

RCW 88.46.135 Emergency response system—Vessel planning

standards. (1) An emergency response towing vessel that is a part of the emergency response system required by RCW 88.46.130 must be stationed at Neah Bay and be available to respond to vessel emergencies. The towing vessel must be able to satisfy the following minimum planning standards:

- (a) Be underway within twenty minutes of a decision to deploy;
 - (b) Be able to deploy at any hour of any day to provide emergency assistance within the capabilities of the minimum planning standards and be safely manned to remain underway for at least forty-eight hours;
 - (c) In severe weather conditions, be capable of making up to, stopping, holding, and towing a drifting or disabled vessel of one hundred eighty thousand metric dead weight tons;
 - (d) In severe weather conditions, be capable of holding position within one hundred feet of another vessel;
 - (e) Be equipped with and maneuverable enough to effectively employ a ship anchor chain recovery hook and line throwing gun;
 - (f) Be capable of a bollard pull of at least seventy short tons;
- and
- (g) Be equipped with appropriate equipment for:
 - (i) Damage control patching;
 - (ii) Vessel dewatering;
 - (iii) Air safety monitoring; and
 - (iv) Digital photography.

(2) The requirements of this section may be fulfilled by one or more private organizations or nonprofit cooperatives providing umbrella coverage under contract to single or multiple covered vessels.

(3) (a) The department must be authorized to contract with the emergency response towing vessel, at the discretion of the department, in response to a potentially emerging maritime casualty or as a precautionary measure during severe storms. All instances of use by the department must be paid for by the department.

(b) Covered vessels that are required to provide an emergency response towing vessel under RCW 88.46.130 may not restrict the emergency response towing vessel from responding to distressed vessels that are not covered vessels.

(4) Nothing in this section limits the ability of a covered vessel to contract with an emergency response towing vessel with capabilities that exceed the minimum capabilities provided for a towing vessel in this section.

(5) The covered vessel owner or operator shall submit a written report to the department as soon as practicable regarding an emergency response system deployment, including photographic documentation determined by the department to be of adequate quality. The report must provide a detailed description of the incident necessitating a response and the actions taken to render assistance under the emergency response system. [2009 c 11 s 3.]

Findings—Intent—2009 c 11: See note following RCW 88.46.130.