
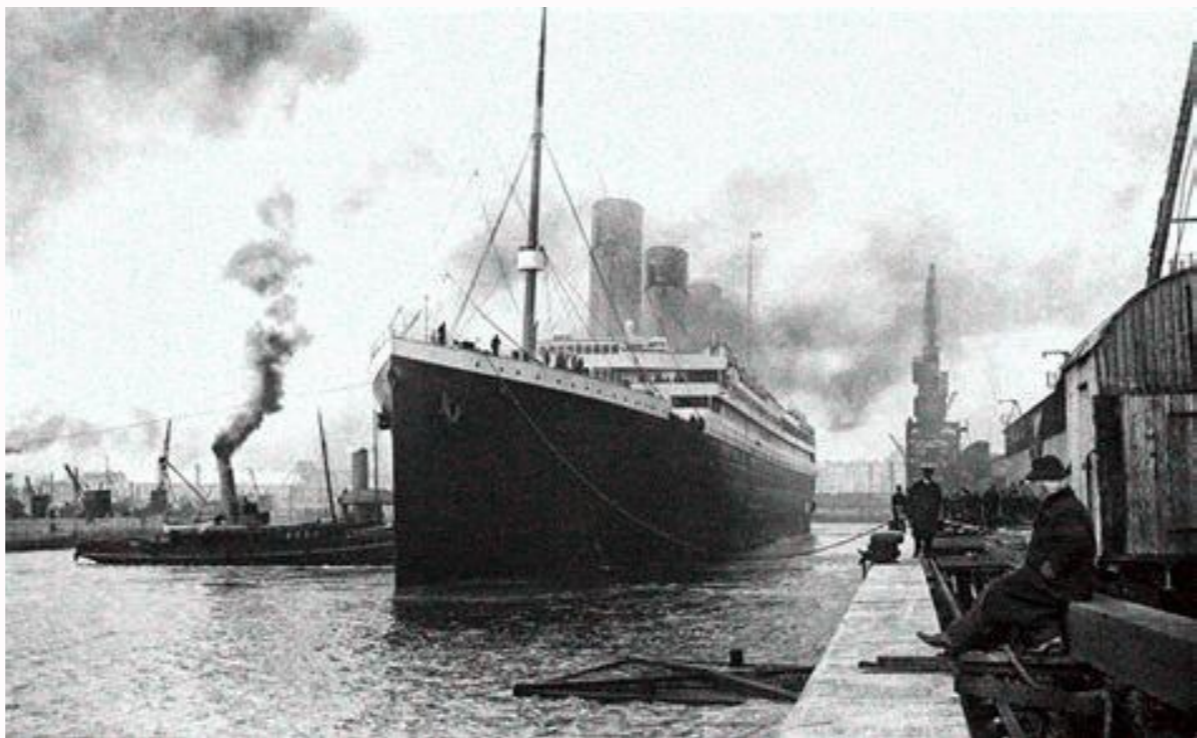


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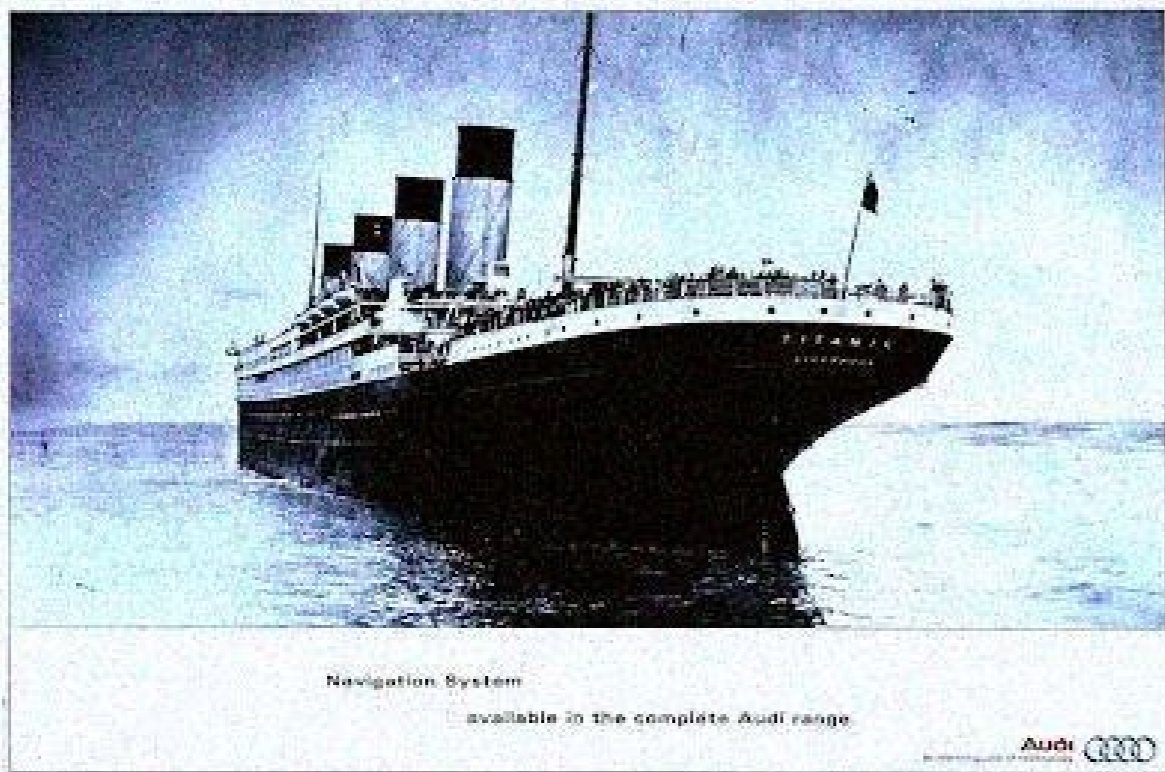
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## What does rms titanic stand for

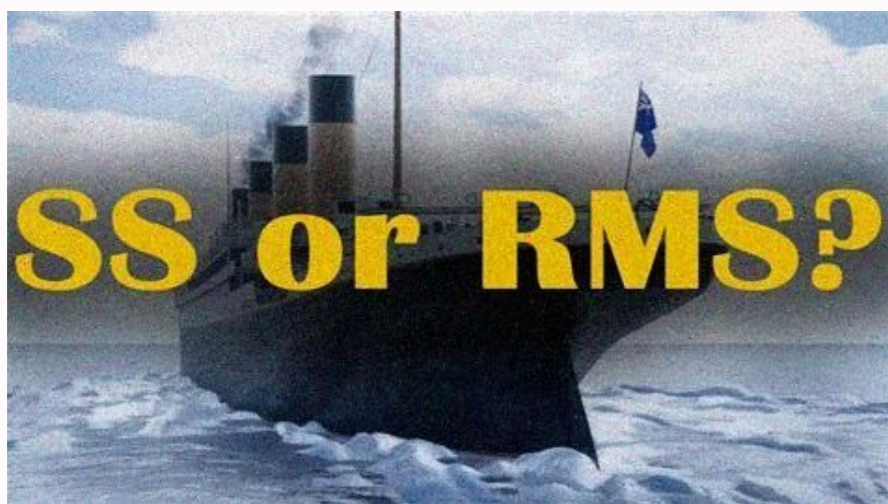
The Royal Mail Steamer (R.M.S.) Titanic is perhaps the most famous shipwreck of all time. A British registered ship of the White Star Line offsite link that was owned by a U.S. company in which famed American financier John Pierpont "JP" Morgan offsite link was a major stockholder, Titanic was built in Belfast, Northern Ireland by Harland and Wolff offsite link for transatlantic passage between Southampton, England and New York City. zidupu It was the largest and most luxurious passenger ship of its time and was reported to be unsinkable. Titanic was launched on May 31, 1911, and set sail on its maiden voyage from Southampton on April 10, 1912, with 2,240 passengers and crew on board. On April 15, 1912, after striking an iceberg, Titanic broke apart and sank to the bottom of the North Atlantic Ocean, taking with it more than 1,500 passengers and crew. While there has been some salvage outside of the major hull portions, most of the ship remains in its final resting place, 12,000 feet below sea level and over 350 nautical miles off the coast of Newfoundland, Canada. Its famous story of disaster and human drama has been, and continues to be, recounted in numerous books, articles, and movies. Titanic has been recognized by the United States for its national and international significance and in many ways has become a cultural icon around the world. The disaster resulted in a number of memorials around the world. In the United States, there are major memorials in Washington D.C. and New York offsite link, as well as at Harvard University's Widener Library offsite link. The 100th Anniversary of the sinking of the R.M.S. Titanic on April 15, 2012, triggered significant interest in the wreck site. On January 31, 2012, in response to a request from NOAA, the U.S. National Park Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the International Maritime Organization issued a circular on Titanic. (MEPC.1/Circ.779).



