



COFR applications impacted by US government shutdown

In the US, the current partial shutdown of the federal government continues, now for more than a month, and this includes affecting such agencies as the U.S. Coast Guard.

Published 23 January 2019

The information provided in this article is intended for general information only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information at the time of publication, no warranty or representation is made regarding its completeness or timeliness. The content in this article does not constitute professional advice, and any reliance on such information is strictly at your own risk. Gard AS, including its affiliated companies, agents and employees, shall not be held liable for any loss, expense, or damage of any kind whatsoever arising from reliance on the information provided, irrespective of whether it is sourced from Gard AS, its shareholders, correspondents, or other contributors.

While certain emergency or essential functions are being carried out without interruption thus far, there have been instances of outage or delay of some ancillary activities and services that impact the maritime shipping community.

In particular, the processes involving application and confirmation of Certificates of Financial Responsibility (commonly known as COFR's), that are required for vessels entering U.S. waters under regulations issued pursuant to the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, are now being affected. The web page of the USCG National Pollution Funds Center has a current notice regarding the situation, and vessel owners and operators should be aware of same:

Due to the partial government shutdown, the Vessel Certification Division at NPFC is only minimally staffed and Certificate of Financial Responsibility (COFR) applications are not being processed. However, the ECOFR site will remain operational and all applicants and guarantors should continue to submit applications, renewals and cancellations as normal. When a COFR holder advises the U.S. Coast Guard that they are enroute to a U.S. port, the Captain of the Port will check with NPFC to see if a valid COFR exists on that vessel. Compliance determinations will be made directly to the Captain of the Port office and the vessel owner/operator will be informed accordingly. Delays in granting approval to enter U.S. waters may occur.

Members and clients may wish to consult with their COFR issuers and/or Qualified Individual's for further detailed guidance and assistance with any particular port of call issues or general COFR documentary delays, until the partial governmental shutdown ends.

Please reference the NPFC website to review their most recent information or to access the ECOFR site: <https://publicsearch.npfc.uscg.mil/COFR/Default.aspx> .

The information provided in this article is intended for general information only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information at the time of publication, no warranty or representation is made regarding its completeness or timeliness. The content in this article does not constitute professional advice, and any reliance on such information is strictly at your own risk. Gard AS, including its affiliated companies, agents and employees, shall not be held liable for any loss, expense, or damage of any kind whatsoever arising from reliance on the information provided, irrespective of whether it is sourced from Gard AS, its shareholders, correspondents, or other contributors.