

Section 4.3

General Salvage Policy (Other than Towing)

The MSAP and General Salvage Policies were developed separately and remain distinct from one another.

4.3.1 General

When commercial salvors are on scene performing salvage, Coast Guard units may assist them within the unit's capabilities, if the salvor requests. When no commercial salvage facilities are on scene, Coast Guard units should only engage in salvage other than towing when limited salvage operations (e.g., ungrounding, pumping, damage control measures, etc.) **can prevent a worsening situation or complete loss of the vessel.** *Any salvage operations shall be performed at the discretion of the unit CO/OINC.*

NOTE: *Coast Guard units and personnel shall not be unduly hazarded in performing salvage.*

4.3.2 Small Craft

4.3.2.1 This policy applies to small craft that need salvage other than towing. However, when no commercial salvage companies are available within a reasonable time or distance, the District commander may modify the policy to provide for refloating a grounded boat which is **not in peril** of further damage or loss if:

- (a) the Coast Guard units are capable of rendering the assistance,
- (b) the owner requests the assistance and agrees to the specific effort to be made, and
- (c) Coast Guard units and personnel are not unduly hazarded by the operation.

4.3.2.2 Prudent actions include:

- (a) Allowing the next tide to refloat the vessel,
- (b) Helping the mariner set anchors,
- (c) Evacuating the passengers,
- (d) Helping the mariner determine the vessel's seaworthiness.

4.3.3 Operator Insistence

Occasionally an operator will insist that the Coast Guard take action, such as pulling a vessel from a reef, which Coast Guard personnel on scene consider unwise. The Coast Guard is under no obligation to agree to any such request or demand. If a decision to comply with such a request is made, it should be made clear that the operator is assuming the risk of the operation. The fact that the action is undertaken at operator's request, and is against Coast Guard advice, should be logged.