

Chapter 76A.

Navigation and Pilotage Commissions.

SUBCHAPTER I. CAPE FEAR RIVER NAVIGATION AND PILOTAGE COMMISSION.

Article 1.

General Provisions.

§ 76A-1. Commission established; powers generally.

In consideration of the requirement for the safe and expeditious movement of waterborne commerce on the navigable waters of the State, it is deemed necessary to establish the Cape Fear Navigation and Pilotage Commission, hereinafter referred to as the Commission. The Commission shall have the exclusive power to license and regulate a group of river pilots familiar with the waters of the Cape Fear River and Bar to best guide vessels within those waters and to exercise authority over navigation in the Cape Fear and Bar and to and from the sea buoy of the port. (1981, c. 910, s. 1; 1983 (Reg. Sess., 1984), c. 1081, s. 1.)

§ 76A-2. Membership.

The Commission shall consist of five voting members, four appointed by the Governor, and the president of the Wilmington-Cape Fear Pilots Association who shall serve as an ex officio voting member. Of the four members appointed by the Governor three shall be from New Hanover County, one shall be from Brunswick County. One member shall represent maritime interests. The Governor shall designate a member to serve at his pleasure as Chairman. With the exception of the ex officio member, licensed pilots and members of their immediate families shall not be allowed to serve on the Commission. (1981, c. 910, s. 1.)

§ 76A-3. Term.

It shall be the duty of the Governor to make initial appointments to the Commission on July 1, 1981. Two of the initial appointees shall serve two-year terms; the other two appointees shall serve four-year terms. All appointees after the initial appointments shall serve four-year terms. Any vacancy in the membership appointed by the Governor shall be filled by the Governor. (1981, c. 910, s. 1.)

§ 76A-4. Quorum.

A simple majority of the Commission shall constitute a quorum and may act in all cases. (1981, c. 910, s. 1.)

§ 76A-5. Duties and authority.

(a) Rules and Regulations, Pilotage. – The Commission shall make and establish such rules and regulations as necessary and desirable respecting the qualifications, arrangements and station of pilots and for the control of navigation within the Cape Fear River and from and to the Cape Fear Bar and the sea buoys. In the development of such rules and regulations, the Commission should request the advice of the United States Coast Guard, the U.S. Corps of Engineers, the Pilots Association, other maritime interests and any other party that the Commission might deem beneficial.

(b) Examination and Licensing. – The Commission may examine such persons who hold a federal pilot's license as may offer themselves to be a pilot on the Cape Fear River and Bar. The examination shall consist of, but not be limited to: a personal interview before the Commission; contact by the Commission with personal references; and a physical examination by a licensed physician based on a standard established by the Commission. Licenses shall be granted for a one-year period.

(c) License Renewal. – Each license shall be renewed annually provided during the preceding year the holder thereof shall have complied with the provisions of this act and the reasonable rules and regulations as prescribed by the Commission under authority hereof. The Commission may for special considerations validate a license for less than a one-year period. Each license renewal submittal shall be accompanied with a physical examination comparable to the standards set in G.S. 76A-5(b).

(d) Fine, License Suspension and Cancellation. – The Commission shall have the power to fine or call in and suspend or cancel the license of any pilot found to be derelict of duty, in violation of the reasonable rules and regulations as set out by the Commission or for other just cause. Grounds for suspension or cancellation shall include but not be limited to: citation by the United States Coast Guard and/or Commission for careless or neglectful duty resulting in damage to property or personal harm; absence, neglect of duty, absence from duty for a period longer than four weeks without written submission to and written approval from the Commission chairman; other violations of regulations or in actions found by the Commission to be unduly disruptive of the pilotage and service and/or harmful to person or property.

The clear proceeds of fines levied pursuant to this subsection shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2.

(e) Pilots to Give Bond. – The Commission shall require of each pilot prior to granting his commission a bond with surety acceptable to the Commission in an amount not to exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000). Every bond taken of a pilot shall be filed with and preserved by the Commission in trust for every person, firm or corporation, who shall be injured by the neglect or misconduct of such pilots, and any person, firm or corporation, so injured may severally bring suit for the damage by each one sustained.

(f) Jurisdiction over Disputes as to Pilotage. – Disputes between pilots may be voluntarily appealed by one of the pilots to the Commission for resolution. If a resolution is not reached or the Commission decision is unacceptable to either party, normal legal recourse is available to resolve the dispute. (1981, c. 910, s. 1; 1983 (Reg. Sess., 1984), c. 1081, s. 2; 1998-215, s. 137(a); 2011-183, s. 127(b).)

§ 76A-6. Classes of licenses.

The Commission shall have general authority to issue the following classes of licenses:

- (1) Limited. – Limited licenses may be issued to those who pass requirements established by the Commission to entitle such person to a limited license.
- (2) Full. – A license to pilot any vessel. Provided there is a vacancy in the number of pilot positions established pursuant to G.S. 76A-14, a full license shall be issued to the holder of a limited license who has in the opinion of the Commission satisfactorily served at least one year under a limited license. Additionally the Commission may issue a full license to any one who in the Commission's judgment has sufficient credentials as established under G.S. 76A-5(b) to perform the pilotage task associated with a full license.

- (3) Apprentice. – A license to engage in a program, approved by the Commission, as apprentice pilot under the terms of G.S. 76A-12. (1981, c. 910, s. 1; 1983 (Reg. Sess., 1984), c. 1081, s. 3; 1985, c. 631, ss. 1, 2; c. 689, s. 26.)

§§ 76A-7 through 76A-11. Reserved for future codification purposes.