

October 22, 2008

TO: Harbor Safety Committee

FROM: Fred Henning, Chair Tug Escort Work Group

SUBJECT: Recommended Best Practices for Emergency Tug Training

Emergency Tug Training. At the September 17, 2008 Tug Escort Work Group meeting, we were given a presentation of a Simulator Training Program for Tugs and Pilots that is being used in Puget Sound for tug captains, Puget Sound Pilots and B.C. Pilots. A number of years ago the Harbor Safety Committee recommended training for tug operators and pilots in relation to tug escorting in the Bay. A set of recommendations for conducting Escort Training on San Francisco Bay is part of the Harbor Safety Plan (Appendix I). The guidelines anticipated live escort training exercises.

Over the years it has become evident that the opportunity for on-the-water exercises involving tankers and tugs has been extremely limited at best, with few individuals trained for actual events. However, with maritime simulators becoming more sophisticated in their ability to replicate a variety of situations and with a California Maritime Academy (CMA) simulator operational within a few months, the Work Group decided to explore the opportunity for simulating local conditions on a cost effective basis to the maritime community within the San Francisco Bay Area.

The Work Group concluded that in addition to promoting simulator training for tugs escorting tankers, simulator training is applicable to tugs assisting and docking container ships, bulk carriers and chemical ships – thus providing industry-wide benefits for safe navigation. The Work Group therefore recommends the following Best Practice for Emergency Tug Training:

Best Practice: The Harbor Safety Committee encourages the maritime industry to provide simulator training for tug personnel with pilot participation for emergency tug operations, based on local conditions. The training would improve communication between pilots and tug masters, offer in-house training to tug industry personnel, and provide valuable “lessons learned” for emergency situations in a controlled environment.