



June 09, 2014

Cruise Industry Colleagues

Dear Colleagues:

The Vessel Sanitation Program (VSP) will discontinue conducting construction inspections for new builds and renovations after December 31, 2014.

Since the adoption of the *2011 VSP Construction Guidelines*, VSP staff has noted several recurring issues during plan reviews and construction inspections. Examples include the following:

- Less than 80% of areas are complete when VSP inspectors arrive for construction inspections, resulting in the need for a second inspection.
- Required materials, such as decorative materials, menus and restaurant concepts, changes to drawings since the initial plan reviews, and information about owner-supplied equipment, are not always provided before the construction inspection.
- Owners and shipyards are not following certain requirements in the *2011 VSP Construction Guidelines*, especially those not required in the *2011 VSP Operations Manual*. Specific examples include the following:
 - Not constructing food preparation areas outside of galleys to galley standards, including use of stainless steel deckheads and bulkheads.
 - Not constructing recreational water facilities to the *2011 Construction Guidelines*.
 - Not identifying the locations and uses of lockers in food areas before construction.
 - Not constructing lockers in food areas to the *2011 Construction Guidelines* for food and equipment storage.
 - Not installing enough housekeeping handwashing stations.
 - Installing new areas during renovation without consulting VSP.
 - Installing open plenum air vents over food areas.
 - Introducing new concept areas without notifying VSP.

Because of these recurring issues, conducting construction inspections is not an effective use of VSP resources.

After December 31, 2014, VSP will participate in these construction activities:

- Conducting plan reviews at no charge at the request of the shipyards and owners,
- Providing technical support for construction through email and phone calls, and
- Conducting construction inspections on previously constructed vessels that are new to the U.S. market.

VSP will resume construction inspections for new builds and renovations once the *VSP Operations Manual* is revised to include all of the elements of the *2011 Construction Guidelines*. The revised *VSP Operations Manual* will include a statement that these requirements will be applied to all vessels constructed or renovated to standards in the *2011 Construction Guidelines* or later. VSP typically revises the *VSP Operations Manual* every 5 to 6 years, so we expect that the next revision process will begin in 2015 or 2016. We expect the revision process to take approximately 2 years, including research, industry meetings, and publication clearance.

Please contact me or the VSP construction coordinators (CDR Aimee Treffiletti and CDR Jill Shugart) at vsp@cdc.gov with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



CAPT Jaret T. Ames
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