

MARINE SAFETY/SECURITY
INFORMATION BULLETIN (MSIB) 15-07



Coast Guard Sector San Francisco
Department of Homeland Security



Safety Alert:

Commercial Fishing Vessel "Work-Lights" Create Potential Night Time Navigation Hazard

Mariners directing the movement of large ships in or near the offshore approaches to San Francisco Bay have indicated to the Coast Guard that the high-intensity "work-lights" used by commercial fishing vessels prevent vessel operators from seeing the commercial fishing vessel's navigation lights at night and in low visibility conditions.

A clear and present threat to navigation safety exists when one vessel cannot see the navigation lights of another vessel. If navigation lights are obscured, the aspect of the latter vessel cannot be determined making it extremely difficult for both vessels to successfully execute the nautical rules of the road. International Navigation Rule 20 states that no other lights that may impair the visibility of the lights specified in the Rules shall be displayed from sunrise to sunset and during periods of low visibility. Vessels found to be in violation of Rule 20 may be subject to a \$6,500 fine.

All vessels operating near the San Francisco Bay inbound or outbound off-shore traffic lanes are required to comply with the Navigation Rules as they pertain to navigation lights. Vessels are also encouraged to maintain an active listening watch on VHF/FM Channels 13 and 16 and, when the intentions of another vessel are unclear, communicate to make arrangements to reduce the risk of collision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G. G. Stump".

G. G. Stump
Captain, U. S. Coast Guard
Captain of the Port