

MINUTES

HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

10:00 a.m., Thursday, September 11, 1997

Port of Richmond, Harbor Master's Office, Richmond, CA

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. by **A. Thomas**, Chair. The following committee members or alternates were in attendance: **Maurice Croce**, Chevron Shipping; **Gail Skarich**, (alternate for **Mary McMillan**), Sanders Towboat Service, Inc.; **Charles Mitchell**, Port of San Francisco; **Roger Peters**, Member at Large; **Margo Brown**, National Boating Federation; **Rich Smith**, (alternate for **Stuart McRobbie**), SeaRiver Maritime; **Joan Lundstrom**, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission; and **Scott Merritt**, Foss Maritime; U.S. Coast Guard representatives, **CAPT Harlan Henderson**, **LCDR Pete Marsh** and **LCDR Mark Dix**; and OSPR representatives, **Bud Leland** and **Barbara Foster**. Also in attendance, more than thirty members of the interested public.

1. The Secretary confirmed the presence of a quorum.
2. MOTION by **R. Peters**, seconded by **J. Lundstrom** "to approve the minutes of the previous meeting." Motion passed without objection.
3. The Chair, **A. Thomas**, welcomed those in attendance and informed all that **Fran Black** will be absent from the next couple of meetings due to an injury. He then introduced **Mary Kieffer** of the Marine Exchange of the San Francisco Bay Region who will be taking minutes until **F. Black** recovers. The Chair, **A. Thomas** also announced the promotion of **Carlton Moore** of OSPR to Rear Admiral in the Coast Guard Reserve. He went on to praise the Coast Guard for recognizing the efforts of "those in the know". Congratulations to **Rear Admiral Carlton Moore**, USCG Reserve.
4. The Chair, **A. Thomas**, announced the retirement of **Captain Tom Richards** of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration. **Captain Richards** was lauded as an individual who served twenty-seven years with NOAA and who had taken upon himself to guide the PORTS Project in San Francisco Bay through its birth. A commemorative tray was presented to **Captain Richards** by **A. Thomas** on behalf of the Harbor Safety Committee.
5. **COAST GUARD COTP'S REPORT, CAPT Harlan Henderson.** (1) In reference to the aforementioned **Rear Admiral Carlton Moore**, **CAPT H. Henderson** stated that there are only two reserve admirals in the Coast Guard. (2) **Vice Admiral James Card** spoke at the last Coast Guard meeting. **VADM Card** has stated that he is available to give presentations to any group that is interested. (3) Ferry transits on the bay are up 12% due the BART strike. (4) There were two vessel interventions this past month. One ship was a Panamanian flag, the other was a Thai flag. It was found that there was no consistent lifeboat drills for the crews. Coast Guard is

implementing a matrix system by which vessels may be classified as to their readiness for sea. The matrix system includes the age of the vessel, the flag, as well as the class society under which they are registered. (5) There were five propulsion casualties and two steering casualties reported for the month. The Potomac ran out of gas. The M/V Jupiter came up on the Potomac's stern, but there were no casualties. (6) There were two freight vessel casualties and one crude carrier casualty reported. Both were due to propulsion problems. (7) There were twenty-four spills reported, but nothing of significance. (8) There is a problem with wrecked boats in the Oakland Channel (Rule 9 violations). Civil penalties or warnings were issued to the owners of these vessels. (9) Report of a outbound ship that lost its power. At the same time, there was an inbound ship. No casualties were reported, however, the outbound ship was ordered by the Captain of the Port to return to Anchorage 9 for inspection before proceeding to Seattle.

R. Smith questioned whether this was a partial failure for the outbound tanker and was it a foreign flagged vessel? **CAPT H. Henderson** answered in the affirmative to both questions. Chair, **A. Thomas** stated that there is a long term effort to train American mariners for foreign flagged ships. Better communication amongst the crew will at least partially correct some casualties.

6. CLEARINGHOUSE REPORT, T. Hunter. (1) There were two technical tanker vessel violations reported this month. Both violations were attributed to a misreading of the regulations. (2) In August, 1996, 81 tankers entered the bay; in August, 1997, the total was 61. In August, 1996, there were 265 deep draft vessel arrivals as compared to 229 deep draft vessels arrivals for August, 1997.

