

TITLE 46 - SHIPPING**Subtitle III - Maritime Liability****CHAPTER 305 - EXONERATION AND LIMITATION OF LIABILITY****§ 30505. General limit of liability**

(a) **In General.**— Except as provided in section 30506 of this title, the liability of the owner of a vessel for any claim, debt, or liability described in subsection (b) shall not exceed the value of the vessel and pending freight. If the vessel has more than one owner, the proportionate share of the liability of any one owner shall not exceed that owner's proportionate interest in the vessel and pending freight.

(b) **Claims Subject to Limitation.**— Unless otherwise excluded by law, claims, debts, and liabilities subject to limitation under subsection (a) are those arising from any embezzlement, loss, or destruction of any property, goods, or merchandise shipped or put on board the vessel, any loss, damage, or injury by collision, or any act, matter, or thing, loss, damage, or forfeiture, done, occasioned, or incurred, without the privity or knowledge of the owner.

(c) **Wages.**— Subsection (a) does not apply to a claim for wages.

(Pub. L. 109–304, § 6(c), Oct. 6, 2006, 120 Stat. 1513.)

Historical and Revision Notes

| Revised Section | Source (U.S. Code) | Source (Statutes at Large) |
|---|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 30505 | | |
| 46 App.:183(a). | | |
| R.S. § 4283(a); Aug. 29, 1935, ch. 804, § 1, 49 Stat. 960; June 5, 1936, ch. 521, § 1, 49 Stat. 1479. | | |
| | 46 App.:189 | |
| June 26, 1884, ch. 121, § 18, 23 Stat. 57. | | |

In subsection (a), the words “Except as provided in section 30506 of this title” are substituted for “except in the cases provided for in subsection (b) of this section” because 46 App. U.S.C. 183 (b) is restated in section 30506 of the revised title. The words “whether American or foreign” are omitted as unnecessary because of section 30502 of the revised title. The words “shall not exceed the value of the vessel and pending freight” are substituted for “shall not . . . exceed the amount or value of . . . such vessel, and her freight then pending” in 46 App. U.S.C. 183 (a) and for “the aggregate liabilities of all the owners of a vessel on account of the same shall not exceed the value of such vessels and freight pending” in 46 App. U.S.C. 189 for consistency and to eliminate unnecessary words. The last sentence is substituted for “the interest of such owner in” in 46 App. U.S.C. 183 (a) and for “The individual liability of a shipowner shall be limited to the proportion of any or all debts and liabilities that his individual share of the vessel bears to the whole” in 46 App. U.S.C. 189 for clarity and consistency. The words “Provided, That this provision shall not prevent any claimant from joining all the owners in one action” in 46 App. U.S.C. 189 are omitted as unnecessary.

Subsection (c) is substituted for “nor shall the same apply to wages due to persons employed by said shipowners” in 46 App. U.S.C. 189 because of the reorganization of the source provisions.