On January 31, 2012, in response to a request from NOAA, the U.S. National Park Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the International Maritime Organization issued a circular on Titanic. (MEPC.1/Circ.779). The circular advised all vessels to refrain from discharging any garbage, waste, or effluent in a zone approximately 10 nm (34 km) above the wreck. It also requested that submersibles avoid landing on the Titanic's deck and concentrate the release of any drop weights on ascent in specific areas away from the hull portions of the wreck. The circular also requested that visitors refrain from placing plaques or other permanent memorials on the wreck, however well-intentioned. As of April 15, 2012, the R.M.S. Titanic came under the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage. sejumulado offsite link On May 5, 2017, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) was signed into law. Section 113 of the Act provides that "no person shall conduct any research, exploration, salvage, or other activity that would physically alter or disturb the wreck or wreck site of the RMS Titanic unless authorized by the Secretary of Commerce per the provisions of the Agreement Concerning the Shipwrecked Vessel RMS Titanic. The Secretary of Commerce shall take appropriate actions to carry out this section consistent with the Agreement." Under Article 4 of the International Agreement, each Party is to take "appropriate actions" to enforce measures taken pursuant to the Agreement against its nationals and vessels flying its flag and to prohibit activities in its territory, including its maritime ports, territorial sea, and offshore terminals, that are inconsistent with the Agreement. The International Agreement entered into force on November 18, 2019, when the U.S. accepted the Agreement. For more details see the International Agreement page. Additional reference information U.S. Department of State Media Note, United States Accepts Agreement Protecting the Titanic Wreck Site (December 19, 2019) NOAA Web Story, Safeguarding the RMS Titanic's final resting place: United States and United Kingdom join to protect the famous vessel (December 19, 2019) NOAA Ocean Today (video), The Titanic Wrecksite NOAA Press Release, NOAA Commemorates the 100th Anniversary of RMS Titanic (May 31, 2011) NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Titanic as Part of America's Maritime Cultural Landscape NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, The 2010 Scientific Expedition to Titanic NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Previous Missions to Titanic NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, Titanic Collection NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, Rusticles Thrive on the Titanic NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, R.M.S. Titanic Expedition 2003 NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, R.M.S. Titanic 2004 Expedition National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Foecke, T., Metallurgy of the RMS Titanic, NIST Interagency/Internal Report (NISTIR) (Feb. 1, 1998) The Smithsonian Institution, The Titanic offsite link Royal Museums Greenwich, Titanic offsite link National Museums Northern Ireland, Titanic and her Sister Ships offsite link SeaCity Museum Southampton, The Titanic offsite link La Cité de la Mer, Titanic Cherbourg offsite link Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Titanic: the Unsinkable Ship and Halifax offsite link Encyclopedia Titanica offsite link Starboard railing. (NOAA Photo Library)General How and why is the United States Government, and NOAA specifically, involved with R.M.S. Titanic? gejjyko Titanic holds exceptional national and international significance as both a site of historical importance and continuing scientific study. Importantly, pursuant to the Agreement Concerning the Shipwrecked Vessel RMS Titanic, the Titanic serves as a maritime memorial for those individuals who lost their lives on that infamous night in 1912. cimelureguso Of more than 2,200 individuals on board Titanic, approximately 1,500 perished in its tragic sinking, including 119 of the 306 American passengers, and many on their way to become United States citizens. The remains of many of these individuals were never recovered, and Titanic serves as their final resting place. All three branches of the U.S. government have been involved in efforts to protect and preserve the Titanic wreck and wreck site. Congressional Action The sinking of Titanic was one of the deadliest peacetime maritime disasters in history and quickly became a catalyst for change. Following the sinking of Titanic, the United States Congress held hearings that resulted in a Senate report and measures to improve safety of navigation. Similar investigations were held in the United Kingdom. The international community readily came together for the purpose of establishing global maritime standards and regulations to promote safety of navigation, including the Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea offsite link (SOLAS), widely regarded as the most important of all international agreements on maritime safety. Today, SOLAS, as amended, is still in force, helping to ensure the safety of seafarers and modern cruise line passengers. In response to the discovery of the Titanic wreck in 1985, Congress saw the need for legislation that would properly protect the ship, while allowing all interested parties, from relatives of victims to scientists and naval architects, to benefit from its historic discovery. As stated in House Report 99-393 (November 21, 1985), Congress was particularly concerned with the potential harm to the wreck site that salvors might cause by physically altering, disturbing, or salvaging Titanic. Nearly identical bills addressing these concerns were introduced in the House of Representatives on September 11, 1985 (H.R. 3272), and in the Senate on February 5, 1986 (S. 2048). Both chambers ultimately passed the Senate version of the bill, and the R.M.S. Titanic Maritime Memorial Act of 1986 (Titanic Memorial Act) was signed into law by President Reagan on October 21, 1986. President Reagan's signing statement provided that: "The R.M.S. Titanic is the premier symbol in modern times of both the perils of the sea and the need for high standards of ship safety. The significance of the R.M.S. Titanic stems not only from the durable imprint of the disaster upon the consciousness of succeeding generations but also from the enormous strides made by the international community in promoting safety of life at sea, the study and observation of ice conditions, the maintenance of ice patrols in the North Atlantic Ocean, and the development and improvement of standards for the design and construction of vessels." See Ronald Reagan, Statement on Signing the R.M.S. Titanic Maritime Memorial Act of 1986 offsite link (Oct. 21, 1986). The Titanic Memorial Act directed the State Department and NOAA, respectively, to (1) negotiate an international agreement to protect Titanic, and (2) develop international guidelines for exploration, research, and, if determined appropriate, salvage. As directed by Congress in the Titanic Memorial Act, the State Department subsequently entered into negotiations with the United Kingdom, France, and Canada to develop an international agreement to protect Titanic, and on June 18, 2004, the United States signed the Agreement Concerning the Shipwrecked Vessel RMS Titanic (International Agreement), subject to the adoption of domestic implementing legislation. In 2017, Congress enacted legislation to implement the International Agreement. See Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) (May 5, 2017). Section 113 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 prohibits "any research, exploration, salvage, or other activity that would physically alter or disturb the wreck or wreck site of the RMS Titanic unless authorized by the Secretary of Commerce per the provisions of the Agreement Concerning the Shipwrecked Vessel RMS Titanic. . ." Executive Branch Action Since the discovery of the Titanic wreck site in 1985, executive branch agencies have been involved in protecting and preserving the site, from participating in exploration and scientific expeditions to negotiating the International Agreement. Following the enactment of Section 113, the United States deposited its instrument of acceptance for the International Agreement, which entered into force between the United States and the United Kingdom on November 18, 2019. Consistent with the Titanic Memorial Act, NOAA developed Guidelines for Research, Exploration and Salvage of RMS Titanic (NOAA Guidelines) in 2001, in consultation with the United Kingdom, France, Canada, and other interested countries. 66 Fed. Reg.



