* (1) All non-participants are prohibited from entering, transiting through, anchoring in, or remaining within the regulated areas described in paragraph (a) of this section, except as provided in paragraph (c)(2), unless authorized by the COTP or their designated representative.

(2) All vessels that are authorized by the COTP or a designated representative to enter the regulated areas established by this section must adhere to the following restrictions:

(i) Spectator Area DELTA (“D”) is open to all vessels. Vessels desiring to use area DELTA (“D”) may begin entering the designated spectator area at 8:00 p.m.

(ii) All non-participant vessels are prohibited from entering Exclusion Area ECHO (“E”) without permission from the COTP or their designated representative after 7:30 p.m. All vessels authorized to transit by the COTP or their designated representative must pass as close to the pierhead as safely possible and must transit through the area no later than 8:00 p.m. Vessels must operate at the minimum speed necessary to maintain safe course while crossing through area ECHO (“E”) and comply with all directions that may be provided by the Coast Guard.

(iii) Spectator Area FOXTROT (“F”) is limited to vessels over 65.6 feet (20 meters) in length. Vessels desiring to use area FOXTROT (“F”) may begin entering the designated spectator area at 8:00 p.m. and must be in a holding position no later than 9:00 p.m. Vessels must depart Spectator Area FOXTROT (“F”) without delay following the

conclusion of the fireworks display.

(iv) Spectator Area Golf (“G”) is limited to vessels less than or equal to 65.6 feet (20 meters) in length. Vessels desiring to use Spectator Area GOLF (“G”) may enter the area starting at 8:00 p.m.

(3) During periods of enforcement all persons and vessels in the regulated areas must comply with all lawful orders and directions from the Coast Guard Patrol Commander, COTP, or their designated representative.

(4) During periods of enforcement, the COTP or their designated representative may restrict the number of vessels allowed within the regulated area to prevent overcrowding and ensure safe navigation. Once the COTP or their designated representative determines that the regulated area has reached a safe capacity, no additional vessels will be allowed to enter unless specifically authorized by the COTP or their designated representative.

(5) The operation of personal watercraft is prohibited in any regulated areas.

(6) Vessel operators desiring to enter or operate within the regulated areas outside the restrictions identified in (c)(2) of this section should contact the Coast Guard Patrol Commander, COTP, or their designated representative at 844-NYC-USCG or on VHF 16 to obtain permission.

(7) Non-participant and Spectator Vessels must not anchor, block, loiter or impede the transit of event participants or official patrol vessels in the regulated areas during the enforcement period and times unless authorized by the COTP or their designated representative.

(d) *Enforcement periods.* (1) This section is in effect from 4 p.m. July 4, 2026, to 11:30 p.m. July 5, 2026. It will only be subject to enforcement, however, from 4 p.m. through 11:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 4, 2026, unless the event is delayed because of weather conditions, in which case it may be subject to enforcement of those same hours

on July 5, 2026.

(2) The COTP will provide advance notice of the enforcement period for the regulated areas as well as any changes to the enforcement times of the regulated area through local notice to mariners, broadcast notice to mariners, and through on-scene notice by the COTP's designated representative or official patrol vessels.

Jonathan Andrechik,
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard,
Captain of the Port, Sector New York.

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