

subsection. ~~Provided, that there shall be no such liability where such discharge was due to an Act of God.~~ Clearance of a vessel liable for such costs from a port of the United States may be withheld until such costs are paid or until a bond or other surety satisfactory to the Secretary is posted. Such costs shall constitute a maritime lien on such vessel which may be recovered by action in rem in the district court of the United States for any district within which such vessel may be found.

“(f) In any action instituted by the Secretary of the Interior under subsection (e) of this section, evidence of the discharge of oil from a vessel or shore installation shall constitute a prima facie case of liability on the part of the owner or operator of such vessel or shore installation or, as appropriate, the vessel for the costs of removal as provided for in subsection (e) of this section, and the burden of rebutting such prima facie case shall be upon such owner or operator. The Secretary of the Interior shall also have a cause of action under subsection (e) of this section against any other person whose negligence is found to have caused or contributed to the discharge of oil from a vessel or shore installation involved in a collision or other casualty. The burden of rebutting the prima facie case of liability which the Secretary shall have against the vessel or the owner or operator of the vessel or shore installation from which the oil is discharged shall in no way affect any rights which such owner or operator may have against any other vessel or persons whose willful act or negligence may in any way have caused or contributed to such discharge of oil.”

“(g) (f) There is hereby authorized to be appropriated to a revolving fund, which is established in the Treasury, such amounts as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of subsection (e) of this section. Any funds received by the United States in payment of any actual costs incurred by the Secretary pursuant to said subsection and any penalties collected for any violation of this section shall also be deposited into said fund for such purpose, and for research purposes as set forth in subsection (i) of this section. All sums appropriated to, or deposited into, said fund shall remain available until expended.”

“(h) (g) The Commandant of the Coast Guard may, subject to the provisions of section 4450 of the Revised Statutes, as amended (46 U.S.C. 239), suspend or revoke a license issued to the master or other licensed officer of any vessel found willfully or negligently violating the provisions of subsection (b) of this section.”

“(i) (h) The Secretary shall issue regulations which (1) will set forth the methods and procedures to be followed in removing oil from the navigable waters of the United States and adjoining shorelines of the United States, (2) will facilitate the enforcement of this section, and (3) will assist in preventing the pollution of the navigable waters of the United States. The Secretary may also issue regulations which authorize the discharge of oil from a vessel or shore installation in quantities, under conditions, and at times and locations, deemed appropriate by the Secretary, after taking into consideration various factors such as the effect of such discharge on the public health or welfare, recreation, fish and wildlife, and navigation.”

“(j) The Secretary shall engage in such research as may assist in the removal of oil from navigable waters and adjoining shorelines and shall publish such findings and technical information. There are hereby authorized to be appropriated such funds as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this subsection.”

“(k) An owner or operator who shall remove oil discharged from its vessel or shore installation shall be entitled to reimbursement from any other person, vessel or the United States for the reasonable costs expended for removal when