Provisions on the Administration of the Navigation of Foreign Vessels in the Waters of the Yangtze River

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Unofficial English translation prepared for reference only. The official Chinese text prevails.

Approved by the State Council on April 9, 1983 and promulgated by the Ministry of Communications on April 20, 1983; revised and approved in 1986, 1992 and 1997; amended on March 2, 2019.

Article 1 — The Yangtze River is an inland river of the People's Republic of China. These Provisions are formulated, in accordance with the Rules for the Administration of Foreign-flag Vessels of the People's Republic of China, for the purpose of safeguarding the sovereignty of the People's Republic of China, ensuring vessel safety, and maintaining order in the waters and ports of the Yangtze River.

Article 2 — Foreign-flag motor vessels, non-motorized vessels and other waterborne means of transport (hereinafter "vessels") navigating or berthing in the Yangtze River waters and ports of the People's Republic of China shall comply with these Provisions and all relevant laws, administrative regulations and rules of the People's Republic of China.

Article 3 — For the purposes of these Provisions, "Yangtze River waters" means the main-channel waters between the line connecting Liuheiwu downstream of the Liuhekou (31°30′ N, 121°18′ E) and Shixingan downstream of the Shiqiaokou of Chongming Island (31°37′ N, 121°22′ E), extending up the Yangtze River to the line connecting Yaozui on the north bank of the middle reaches (29°29′ N, 113°6′ E) and Qizhou on the south bank (29°28′ N, 113°6′ E), and the line connecting Qilishan on the south bank of the Xiangjiang River at the mouth of Dongting Lake (29°24′ N, 113°7′ E) and Luxizhou on the north bank (29°25′ N, 113°6′ E).

For the purposes of these Provisions, "ports" means the ports open to foreign-flag vessels within the Yangtze River waters referred to in the preceding paragraph.

Article 4 — These Provisions shall be implemented by the harbor supervision authority of the People's Republic of China, and all vessels shall accept the supervision and administration of the harbor supervision authority.

Article 5 — A vessel entering the Yangtze River waters and its ports shall obtain approval from the harbor supervision authority of the People's Republic of China.

A vessel approved to enter the Yangtze River waters and its ports shall accept inspection by the harbor supervision, border inspection, customs and other departments, and complete the relevant procedures. Where necessary, the aforesaid departments shall have the right to carry out onboard supervision.

Article 6 — A vessel entering the Yangtze River waters and its ports shall, in accordance with the relevant provisions, navigate with a pilot on board or obtain pilotage guidance.

Article 7 — While in the Yangtze River waters and its ports, a vessel shall display the flags and signals prescribed by the relevant provisions, and shall comply with the regulations on navigation, berthing and collision avoidance.

Article 8 — While in the Yangtze River waters and its ports, a vessel shall not engage in the following activities:

(1) surveying, photographing, filming or mapping without approval;

(2) fishing or engaging in other activities affecting navigation safety;

(3) engaging in trade or other activities with unauthorized vessels, or transporting unauthorized persons or goods; and

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(4) other activities prohibited by laws, administrative regulations and rules.

Article 9 — While in the Yangtze River waters and its ports, a vessel shall not arbitrarily discharge or dump oil, oily mixtures, or other polluting substances and wastes.

Article 10 — A vessel shall comply with the regulations on the entry and exit of persons, and its crew and passengers shall accept border inspection and health quarantine inspection.

Article 11 — While in the Yangtze River waters and its ports, a vessel shall report to the harbor supervision authority in accordance with the prescribed time and contents, and shall accept its supervision.

Article 12 — A vessel shall not, without approval, engage in cargo transfer, barge transshipment or similar operations in the Yangtze River waters, except for the normal loading and unloading of cargo in ports.

Article 13 — A vessel shall not, without approval, provide pilotage, towage or other services to other vessels, nor shall it engage in passenger transport or goods transport within the Yangtze River waters.

Article 14 — Where a vessel needs to make a temporary berthing in the Yangtze River waters due to special circumstances such as severe weather or flood peaks, it shall berth as close as possible to the edge of one side of the channel, shall not occupy the main channel, and shall promptly report the anchoring time, position and departure time to the nearest harbor supervision authority; without approval of the local public security department, the personnel on board shall not go ashore.

Article 15 — A vessel shall not navigate at a speed that endangers the safety of other vessels and the facilities on both banks.

Article 16 — While in the Yangtze River waters and its ports, matters concerning navigation, berthing and avoidance shall be handled in accordance with the Inland River Collision Avoidance Rules promulgated by the Ministry of Communications of the People’s Republic of China.

Article 17 — Vessels using signals shall comply with the Inland River Collision Avoidance Rules promulgated by the Ministry of Communications of the People’s Republic of China and other relevant signal provisions; matters not provided for shall be handled in accordance with the relevant international signal rules.

Article 18 — While in the Yangtze River waters and its ports, a vessel shall not arbitrarily discharge or dump oil, oily mixtures, or other polluting substances and wastes.

Article 19 — Matters covered by these Provisions shall be handled in accordance with these Provisions; matters not covered shall be handled in accordance with the Rules for the Administration of Foreign-flag Vessels of the People’s Republic of China and other relevant provisions.

Article 20 — These Provisions shall take effect on the date of promulgation.

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