



*Office of Spill Prevention and
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SAN FRANCISCO HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE WINS NATIONAL AWARD

Fort Lauderdale, FL. – The Area Maritime Security and Harbor Safety Committee of the San Francisco Bay Region (SFHSC) recently received a formal award from Secretary of Transportation, Norman Mineta, for their dedication to enhancing the safety and security of maritime commerce while striving to maintain economic viability and protect sensitive ecosystems. Presented at the National Harbor Safety Conference in February, several high-ranking U.S. Coast Guard officials including Vice Admiral Thad Allen, Chief of Staff, Rear Admiral Thomas Gilmour, Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety, and Rear Admiral Harvey Johnson, Seventh District Commander, were on hand to congratulate the SFHSC on their well-deserved award.

The SFHSC began as the Marine Exchange Harbor Safety Advisory Committee in 1987. This revolutionary group served as a highly respected forum for maritime industry cooperation and innovation with unprecedented success, inspiring passage of the state legislation that created Harbor Safety Committees for the state of California. In 1990, California enabled comprehensive oil spill prevention laws which established harbor safety committees in the State's five major ports. Each committee is sponsored by the Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR).

“Since its inception, the SFHSC has served as a breeding ground for the development of innovative ways to enhance the safety, security, and economic viability of maritime commerce while protecting the environment”, said Carl Moore, Interim Administrator for OSPR. Unique to the SFHSC is the level of public participation and the open dialog that is encouraged, resulting in pro-active and deeply committed maritime efforts. An affective and productive working relationship based on mutual respect has been fostered between commercial, governmental, environmental and recreational interests.

Individuals with diverse and sometimes conflicting positions representing every facet of maritime concern have worked together to develop comprehensive tug escort procedures for tankers, publish brochures that identify radio protocols, outline standards of care for the prevention of steering and propulsion casualties, map the common and formal names of local marine landmarks, develop an agreement for expediting the timely delivery of Army Corp of Engineer post-dredge sounding data to the pilots, and produce a professional video entitled "Sharing the Bay" to educate recreational boaters on the constraints and hazards that face commercial vessels. In addition members of the SFHSC have worked together to maintain the Physical Oceanographic Real Time System (PORTS), a system that provides crucial, real-time information to mariners, oil spill response teams, managers of coastal resources, and others about San Francisco Bay's water levels, currents, salinity, and winds.

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