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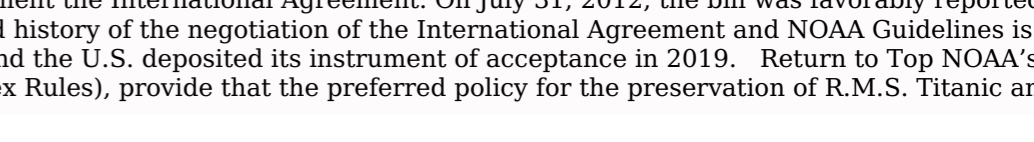
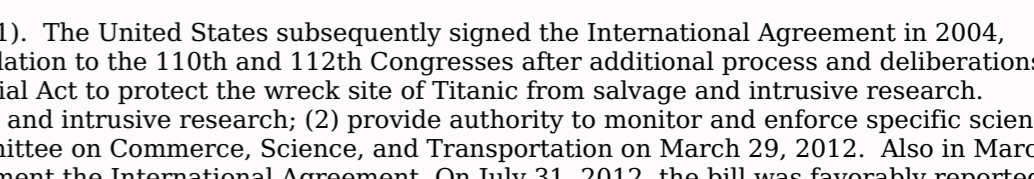
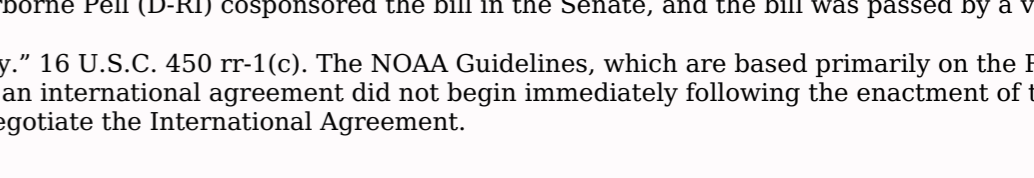
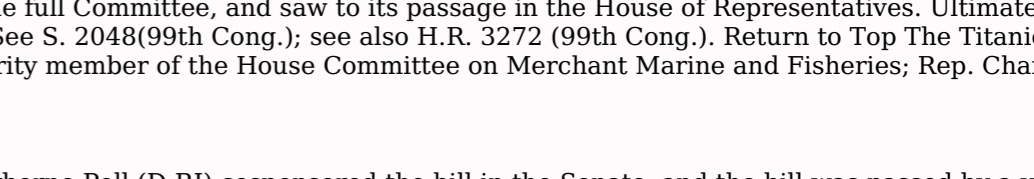
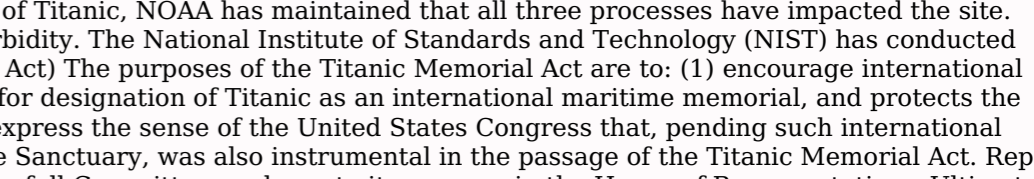
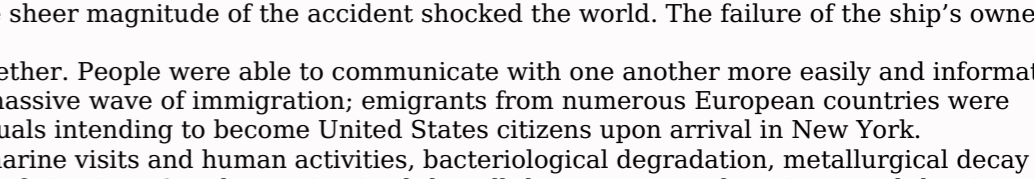
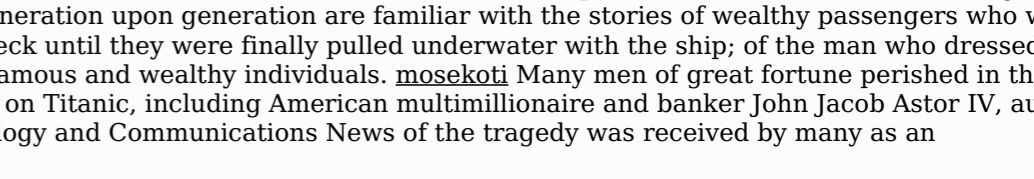
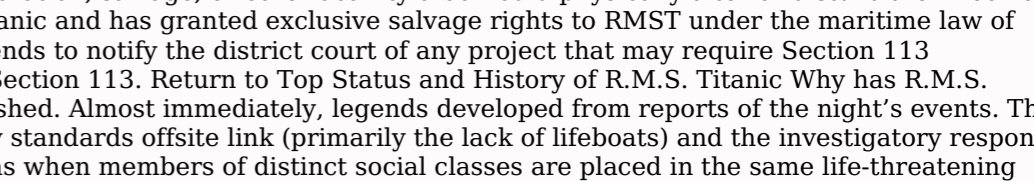
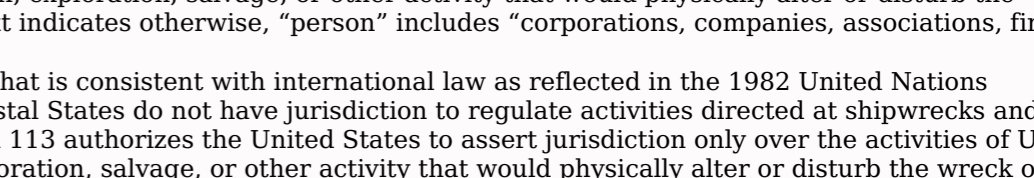
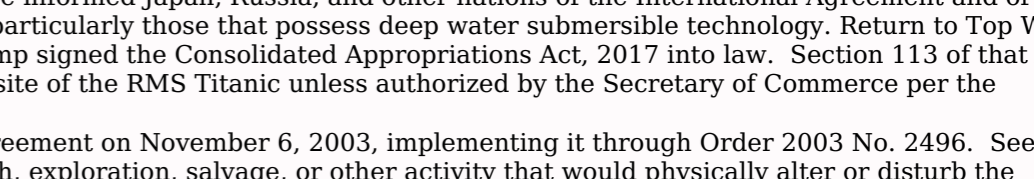
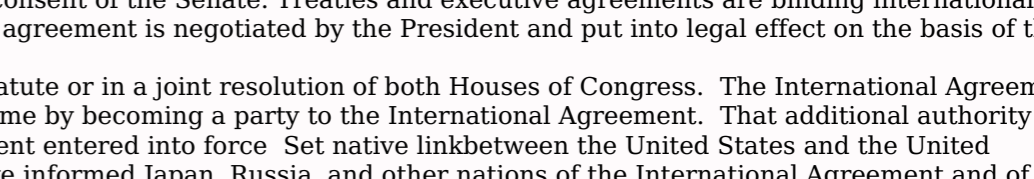
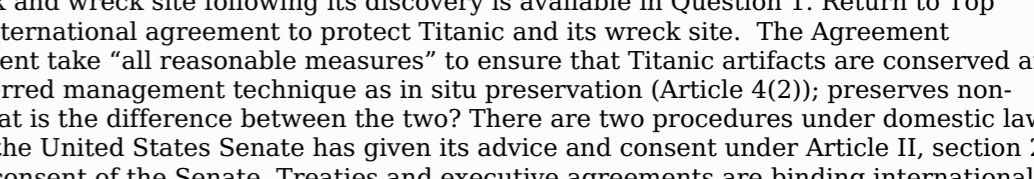
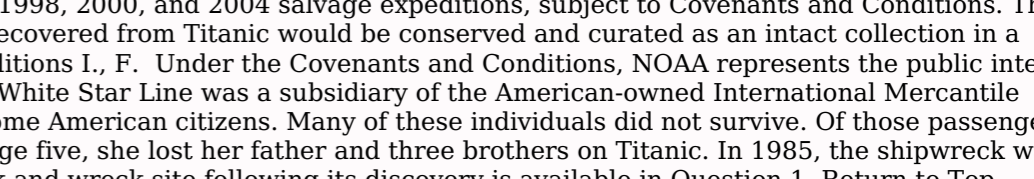
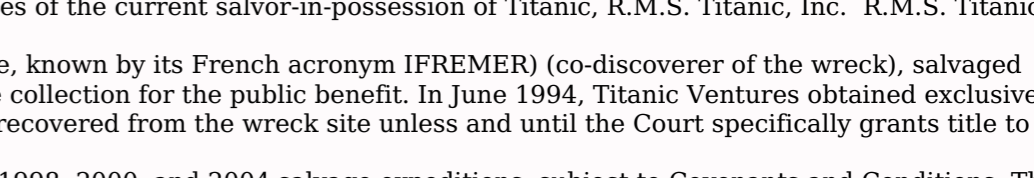
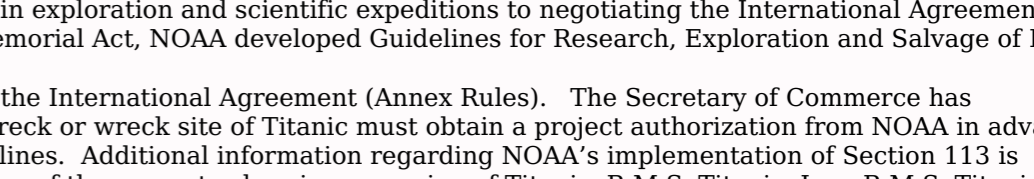
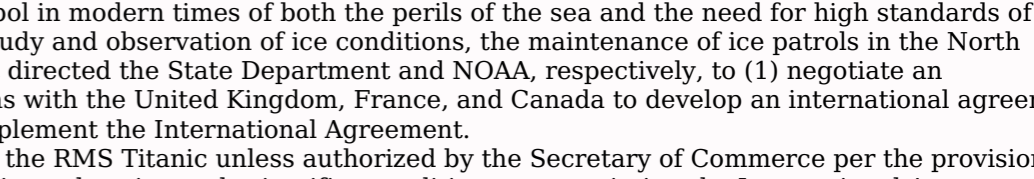
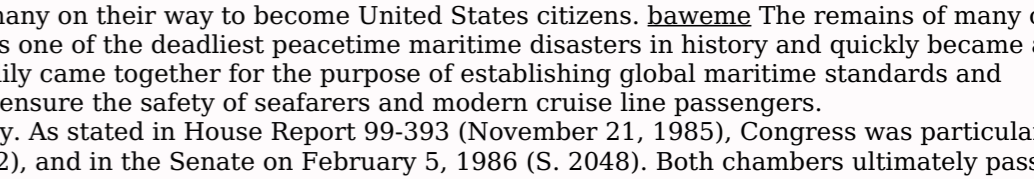
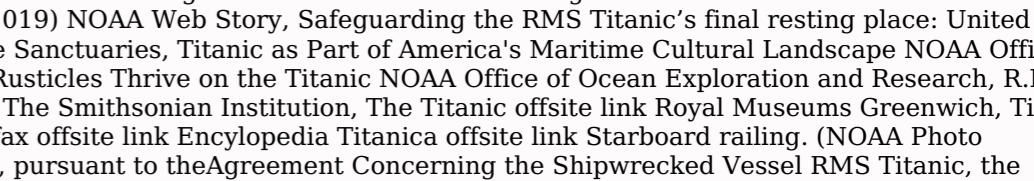
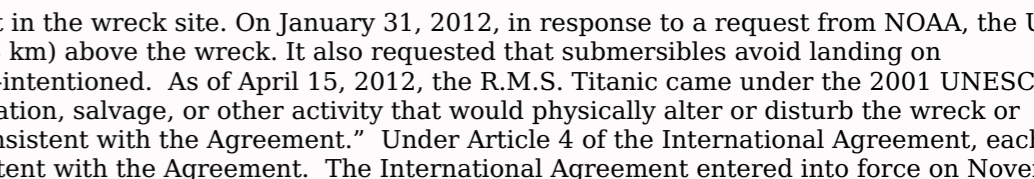
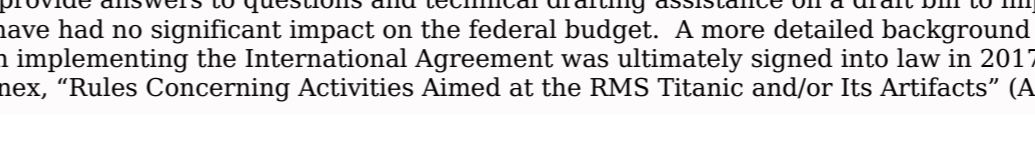
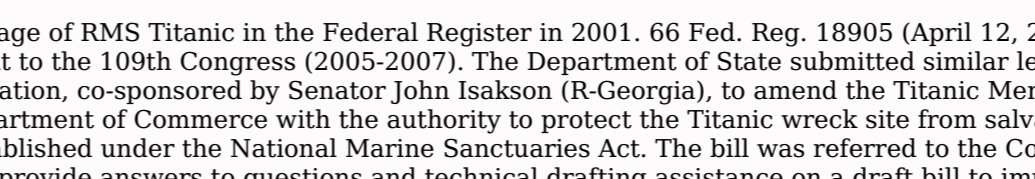
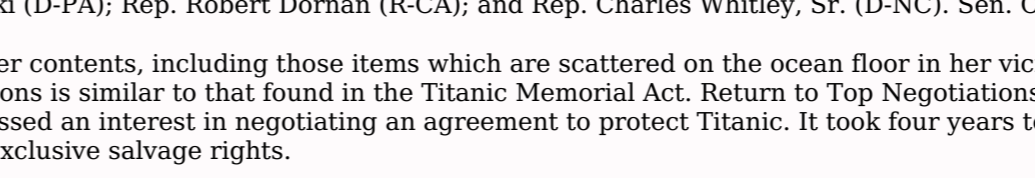
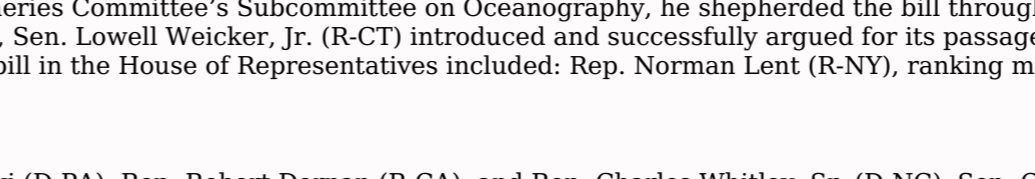
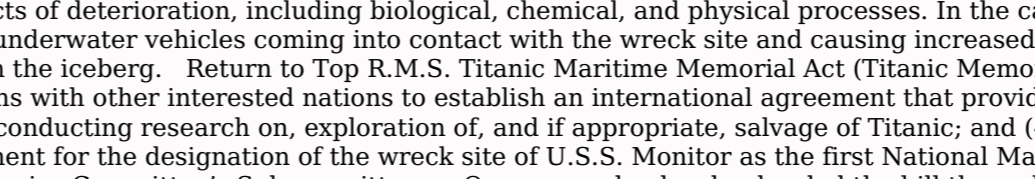
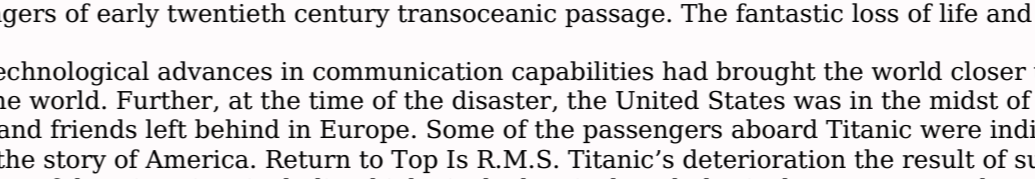
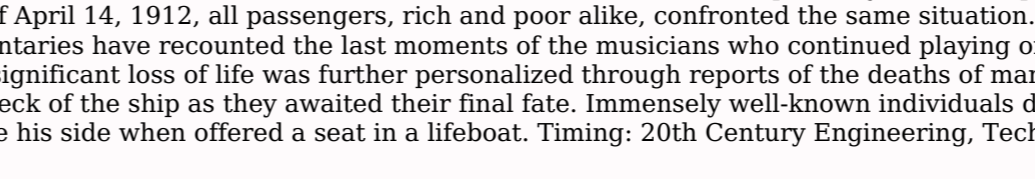
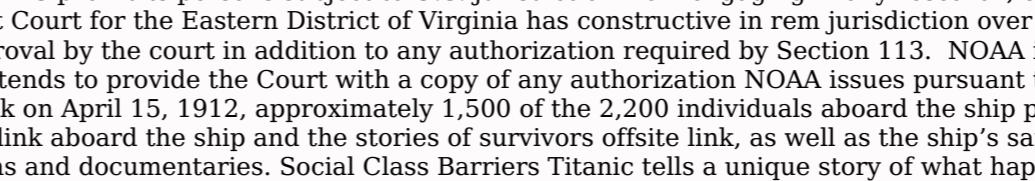
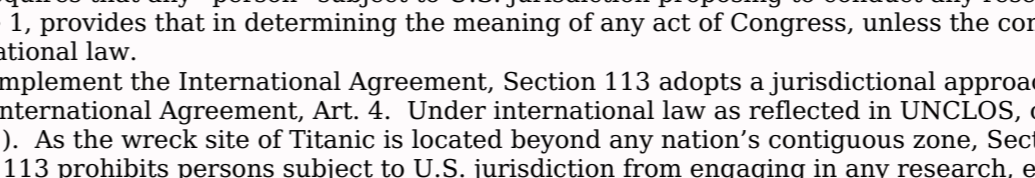
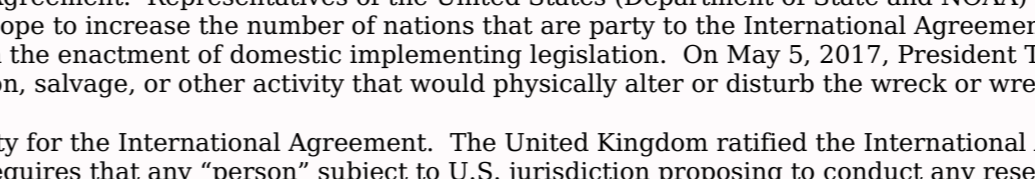
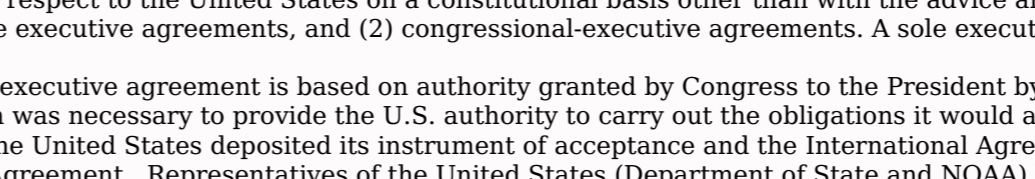
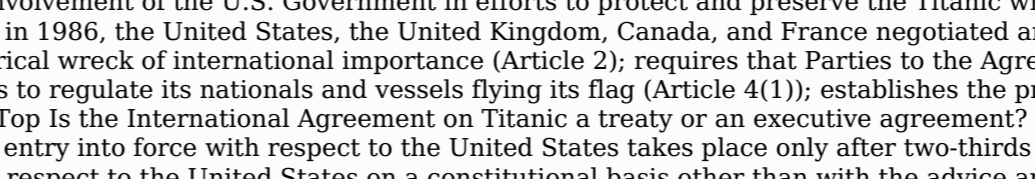
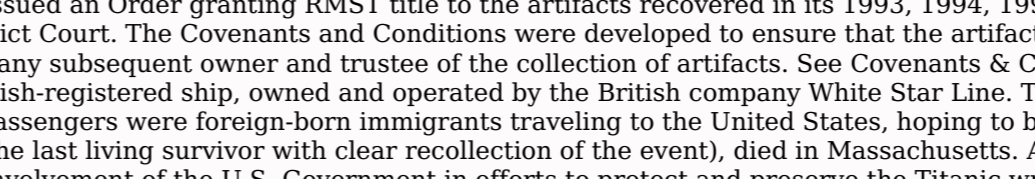
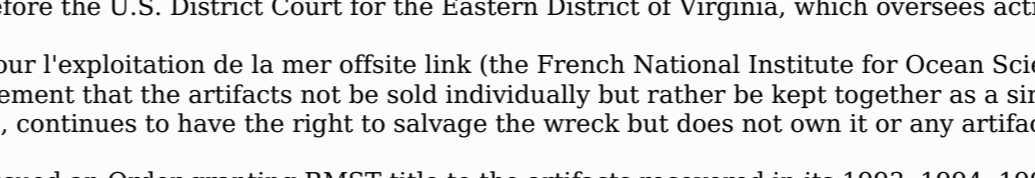
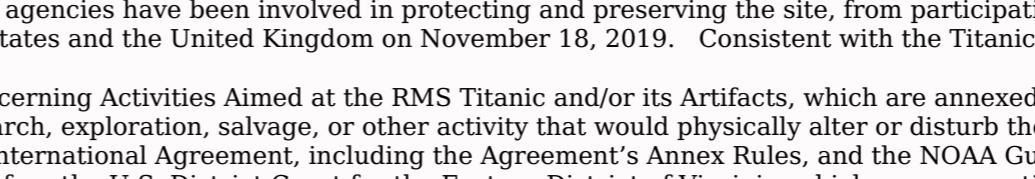
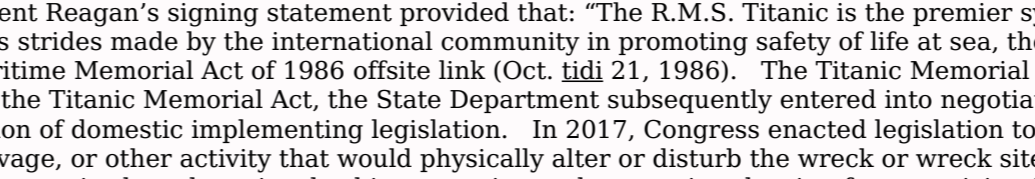
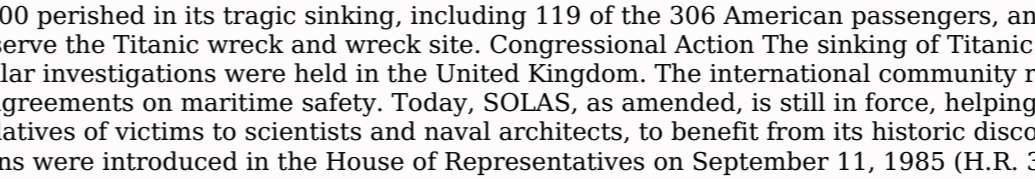
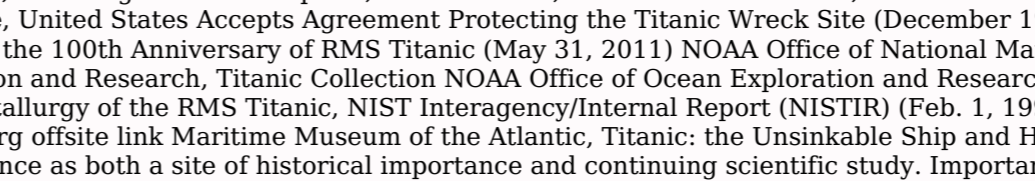
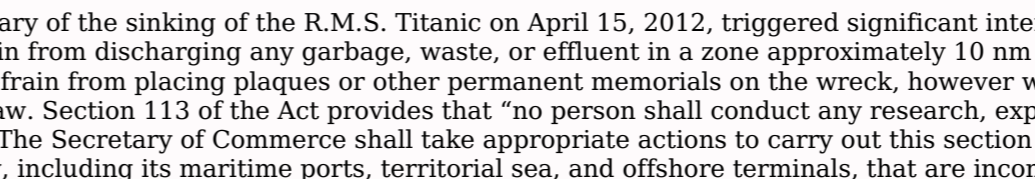
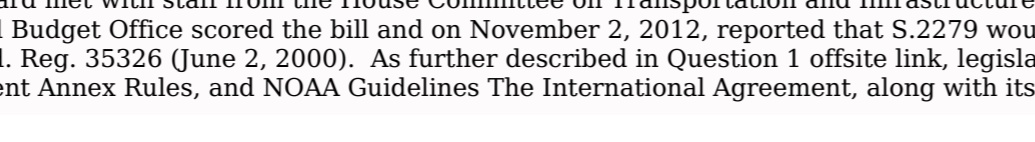
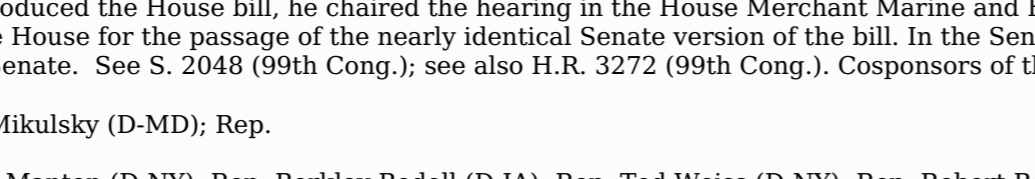
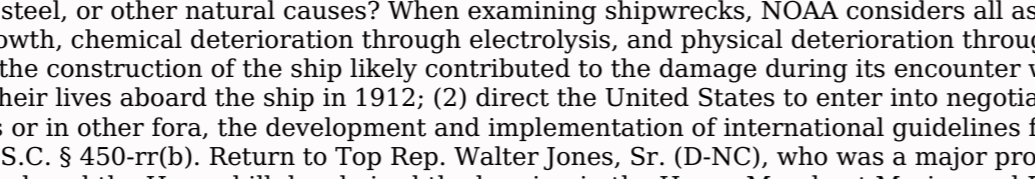
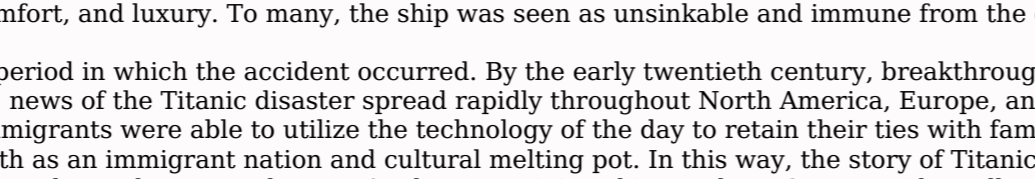
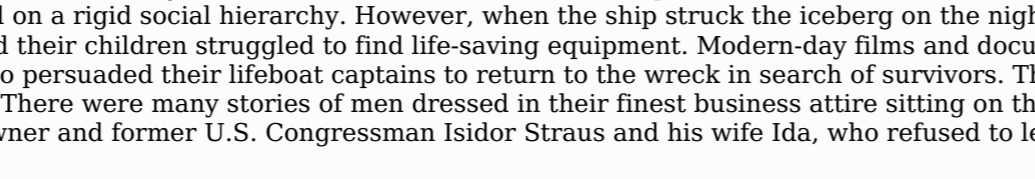
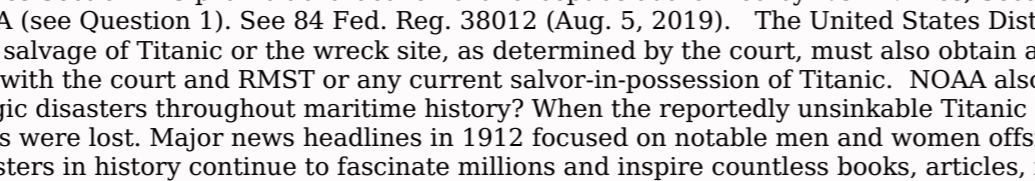
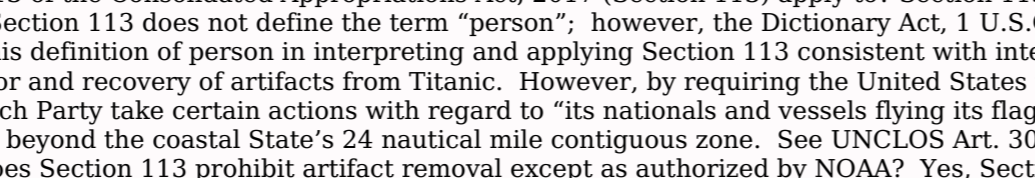
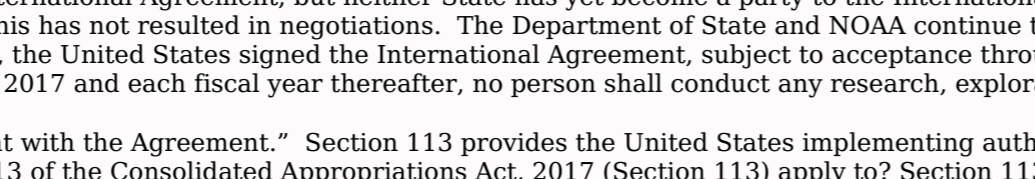
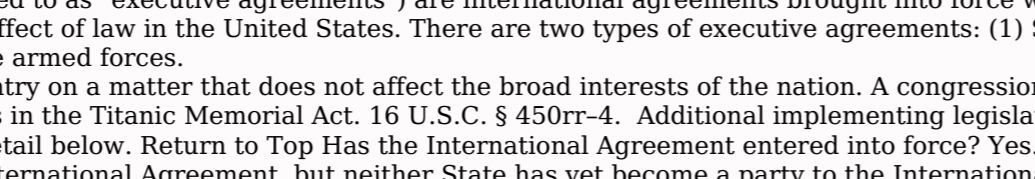
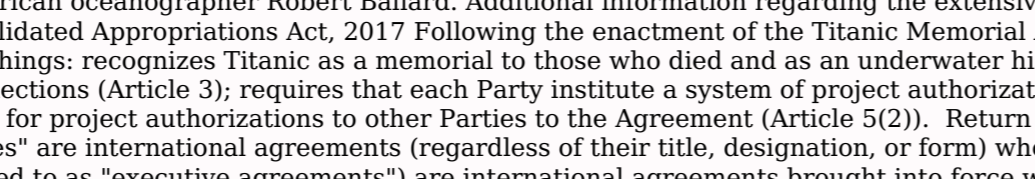
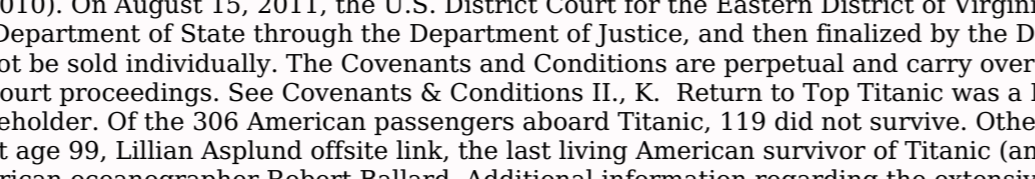
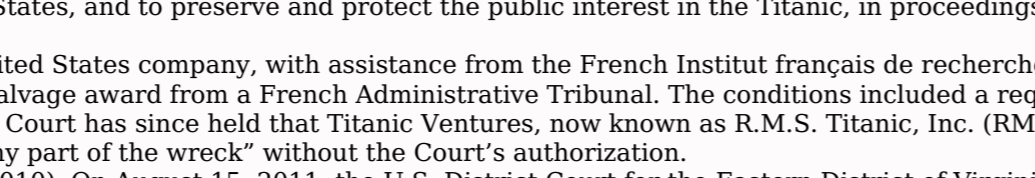
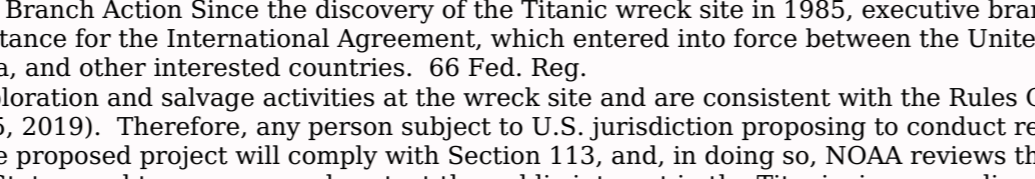
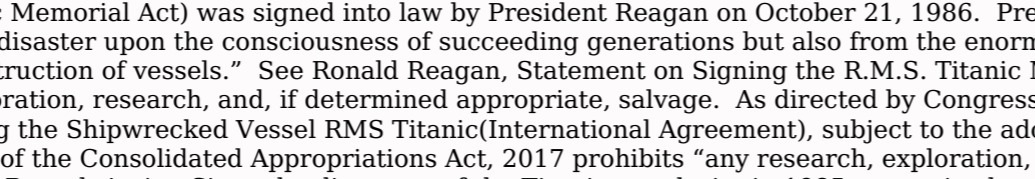
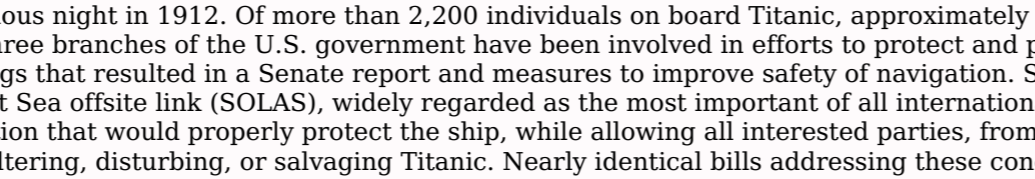
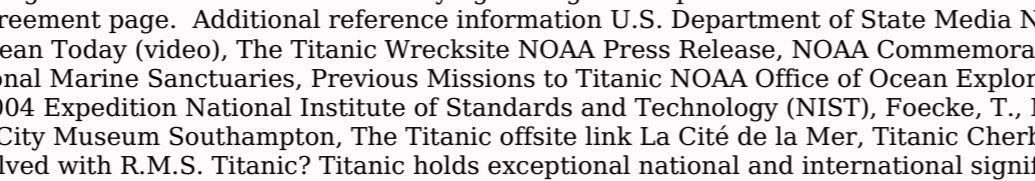
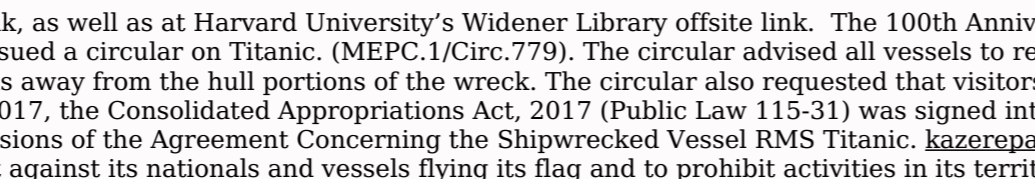
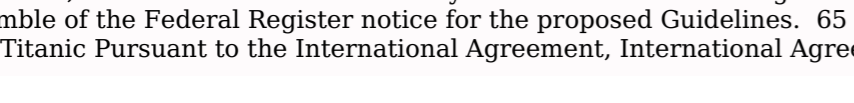
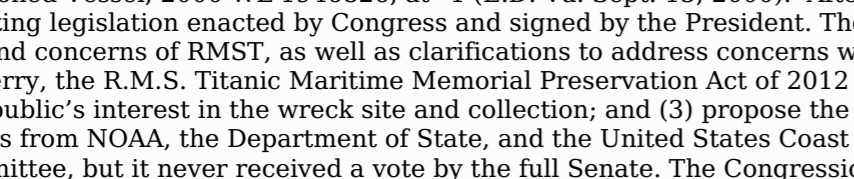
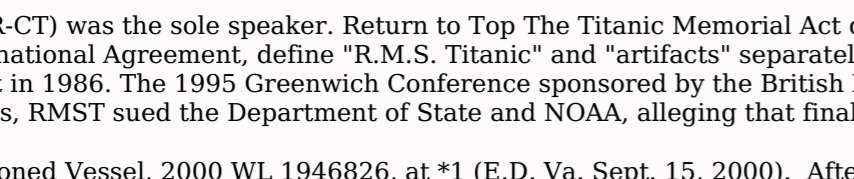
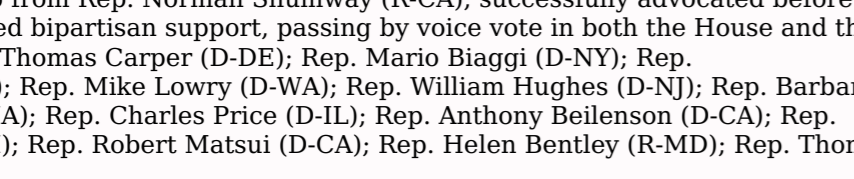
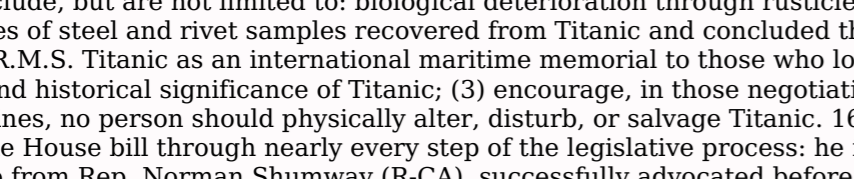
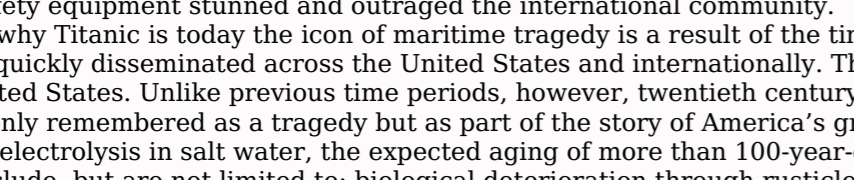
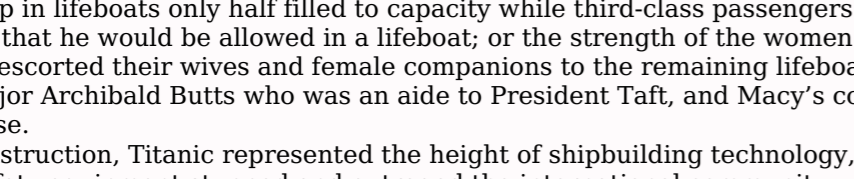
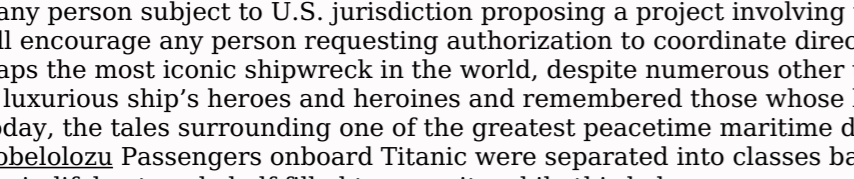
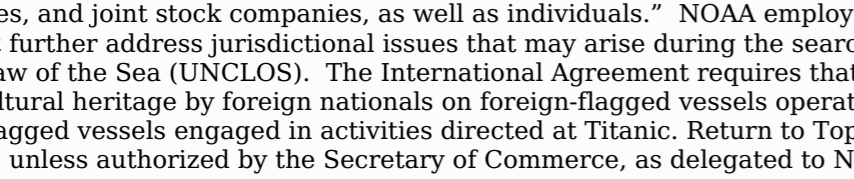
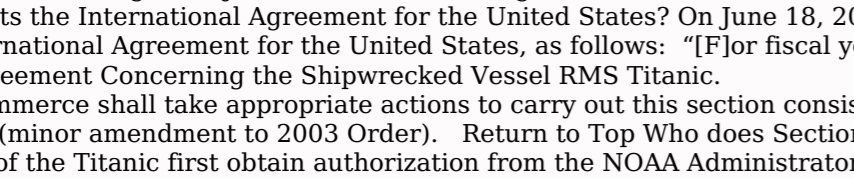
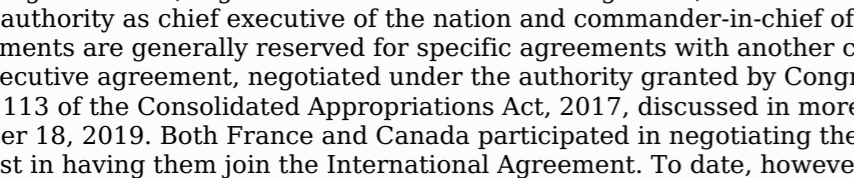
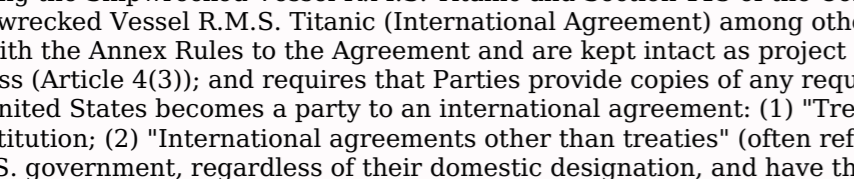
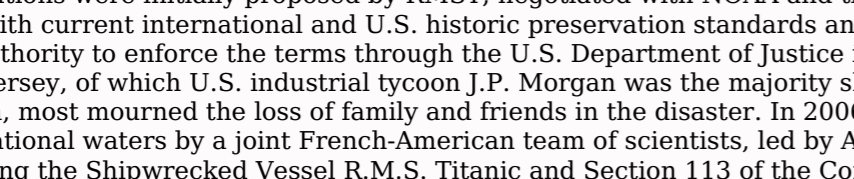
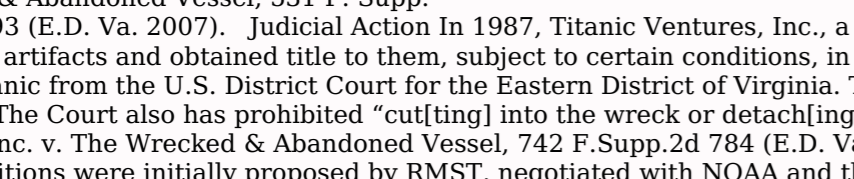
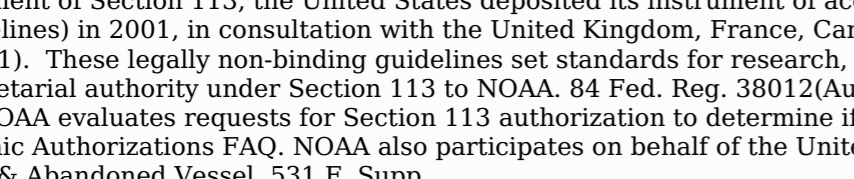
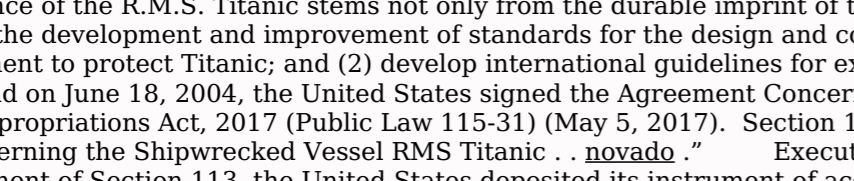
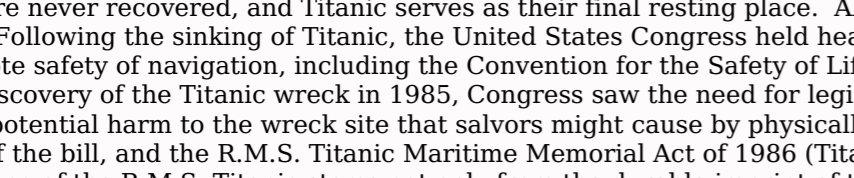
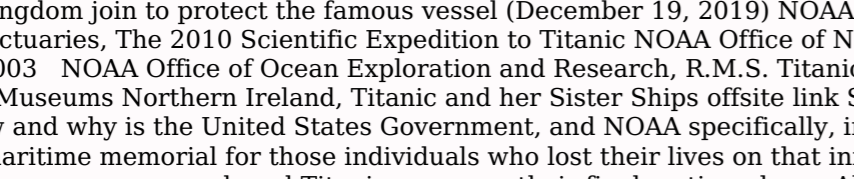
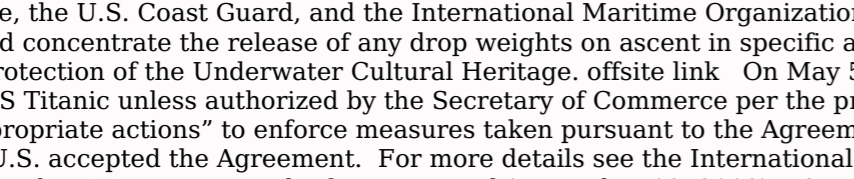
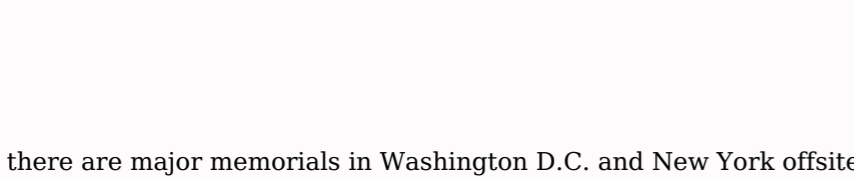


