

DATE: 2.25.05

TO: Harbor Safety Committee

FROM: Harbor Safety Plan Work Group
Joan Lundstrom, Chair

SUBJECT: Proposed Changes to Harbor Safety Plan Recommendations

Background:

In the fall of 2004, the Harbor Safety Plan Work Group was formed to review, revise and update all sections of the Harbor Safety Plan. The original Harbor Safety Plan was adopted August 13, 1992, with subsequent annual reports by various subcommittees and work groups. However, Harbor Safety Plan Recommendations made to the OSPR Administrator, as part of Harbor Safety Plans, have not been reviewed for a number of years.

The Plan Work Group reexamined “Recommendations Yet to be Implemented” (pages xii to xv in the current Harbor Safety Plan) and proposes the following changes. Note: many changes simply reflect existing committee policies and practices, and incorporate the wording of previously adopted recommendations.

I. Geographical Boundaries No current recommendation.

II. General Weather, Tides and Currents

1. The Harbor Safety Committee supports efforts to adequately fund NOAA maritime functions. The Committee recommends that NOAA update tide and current data using the latest technology available and publish the water level and current atlases on an expeditious basis.
2. The Harbor Safety Committee urges that the OSPR Administrator support PORTS as a high priority and that OSPR continue to seek and allocate funds to maintain the system. The Committee recommends that the Marine Exchange of the San Francisco Bay Region continue to operate, maintain and ~~market~~ support the uses of the PORTS program.

III. Aids to Navigation No current recommendation.

IV. Anchorages No current recommendation.

V. Harbor Depths, Channel Design, and Dredging

1. The Committee continues to support the spirit of cooperation of the Corps of Engineers (COE) in providing timely up-to-date surveys of deep-water navigation channels, with highest priority on areas where shoaling has taken place, and timely dissemination of that information to the ~~VTS~~ the United States Coast Guard (USCG), pilots and ~~masters~~ the maritime community.
2. The Committee continues to support NOAA’s timely updating of charts to reflect survey information from NOAA, COE and independent sources, frequently publishing data on channel depths in areas heavily trafficked by deep draft vessels, oil tankers and barges, and quickly alerting ~~VTS~~ the USCG, pilots and ~~masters~~ the maritime community.

Move the following from “Recommendations Yet to be Implemented” to “Recommendations Implemented or Addressed”:

1. The recommendation to “establish a new two-way Traffic Separation Scheme north of Alcatraz to allow safer navigation of deeply laden tankers” has been implemented, and is now referred to as the “Deep Water Traffic Lane.” (Date established: 1992)
2. The recommendation requesting the Corps of Engineers to further evaluate the lowering of Harding, Arch, Shag and Blossom Rocks has been implemented. The COE determined that there was not a Federal interest in pursuing a structural alternative (physically lowering some or all of the rocks) as a result of the Feasibility Study for the proposed project. No further action. (See Ch. V, section on Navigational Issues Associated with Channel Design and Dredging.)
3. The recommendation to eliminate the dogleg at buoy “C” of the San Rafael main ship channel to maintain proper two-way traffic separation” has been addressed implemented. This action was evaluated and found cost prohibitive. (Date addressed: 1993)

VI. Contingency Routing

1. The Committee continues to support the high degree of cooperation and consultation between pilots, the Coast Guard, the COE, port authorities and all other appropriate agencies and contractors, from the project planning stage through the construction stage of projects that may impact safe navigation in the Bay. The planning stage should include an evaluation of various alternatives to ensure harbor safety.
2. The Committee continues to request that Caltrans, railroads, etc., provide notice of work that would temporarily or permanently reduce bridge clearances as far in advance as possible through the Local Notice to Mariners, at a minimum, to assure that vessels are alerted to these hazards.

VII. Vessel Traffic Patterns **Add** the following recommendations:

1. As larger and deeper draft vessels enter San Francisco Bay en route the Port of Oakland due to the 50 foot deepening project, it is recommended that the Navigation Work Group of the Harbor Safety Committee (HSC) examine the current traffic scheme in the Bay and make recommendations to the Coast Guard for any changes in the current traffic schemes.
2. It is recommended that the Navigation Work Group (or a special group formed for this purpose) examine the MSO’s marine casualty statistics and their monthly reports of Significant Port Safety and Security cases to determine if there are trends or issues that should be brought to the HSC’s attention for further consideration or action. A summary shall be included in the Annual Report to the Harbor Safety Committee.

Move the following from “Recommendations Yet to be Implemented” to “Recommendations Implemented or Addressed”:

1. The Committee adopted a definition of a reportable ‘Near Miss’ situation to standardize reporting along the California Coast. However, after consulting with the other California Harbor Safety Committees, the idea to establish a systematic reporting of a ‘near miss’ was abandoned because of the issue of potential liability by the reporting party. ~~No further action.~~ The USCG considered a program to address non-reportable near casualties on a national and international level, but put the program on hold in November 2002, because of lack of funding.
(Date addressed: 2002)

VIII. Communication No current recommendation.

IX. Bridges

1. The Harbor Safety Committee continues to recommend that Caltrans, the Golden Gate Bridge and other owners and bridge operators install energy-absorbing fendering, instead of wooden or plastic fendering as bridges are repaired, retrofitted or in new construction.

X. Small Vessels

1. Representatives of the Harbor Safety Committee should meet with representatives of the San Francisco Boardsailing Association, kayak, outrigger and canoe groups to promote safer navigation in the Bay by discussing such issues as race schedules and locations (if applicable); Rule 9 requirements; characteristics of large vessels, fast ferries, and tug/barge operations, and possible education efforts such as posting signs at areas frequented by large numbers of boardsailors or paddlesports enthusiasts to warn of vessel traffic dangers.

Other possible efforts include:

- Cooperate with the Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadrons and other educational organizations to emphasize boater safety education and to disseminate boater safety materials to recreational boaters.
- Target boat rental establishments for education as inexperienced boaters are a continuous source of problems.
- Target marinas and boat ramps for education outreach.

XI. Vessel Traffic Service No current recommendation.

XII. Tug Escort/Assist for Tank Vessels No current recommendation.

XIII. Pilotage *Note: This section is being evaluated by the Navigation Work Group.*

1. Amend the California Harbor and Navigation Code to require that shipping company employees eligible to pilot vessels in the Bay area must hold a Master's license with pilotage endorsement and have made at least 20 trips as pilot trainee or observer on vessels over the routes to be piloted within a one-year period.
2. Amend Coast Guard regulations for pilotage to adjust the limit to 10,000 gross tons for tank barges carrying oil or other petroleum products as cargo to 5,000 gross tons.

XIV. Underkeel Clearance and Reduced Visibility

Move the following from "Recommendations Yet to be Implemented" to "Recommendations Implemented or Addressed":

1. The recommendation that "~~guidelines for underkeel clearances of tank all deep-draft vessels carrying oil or petroleum products as cargo~~" be established has been implemented by establishing the following minimum clearances:
 - Vessels west of the Golden Gate Bridge: Ten percent (10%) of the vessel's draft.
 - Vessels under way east of the Golden Gate Bridge: Two (2) feet.
 - Vessels at final approach to berth and at berth: Always afloat.

These clearances are incorporated into the Bar Pilots' Operational Guidelines, which are updated regularly:

XV. Economic and Environmental Impacts No current recommendation.

XVI. Plan Enforcement No current recommendation.

XVII. Other: Substandard Vessel Inspection Program No current recommendation.