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## MEMORANDUM

TO: AWO Members

FROM: Michael L. Breslin

DATE: October 12, 2022

RE: AWO Board of Directors Provides Increased Flexibility to RCP Users

Please be advised that this correspondence is sent on behalf of the Responsible Carrier Program ® (RCP) Standards Board of The American Waterways Operators (AWO), which “has the authority to issue Clarifications and Directives Memoranda, as needed, to guide RCP interpretation by AWO-recognized third-party organizations.”<sup>1</sup>

Following the end of the phase-in period for Certificates of Inspection for towing vessels, the Coast Guard released policy to clarify and to initiate enforcement of [46 CFR § 138.315](#), which requires an external audit of all vessels covered by a TSMS certificate to be conducted during the five-year period of validity of the TSMS certificate. According to the [policy](#), the vessels must be selected randomly according to a program developed by the Coast Guard-approved third-party organization that issued the TSMS certificate. Consistent with the Board’s previous direction to streamline the administration of RCP certification, in October 2022 the RCP Standards Board recommended and the Board of Directors approved the establishment of an equivalency that ensures vessels undergoing external audits through a random audit program administered by a Coast Guard-approved third-party organization are considered compliant with the RCP’s external audit requirements, while allowing RCP users that have chosen the Coast Guard option to maintain their external vessel audit schedule. This change is incorporated in section [RCP.II.G.2.a.2](#), with an effective date of October 12, 2022.

AWO remains committed to maintaining the RCP as a member benefit and reducing burdens on members using the RCP as their SMS. If you should have any questions related to this change, or any other RCP-related issue, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Michael L Breslin

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<sup>1</sup> RCP Addendum F.d.