7. OSPR REPORT, Bud Leland. (1) The PORTS Project is proceeding on schedule. Final preparations are being made for the Marine Exchange of the San Francisco Bay Region to take over the running of the PORTS system from NOAA on October 1, 1997. (2) OSPR is working on a alternate contingency plan. Right now, they are looking at a 25-30% rate change in the plan. There is also a move to rate salvage organizations. (3) Oil spill regulations are being formalized. **B. Leland** reported that there would be a change in the monetary requirements in 1998 as well as a new definition as to the vessels carrying oil product as a secondary cargo. **R. Peters** asked for a more detailed description of oil as a second cargo. **B. Leland** replied that they will get more information to the committee on this topic.

8. PORTS STEERING COMMITTEE. **Captain Tom Richards** introduced **CDR Bruce Hillard** who will replace **CAPT Richards** as NOAA representative for the Bay Area on October 1, 1997. Also introduced were **Dave McKinnie** and **Linda Maxon** from the NOAA offices in

Seattle. **CAPT Richards** reported that the sensor at Benicia has been removed for the installation of a new generation of acoustical profilers that shall be installed in Benicia in late September. There will be an additional sensor installed at the Golden Gate Bridge. In the past, there was only one in operation. The second sensor will enable profiling of the north side of the deep draft channel at the Golden Gate Bridge. the second sensor is scheduled to be in place in early October, 1997. A sensor is also being installed at Redwood City. This sensor will also reflect water levels in the south bay. In the central bay, sensors will be installed at Alameda and the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge.

CAPT Richards reminded all that the PORTS system could greatly aid mariners this winter with the coming of El Niño. **D. McKinnie** reported that the target date of October 1, 1997 was picked for a variety of reasons. One factor was to enable NOAA to set the sensors in place. **T. Hunter** added that the hand-off of PORTS responsibilities to the Marine Exchange has been "seamless"; that the Marine Exchange staff is handling most of the PORTS operations at present. He further reminded committee that NOS/NOAA are not leaving the area, but stepping back. **CAPT W. Wells** of the San Francisco Bar Pilot Association inquired as to whether the PORTS system will record wind velocity and if so, is there a wind sensor in Oakland? **CAPT Richards** replied that there is a wind sensor in place in Oakland at present. These sensors are able to predict wind patterns in other locations as well. PORTS works in partnership with the United States Geological Society in Menlo Park. Mr. Ralph Chang is their contact. Wind conditions may also be obtained from the internet from such groups as windsurfer associations that also have sensors in the bay. PORTS is designing a hub to include data from all sensors.

Question--Do the two new sensors at the Golden Gate Bridge report separately? No, they report simultaneously. **LCDR P. Marsh** inquires as to whether the USGS will move out of Menlo Park as it has been rumored? **CAPT Richards** replied that if they indeed move, the people who monitor wind conditions will most likely move to Sacramento.

J. Lundstrom announced that the next meeting of the PORTS Ad Hoc Committee will be held at the Port of Oakland at 10:00 a.m. October 15, 1997. The committee is presently seeking a nonpartial evaluation person for the PORTS Project. **J. Lundstrom** welcomes advise from all parties as to the criteria the committee should seeking. There is also a plan to go out to various groups in the Bay Area to show them how PORTS data could be beneficial to their members. **J. Lundstrom** welcomes all interested to the Ad Hoc Committee meetings.

9. **UNDERWATER ROCKS SUBCOMMITTEE, J. Lundstrom.** As reported last month, the federal legislation to appropriate \$100,000 for a reconnaissance study has passed the House of Representatives and is presently being reviewed by the Senate Conference Committee. No word yet as to their decision. Senator Boxer has announced that she is in favor of the legislation. No word yet from Senator Dianne Feinstein.

10. **TUG ESCORT SUBCOMMITTEE, R. Peters.** Last month, the Harbor Safety Committee completed guidelines for tug crew education requirements. The Marine Exchange shall have a list of all education guidelines and trainee qualifications. These qualifications will include: emergency response skills, tug skills and knowledge of local geography and sail conditions. At his time, Chevron has not reviewed the guidelines. **R. Smith** of SeaRiver Maritime stated that they are pleased with the guidelines. **G. Skarich** of Sanders Towboat Service, Inc. and the Golden Gate Tugboat Association stated that the tugboat industry would like to certify themselves, that is, each tugboat company must implement their own training program. **M. Croce** inquired as to whether the State will certify those trainees who pass through the guidelines as set up by the State. **B. Leland** replied in the affirmative. MOTION by **R. Peters**, seconded by **J. Lundstrom**, to accept the education guidelines. Motion passed without objection.

11. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS.** Chair, **A. Thomas** gave an overview of last month's Coast Guard presentation of their program, *Prevention Through People*, which emphasizes the human factor in marine casualties. **A. Thomas** proposed a subcommittee to oversee the operation of this new program. **Margo Brown** will chair this subcommittee. Other interested parties to make up subcommittee include: **John Gosling** of Matson Navigation Company, the Port of Richmond, **Gunnar Lundeberg** of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific and **Gail Skarich** of Sanders Towboat Service. **CAPT H. Henderson** will appoint a Coast Guard officer to act as liaison between the USCG and the *Prevention Through People* subcommittee. **A. Thomas** points out that the USCG's experience with derelict ships will greatly aid with the people factor of this program.

12. **NEW BUSINESS.** Chair, **A. Thomas** introduced Erik Raahauge of the Mare Island Ferry Company who wished to speak of safety concerns for the new ferry dock planned for the Vallejo Ferry Dock Basin. At present, the plan for the new ferry terminal calls for a perpendicular dock that will cross the currents in the channel. There will be a cable tethering system to anchor dock as well as exposed pilings above the mud line. This same system was proposed for San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf and was turned down due to the lateral dock motions consistent with a cable system as well as the cost of the ongoing operations of such a system. E. Raahauge states that Vallejo will better be served by a SPUD or parallel docking system. The SPUD system

is safer for the riding public and cost effective. For the past decade, there has been a seawall basin with a perpendicular approach. There have been several casualties due to propulsion failures. Ferry captains have already expressed concerns as to whether El Niño factors this winter will cause even more difficult landings with the perpendicular approach to the docking basin.

E. Raahauge called upon the expertise of the maritime community to persuade the City of Vallejo to give up their plans for the perpendicular approach system and in its stead allow a parallel docking system to be implemented. He has offered the City of Vallejo the use of the dock owned by the Mare Island Ferry Company for the price of \$1.00 per year. This dock calls for a parallel approach. **LCDR P. Marsh** asked if there was a hull breach with the present system, would there be a spill of any kind. E. Raahauge answered that he is not sure if ferries are double hulled. However, a big enough hit with a vessel approaching a dock perpendicularly will definitely cause a spill. He also stated that a perpendicular system requires some 8000 more yards of material to dredge; possibly more since there is less dredging in the channel since the Navy closed down Mare Island.

Chair, **A. Thomas** stated that the original charge of the Harbor Safety Committee was to review tanker vessels and their escorts in the bay. However, that has changed. The HSC also concerns itself with movements in the bay as well as safety. **A. Thomas** stated that he can see a cable system breaking in a storm. If so, a dock could very well float down the channel to the TOSCO docks and possibly hit any tanker berthed there. **A. Thomas** proposed a subcommittee to review the plans for the new ferry dock at Vallejo. The subcommittee will be a part of the Bridge Committee. **M. Croce** stated that the U.S. Department of Transportation would be involved in the dock plan. Also, subcommittee should hear the City of Vallejo's side of the story. **J. Lundstrom** stated that the Bay Conservation and Development Commission would require a permit for dredging of channel or the placement of any pilings. E. Raahauge stated that the utilization of the current dock fund is \$1.2 million. The same amount of money could be used to build two parallel docks. **R. Smith** stated that he is in favor of reviewing the Vallejo ferry dock plan and further consultations with OSPR regarding the perpendicular approach proposal. **A. Thomas** stated that he will be looking at the ability of the Harbor Safety Committee to review any safety issue in the Bay.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10-09-97 at the Port of Oakland. Chair, **A. Thomas** will be out of state as well as **J. Lundstrom**. Therefore, **R. Peters** will preside over October's meeting if there is a quorum. Committee members will be advised as to whether October meeting will be held.

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MOTION to adjourn by **M. Croce**, seconded by **G. Skarich**. Meeting adjourned without objection at 12:25 p.m.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry Hunter". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Terry Hunter
Secretariat