In the United States, there are major memorials in Washington D.C. and New York offsite link, as well as at Harvard University's Widener Library offsite link. The 100th Anniversary of the sinking of the R.M.S. Titanic on April 15, 2012, triggered significant interest in the wreck site. On January 31, 2012, in response to a request from NOAA, the U.S. National Park Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the International Maritime Organization issued a circular on Titanic. (MEPC.1/Circ.779). The circular advised all vessels to refrain from discharging any garbage, waste, or effluent in a zone approximately 10 nm (34 km) above the wreck. It also requested that submersibles avoid landing on the Titanic's deck and concentrate the release of any drop weights on ascent in specific areas away from the hull portions of the wreck. The circular also requested that visitors refrain from placing plaques or other permanent memorials on the wreck, however well-intentioned. As of April 15, 2012, the R.M.S. Titanic came under the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage. offsite link On May 5, 2017, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) was signed into law. Section 113 of the Act provides that "no person shall conduct any research, exploration, salvage, or other activity that would physically alter or disturb the wreck or wreck site of the RMS Titanic unless authorized by the Secretary of Commerce per the provisions of the Agreement Concerning the Shipwrecked Vessel RMS Titanic. The Secretary of Commerce shall take appropriate actions to carry out this section consistent with the Agreement." Under Article 4 of the International Agreement, each Party is to take "appropriate actions" to enforce measures taken pursuant to the Agreement against its nationals and vessels flying its flag and to prohibit activities in its territory, including its maritime ports, territorial sea, and offshore terminals, that are inconsistent with the Agreement. The International Agreement entered into force on November 18, 2019, when the U.S. accepted the Agreement. For more details see the International Agreement page. Additional reference information U.S. Department of State Media Note, United States Accepts Agreement Protecting the Titanic Wreck Site (December 19, 2019) NOAA Web Story, Safeguarding the RMS Titanic's final resting place: United States and United Kingdom join to protect the famous vessel (December 19, 2019) NOAA Ocean Today (video), The Titanic Wrecksite NOAA Press Release, NOAA Commemorates the 100th Anniversary of RMS Titanic (May 31, 2011) NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Titanic as Part of America's Maritime Cultural Landscape NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, The 2010 Scientific Expedition to Titanic NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Previous Missions to Titanic NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, Titanic Collection NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, Rusticles Thrive on the Titanic NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, R.M.S. Titanic Expedition 2003 NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, R.M.S. Titanic 2004 Expedition National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Foecke, T., Metallurgy of the RMS Titanic, NIST Interagency/Internal Report (NISTIR) (Feb. 1, 1998) The Smithsonian Institution, The Titanic offsite link Royal Museums Greenwich, Titanic offsite link National Museums Northern Ireland, Titanic and her Sister Ships offsite link SeaCity Museum Southampton, The Titanic offsite link La Cité de la Mer, Titanic Cherbourg offsite link Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Titanic: the Unsinkable Ship and Halifax offsite link Encyclopedia Titanica offsite link Starboard railing. (NOAA Photo Library)General How and why is the United States Government, and NOAA specifically, involved with R.M.S. Titanic?



