



Marine Safety Information Bulletin

Ninth CG District Commander
U.S. Coast Guard
Inspections and Investigations Branch
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MSIB Number: 004-19
Date: December 04, 2019
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COAST GUARD EXAMINATIONS OF CANADIAN FREIGHT VESSELS (LAKERS) OPERATING EXCLUSIVELY ON THE GREAT LAKES

U.S. and Canadian freight vessels operating exclusively on the Great Lakes and in the St. Lawrence River maintain similar safety and security regulatory standards. Per 46 U.S. Code 3303, Canadian freight vessels, commonly referred to as “Canadian Lakers” have been granted vessel examination reciprocity by the U.S. Coast Guard due to Canada and the U.S. having similar vessel inspection laws and standards.

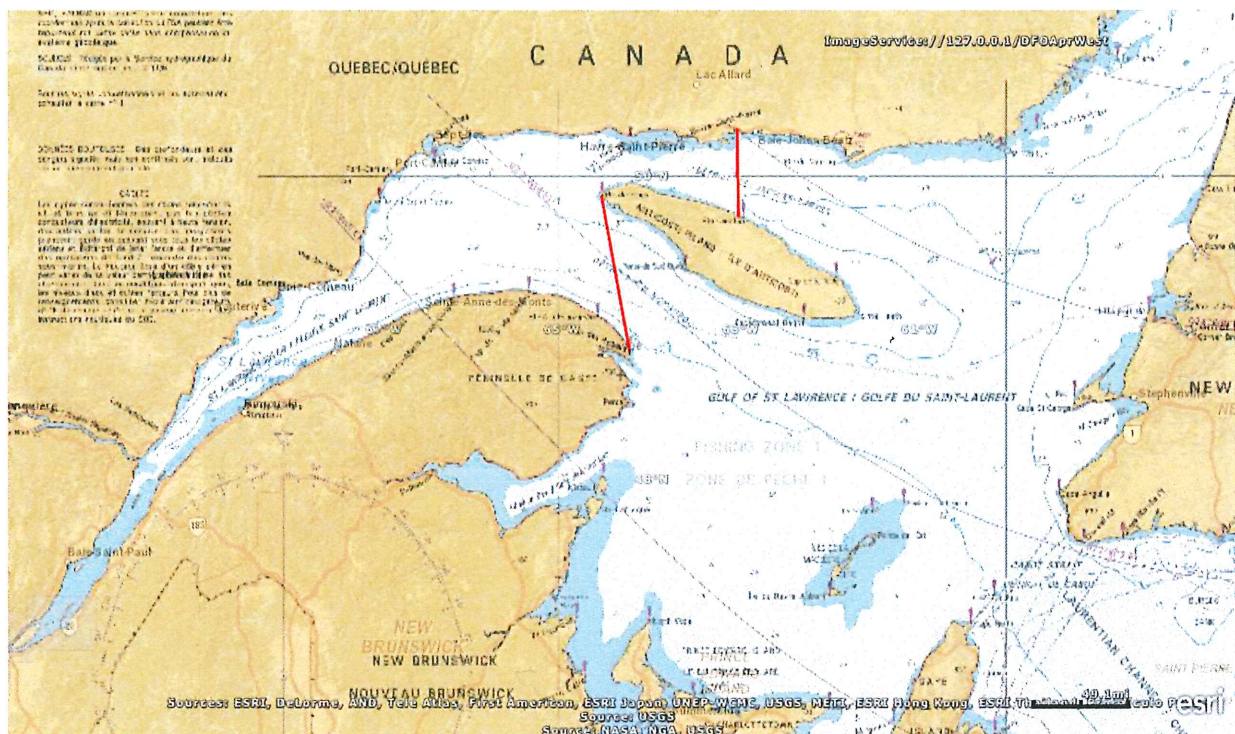
In accordance with U.S. Coast Guard Ninth District guidance, Ref (a), Canadian Lakers are defined as Canadian flagged cargo vessels that operate exclusively on the Great Lakes and possess all of the following:

- (a) A valid Transport Canada Inspection Certificate endorsed for the route Near Coastal Voyage, Class 1 (NC1), limited to Internal Waters Zone 1 (IW1); and
- (b) A valid Marine Transportation Security Regulation Certificate.

“Exclusively on the Great Lakes” means voyages within the Great Lakes of North America and the St. Lawrence River as far eastward as a straight line drawn:

- (a) From Cap-des-Rosiers to West Point, Anticosti Island; and
- (b) From Anticosti Island to the north shore of St. Lawrence River along a meridian of longitude 63° West.

The chart below illustrates the eastern limit of the policy application for Lakers:



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A Canadian Freight Vessel that operates outside of the defined area of the Great Lakes (as defined above) does not meet the definition of a "Canadian Laker" and shall be examined with current Port State Control guidelines (SOLAS, MARPOL, et al.). Discrepancies or non-compliance items that result in an operational control shall be reported to the Ninth District, who will provide support to field units as necessary.

The Coast Guard is not limited in imposing control actions on Canadian vessels if the examiner observes, or otherwise obtains, clear grounds to determine that a Canadian vessel does not comply with applicable international conventions.

The cognizant Captain of the Port may detain any vessel when the condition of the ship or its crew does not substantially comply with the applicable conventions to ensure that the ship will not sail until it can proceed without presenting a danger to the ship or persons on board, or without presenting an unreasonable threat of harm to the marine environment.

If you find that a Canadian Freight Vessel no longer meets the criteria to be considered a "Canadian Laker" based on the locations to which it travels, contact the Ninth District Prevention staff.

This MSIB is provided for information purposes only and does not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirement. For additional information or inquiries, please contact LT Matt MacKillop at (216) 902-6343 or email at Matthew.D.MacKillop@uscg.mil.

Sincerely,



K. D. FLOYD
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Chief, Prevention Division
By direction

Note 1: Vessels carrying liquid bulk dangerous cargoes, and/or a full suite of issued SOLAS certificates shall be examined in accordance with current Port State Control guidelines and policies regardless of the length of time the vessel will be operating on the Great Lakes.

References: (a) D9-WI-PSC-(001) (01), Examinations and Investigations Onboard Canadian Freight Vessels (Lakers) Operating Exclusively on the Great Lakes.