The disaster resulted in a number of memorials around the world. In the United States, there are major memorials in Washington D.C. and New York offsite link, as well as at Harvard University's Widener Library offsite link. The 100th Anniversary of the sinking of the R.M.S. Titanic on April 15, 2012, triggered significant interest in the wreck site. buselobanusi On January 31, 2012, in response to a request from NOAA, the U.S. National Park Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the International Maritime Organization issued a circular on Titanic. (MEPC./Circ.779). The circular advised all vessels to refrain from discharging any garbage, waste, or effluent in a zone approximately 10 nm (34 km) above the wreck. It also requested that submersibles avoid landing on the Titanic's deck and concentrate the release of any drop weights on ascent in specific areas away from the hull portions of the wreck. The circular also requested that visitors refrain from placing plaques or other permanent memorials on the wreck, however well-intentioned. As of April 15, 2012, the R.M.S. Titanic came under the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage. zamosohetatika offsite link On May 5, 2017, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) was signed into law. Section 113 of the Act provides that "no person shall conduct any research, exploration, salvage, or other activity that would physically alter or disturb the wreck or wreck site of the RMS Titanic unless authorized by the Secretary of Commerce per the provisions of the Agreement Concerning the Shipwrecked Vessel RMS Titanic. The Secretary of Commerce shall take appropriate actions to carry out this section consistent with the Agreement." 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Additional reference information U.S. Department of State Media Note, United States Accepts Agreement Protecting the Titanic Wreck Site (December 19, 2019) NOAA Web Story, Safeguarding the RMS Titanic's final resting place: United States and United Kingdom join to protect the famous vessel (December 19, 2019) NOAA Ocean Today (video), The Titanic Wrecksite NOAA Press Release, NOAA Commemorates the 100th Anniversary of RMS Titanic (May 31, 2011) NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Titanic as Part of America's Maritime Cultural Landscape NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, The 2010 Scientific Expedition to Titanic NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Previous Missions to Titanic NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, Titanic Collection NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, Rusticles Thrive on the Titanic NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, R.M.S. Titanic 2004 Expedition National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Foecke, T., Metallurgy of the RMS Titanic, NIST Interagency/Internal Report (NISTIR) (Feb. 1, 1998) The Smithsonian Institution, The Titanic offsite link Royal Museums Greenwich, Titanic offsite link National Museums Northern Ireland, Titanic and her Sister Ships offsite link SeaCity Museum Southampton, The Titanic offsite link La Cité de la Mer, Titanic Cherbourg offsite link Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Titanic: the Unsinkable Ship and Halifax offsite link Encyclopedia Titanica offsite link Starboard railing. (NOAA Photo Library)General How and why is the United States Government, and NOAA specifically, involved with R.M.S. Titanic? Titanic holds exceptional national and international significance as both a site of historical importance and continuing scientific study. Importantly, pursuant to the Agreement Concerning the Shipwrecked Vessel RMS Titanic, the Titanic serves as a maritime memorial for those individuals who lost their lives on that infamous night in 1912. tekkytusiini Of more than 2,200 individuals on board Titanic, approximately 1,500 perished in its tragic sinking, including 119 of the 306 American passengers, and many on their way to become United States citizens. The remains of many of these individuals were never recovered, and Titanic serves as their final resting place. All three branches of the U.S. government have been involved in efforts to protect and preserve the Titanic wreck and wreck site. Congressional Action The sinking of Titanic was one of the deadliest peacetime maritime disasters in history and quickly became a catalyst for change. Following the sinking of Titanic, the United States Congress held hearings that resulted in a Senate report and measures to improve safety of navigation. Similar investigations were held in the United Kingdom. muboxe The international community readily came together for the purpose of establishing global maritime standards and regulations to promote safety of navigation, including the Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea offsite link (SOLAS), widely regarded as the most important of all international agreements on maritime safety. Today, SOLAS, as amended, is still in force, helping to ensure the safety of seafarers and modern cruise line passengers.

In response to the discovery of the Titanic wreck in 1985, Congress saw the need for legislation that would properly protect the ship, while allowing all interested parties, from relatives of victims to scientists and naval architects, to benefit from its historic discovery. As stated in House Report 99-393 (November 21, 1985), Congress was particularly concerned with the potential harm to the wreck site that salvors might cause by physically altering, disturbing, or salvaging Titanic. Nearly identical bills addressing these concerns were introduced in the House of Representatives on September 11, 1985 (H.R. 3272), and in the Senate on February 5, 1986 (S. 2048). Both chambers ultimately passed the Senate version of the bill, and the R.M.S. Titanic Maritime Memorial Act of 1986 (Titanic Memorial Act) was signed into law by President Reagan on October 21, 1986. President Reagan's signing statement provided that: "The R.M.S. Titanic is the premier symbol in modern times of both the perils of the sea and the need for high standards of ship safety. The significance of the R.M.S. Titanic stems not only from the durable imprint of the disaster upon the consciousness of succeeding generations but also from the enormous strides made by the international community in promoting safety of life at sea, the study and observation of ice conditions, the maintenance of ice patrols in the North Atlantic Ocean, and the development and improvement of standards for the design and construction of vessels." See Ronald Reagan, Statement on Signing the R.M.S. Titanic Maritime Memorial Act of 1986 offsite link (Oct. 21, 1986). The Titanic Memorial Act directed the State Department and NOAA, respectively, to (1) negotiate an international agreement to protect Titanic; and (2) develop international guidelines for exploration, research, and, if determined appropriate, salvage. As directed by Congress in the Titanic Memorial Act, the State Department subsequently entered into negotiations with the United Kingdom, France, and Canada to develop an international agreement to protect Titanic, and on June 18, 2004, the United States signed the Agreement Concerning the Shipwrecked Vessel RMS Titanic (International Agreement), subject to the adoption of domestic implementing legislation. In 2017, Congress enacted legislation to implement the International Agreement. See Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31) (May 5, 2017). Section 113 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 prohibits "any research, exploration, salvage, or other activity that would physically alter or disturb the wreck or wreck site of the RMS Titanic unless authorized by the Secretary of Commerce per the provisions of the Agreement Concerning the Shipwrecked Vessel RMS Titanic . . . . Executive Branch Action Since the discovery of the Titanic wreck site in 1985, executive branch agencies have been involved in protecting and preserving the site, from participating in exploration and scientific expeditions to negotiating the International Agreement. Following the enactment of Section 113, the United States deposited its instrument of acceptance for the International Agreement, which entered into force between the United States and the United Kingdom on November 18, 2019. Consistent with the Titanic Memorial Act, NOAA developed Guidelines for Research, Exploration and Salvage of RMS Titanic (NOAA Guidelines) in 2001, in consultation with the United Kingdom, France, Canada, and other interested countries. 66 Fed. Res.



artifacts is in situ preservation. International Agreement, Art.

4 (2). Annex Rules at (1). Recovery or excavation aimed at Titanic and/or its artifacts should be granted only when justified by educational, scientific, or cultural interests. International Agreement, Art. 4 (2). The Annex Rules provide that all artifacts recovered from Titanic should be conserved and curated consistent with professional standards in a manner that provides for public access, curation and its availability for educational, scientific, cultural and other public purposes.

Annex Rules at XII (28). Additionally: Activities shall avoid disturbance of human remains. Activities utilizing non-destructive techniques and non-intrusive surveys and sampling shall be preferred to those involving recovery or excavation aimed at Titanic and/or its artifacts. Activities shall have the minimum adverse impact on Titanic and its artifacts. Persons undertaking these activities shall ensure proper recording and dissemination to the public of historical, cultural and archaeological information. Annex Rules at I. The Annex Rules reflect the most widely accepted principles in archaeology that are appropriate and applicable to a memorial site. The Annex Rules were influenced by input received from delegations from the United Kingdom, Canada, and France. RMST, as well as various experts in law, science, history, archaeology, and salvage were also consulted. Return to Top What are the NOAA Guidelines and How Do They Relate to the International Agreement? Section 5(a) of the Titanic Memorial Act directed the NOAA to enter into consultations with the United Kingdom, France, Canada and others to develop international guidelines for research on, exploration of, and if appropriate, salvage of Titanic. Following the finalization of the draft International Agreement, NOAA published its proposed Guidelines for Research, Exploration, and Salvage of the RMS Titanic

(Guidelines) in the Federal Register. 65 Fed. Reg. 35326 (June 2, 2000). The final Guidelines, including responses to public comments, were published by final rule April 12, 2001, 66 Fed. Reg. 18905-18913 (April 12, 2001), consistent with the authority provided in the Titanic Memorial Act. The NOAA Guidelines are consistent with the International Agreement Annex Rules. Prior to the enactment of Section 113 in 2017, the NOAA Guidelines represented the primary means by which NOAA influenced activities directed at the Titanic wreck site. Following the enactment of Section 113 in 2017, NOAA has been required to ensure that any activity "that would physically alter or disturb the wreck or wreck site of the RMS Titanic" conducted by persons under U.S. jurisdiction is consistent with the International Agreement, including the Annex Rules. The NOAA Guidelines remain applicable to artifacts governed by the Covenants and Conditions, under the 2011 Order of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia. The covenants and conditions specifically require that the collection of artifacts be "managed according to the professional standards recognized in the NOAA Guidelines, the International Agreement and the Annexed Rules, and the federal regulations governing the curation of the federally owned and administered archaeological collections." R.M.S. Titanic, Inc. v. Wrecked & Abandoned Vessel, 742 F. Supp.

2d 784, 792 (E.D. Va. 2010) (quoting R.M.S. Titanic, Inc. v. The Wrecked & Abandoned Vessel, No. 2:93cv902, at 6 n.12 (E.D. Va. Apr. 15, 2008)). Return to Top Article 3 of the International Agreement provides that Parties shall take all "reasonable measures" to ensure all artifacts recovered from Titanic are kept together and intact as project collections. The Annex Rules prohibit projects that would require the sale of artifacts or other material for funding. Annex Rules III(9), XII(28). In this way, the International Agreement is consistent with basic professional archaeological standards that dictate that artifacts recovered or salvaged from a wreck site should be kept intact as a collection. Such collections should not be dispersed through the sale of individual artifacts to private collectors such as through auction house sales. However, Article 3 of the International Agreement would not necessarily preclude the sale, transfer, or trade of an entire collection, provided that the collection would be maintained in a manner that provides for public access, curation and its availability for educational, scientific, cultural and other public purposes. As long as the collection is kept together and maintained for research, education, viewing, and other use of public interest, there should not be restrictions on commercial transactions which are intended to further these public purposes. The NOAA Guidelines take a position consistent with the International Agreement, as well as the admiralty court orders in the in rem action against Titanic (seeQuestion 1 offsite link for more information). Return to Top > NOAA acknowledges the intense controversy and disagreement over whether Titanic should be considered a grave site. Most who feel that it is not a grave site base this view on the fact that no bodies have been found on or near the wreck and that human bone dissolves into seawater at the depth at which the wreck lies. More than 1,500 men, women and children lost their lives when Titanic sank, and a large number of those lost were likely trapped inside the ship's hull. This tragic loss of life and the encasement of the remains of many passengers and crew in the hull sections have caused many people around the world, including descendants of Titanic's passengers and crew, to view the shipwreck as a grave site. Organic material associated with Titanic that has been exposed to the marine environment most likely deteriorated by the 1940s, with the exception of treated organic material, such as tanned leathers used in boots or suitcases. However, experts believe that it is likely that human remains are present within the wreck, and possibly at the wreck site as well. In particular, interior spaces of the hull, especially the intact bow section, even if flooded during the sinking process, may not be exposed to the outside environment. These types of isolated environments create a condition of stasis where constant pressure, low temperatures, no flow, and anoxic water levels have been known to preserve organic matter for centuries. However, whether or not human remains are present on the shipwreck does not detract from the fact that Titanic was the last resting place for hundreds of individuals. As demonstrated by the Titanic Memorial Act and Section 113, Congress supports recognizing Titanic as a memorial to the victims. 16 U.S.C. § 450rr-4. NOAA has also determined that it is appropriate to treat Titanic as a grave site and maritime memorial to the victims, consistent with Article 2 of the International Agreement, which establishes Titanic as a maritime memorial. In the treatment of Titanic as a maritime memorial, NOAA has determined that it is appropriate to treat Titanic as a grave site. The scientific and archaeological approach advocated by the International Agreement and NOAA Guidelines is applicable to a maritime memorial as it is consistent with the Congressional intent to recognize the scientific, cultural, and historical significance of the site. Return to Top NOAA acknowledges that it may be in the public's interest to salvage some artifacts from the Titanic wreck site. NOAA therefore balances this value with the Congressional intent to manage the wreck site as a maritime memorial consistent with the International Agreement, which proclaims that the Titanic shall be recognized as a memorial to those who perished.

NOAA has concluded that the recovery of many of the artifacts from the debris field (with certain exceptions) is consistent with the NOAA Guidelines and the International Agreement, including the in situ preservation policy. However, NOAA has also determined that recovery of artifacts from within either of the two hull sections is not consistent with the purposes of a maritime memorial. Return to Top In situ preservation means that the preservation of Titanic at the site of the wreck should be considered as the first option for protection. The International Agreement and NOAA Guidelines provide that in situ preservation is the preferred policy approach for memorializing and conserving Titanic.

This approach is consistent with widely accepted international and domestic professional archaeological standards and embodies the broader public interest in conserving Titanic. It is a precautionary approach to management of Titanic consistent with the character of a maritime memorial. Under this policy, non-intrusive research and exploration of Titanic is encouraged in order to protect the wreck site for future research and access. However, it is not intended as a legal presumption against the recovery or salvage of artifacts conducted in a manner consistent with Section 113, the International Agreement and its Annex Rules, and the NOAA Guidelines. Non-intrusive research, exploration, and salvage of the artifacts may be justified by educational, scientific or cultural interests. NOAA believes that in situ preservation of Titanic protects the diverse public interest in the shipwrecked vessel and wreck site. Congress and many others view the site as a maritime memorial, a grave site, and an underwater museum and laboratory. The hull and cargo can be seen as a time capsule of a tragic event and a snapshot of another historical period. Because intrusive activities may damage or destroy Titanic, the in situ preservation policy is compatible with promoting non-destructive uses of the site, such as non-intrusive research, education, public viewing, and even commercial use.

It is also consistent with the treatment of Titanic as the final resting place for many people who died aboard her when she sank, and the conservation of the surrounding natural environment. Return to Top NOAA does not view the International Agreement or Guidelines as restricting the public viewing of recovered artifacts or learning about Titanic. To the contrary, the International Agreement promotes facilitating education and maintaining the historical context of each recovered artifact. Return to Top The International Agreement, reflects the most widely accepted public and professional archaeological and historical preservation principles currently known. The International Agreement is in the public interest because it requires that artifacts be preserved and recorded so that historical information can be extracted from the wreck without destroying it or compromising the ship's integrity. Return to Top The United States supported the regulation or control of activities directed at underwater cultural heritage in all of the maritime zones in a manner consistent with international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) from the outset of the UNESCO UCH Convention negotiations. Under UNCLOS, coastal State jurisdiction is limited to UCH in internal waters, the 12 nm territorial sea, and the 24 nm contiguous zone.

In the context of the UNESCO UCH Convention, the United States was concerned about "creeping jurisdiction" of coastal States to UCH on the continental shelf and EEZ, and therefore specifically supported the use of existing provisions of the UNCLOS regarding jurisdiction and authority over natural resources to indirectly protect UCH. As to UCH in the Area beyond the continental shelves of all states, the United States supported the use of flag State jurisdiction and other jurisdiction consistent with the UNCLOS to protect UCH. The jurisdictional approach agreed to by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Canada under the International Agreement is consistent with UNCLOS and may serve as a model for protecting UCH on the continental shelf and EEZ without raising concerns of coastal State "creeping jurisdiction." Return to Top Salvage Titanic was a British-registered ship in the White Star Line that was owned by a United States company — in which famed American financier John Pierpont "JP" Morgan was a major stockholder. Titanic was built in Belfast, Northern Ireland, by Harland & Wolff for transatlantic passage between Southampton, England, and New York City. The White Star Line went out of business and no successor in interest has claimed ownership or rights to Titanic. The Liverpool and London Steamship Protection and Indemnity Association asserted potential rights and interests in the wreck under the maritime law of salvage.

However, R.M.S. Titanic, Inc. (RMST) entered into an agreement with the Liverpool and London Steamship Protection and Indemnity Association in 1994. As a result of that agreement, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia recognized RMST as the exclusive salvor-in-possession of Titanic. The property and personal effects at the wreck site may be subject to claims of private ownership but would also be subject to the maritime law of salvage and a right for its salvage or recovery. RMST's status as exclusive salvor in possession does not mean that the district court has conferred ownership of the wreck on RMST; rather, RMST is the only entity that may engage in salvage of the wreck. As salvor-in-possession, RMST's activities with respect to Titanic must account for the public interest. As the Fourth Circuit explained in a 2006 decision, "the traditional law of salvage ... involves the creation of a trust relationship between salvor and the court on behalf of the owner, it is not a major step to apply the same principles to historic wrecks, creating a trust relationship between the salvor and the court on behalf of the public interest." R.M.S. Titanic, Inc. v. The Wrecked & Abandoned Vessel, 435 F.3d 521 (4th Cir. 2006). RMST's rights as salvor-in-possession are also subject to other applicable U.S. law, including Section 113, and court orders. RMST holds title to the artifacts recovered from the Titanic wreck site from 1987 to 2004. The rights to the artifacts from the 1987 expedition were granted to RMST's predecessor by France, subject to an understanding that the objects would be used "in conformity with the respect due to the memory of their initial owners." The rights to the artifacts recovered between 1993 and 2004 were granted to RMST by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia in an Orderdated August 15, 2011. The Court's order made RMST's rights to these artifacts subject to a set of Covenants and Conditions, which RMST negotiated with NOAA and the Department of State through the Department of Justice. The Covenants and Conditions were developed to ensure that the artifacts recovered from Titanic will be conserved and curated as an intact collection in a manner consistent with current international and United States historic preservation standards (see questions 1 and 30 for more information). More information regarding the Titanic salvage case is available Set native link. On June 14, 2016, RMST and its parent company (at the time), Premier Exhibitions, Inc., and affiliates, filed a voluntary petition for Chapter 11 of the United States Bankruptcy Code in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Florida (In re: RMS Titanic, Inc., et al., Case No. 16-bk-2330 (Bankr. M.D. Fla.) and began to receive offers for purchase of RMST and the trove of Titanic Artifacts it had collected in previous salvage expeditions. On October 19, 2018, the bankruptcy court approved a sale to Premier Acquisition Holding Limited, LLC (PAHL) of 100% of RMST's stock, and along with it the transfer of RMST's Titanic artifact collections. The sale was subject to the approval by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, which issued an order on December 21, 2018 authorizing RMST to consummate the sale for a total of \$19.5 million. The Covenants and Conditions carried over to PAHL. Return to Top What are the Covenants and Conditions and what role do the Covenants and Conditions give NOAA? The Covenants and Conditions lay out the rules for the management and preservation of the artifact collections, including (1) artifacts recovered by RMST's predecessor entity in a 1987 dive expedition, which are subject to an in specie salvage award issued by the French Maritime Tribunal on October 20, 1993 (French collection) and (2) artifacts recovered by RMST over the course of its dive expeditions in 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, and 2004, after the initiation of the Titanic admiralty action in 1992 (American collection). Covenants and Conditions, II., F.

& G. RMST voluntarily agreed to subject the 1987 French Collection to many of the Covenants and Conditions so that those artifacts would be managed together with the American collection as a whole intact collection. The Covenants and Conditions state that the Court's in specie salvage award shall be a trust for the benefit of and subject to the beneficial interest of the public in the historical, archeological, scientific, or cultural aspects of the wreck and its artifacts. Under the Covenants and Conditions, NOAA represents the public interest in the Titanic Collections and exercises oversight functions in relation to the Covenants and Conditions. Covenants & Conditions, II., K. NOAA's authority to represent the public interest in this matter is consistent with NOAA's authority under the Titanic Memorial Act and the NOAA Guidelines. The Covenants and Conditions are also consistent with the International Agreement (for more information on these authorities see Question 1 offsite link). The Covenants and Conditions are perpetual and carry over to any owner and trustee of the collection of artifacts. Covenants & Conditions, II., F. Return to Top The Titanic wreck site is located in waters beyond national jurisdiction and therefore is governed by international law, rather than the laws of one country. Additional information regarding State jurisdiction over vessels is available here. The overarching purpose of existing laws and regulations governing the Titanic wreck site is to preserve and protect the wreck site for present and future educational, scientific, and cultural purposes conducted in the public interest. So long as public visitation to and documentation of the wreck site is non-intrusive, it is not prohibited under the principle of freedom of navigation on the high seas, the International Agreement, or the Titanic Memorial Act. The United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit affirmed this open access policy for non-intrusive visitation in 1999. See RMS Titanic, Inc. v. Haver,171 F.3d 943 offsite link (1999) (holding that salvor-in-possession RMST was prohibited from preventing other parties from visiting and photographing the wreck site, so long as such activities do not constitute salvage efforts or interfere with RMST's salvage rights). Return to Top (Last updated September 7, 2021)