

TRB HARBOR SAFETY AND AREA MARITIME SECURITY CONFERENCE

HOUSTON, TEXAS

June 7 – 9 2011

The Conference was opened by ADM Robert Papp, Commandant who spoke on strengthening partnerships, Resiliency in recording, responding, recovering and resuming from manmade or natural disasters. He indicated there needs to be strategies in place for Natural Disaster Recovery and local disasters; Unified Commands need to focus on recovery, by 2012 there will be 39 Units for MTS Recovery which will be standing units with common assessment planning tools (CART). The America's Waterway Watch Program which is headed by the Auxiliary is a primary tool in this effort.

Admiral Papp indicated the best plans get the public involved, he noted that there were 3,119 days from 26 Feb. 1993 when the bomb was set off in the basement of the World Trade Center to 9-11; now there have been 3,556 days since 9-11.

On the issue of TWIC, there is an effort to try and combine the Merchant Mariner documents with TWIC to have one process, there needs to be refinement of the process to incorporate the variations.

On AIS for small vessels, there are too many vessels, so for better or worse we have to acknowledge that there are too many creating too much data. The problem is how to track all the boaters on the borders. Putting more transponders on vessels would overload the system.

Partnerships – focus on enhancing with Marine Exchanges, there are currently two models one in Alaska and one in southern CA. Strengthening partnerships is Urgent! Leverage partners, look at available facilities and use partners as offered.

Grant Funding, this appears to be an area that will be cut back, have to stay out of politics and stay objective with recommendations.

Mariner Liberty Issues – this is still a problem.

Increase capabilities to help AMSC have sound Intel, ID threats /provide security for events, utilize MSST's for supplement to local units, keep CG experienced in AOR.

Concerns about subsurface issues, AMSC Plans addressing this now.

Cyber security issues, CG Cyber Command works with US Cyber Command, DHS is responsible for domestic cyber attacks.

A very interesting session was held on LNG issues, current facilities and future plans. The history of the efforts by industry, USCG and public for safety in the LNG Industry were discussed. It was noted that there have been thousands of shipments since 1971 via ship, pipeline and truck without incident. Some of the issues the industry is facing include price drops, plants closed and plans dropped for offshore terminals and other improvements to facilities. The new off shore facility in Salem, MA is functional and working well, plants have now become bi-directional, receiving and shipping fuel in order to maintain the industry. Issues discussed included various HAZMAT items, fire, spill, damage to ships or tanks, tools to remediate situations, etc. At this time it appears there is no major expansion of this industry planned and in fact some plants may be closed due to lack of market.

A Federal Agency Update session was held including the USCG, ACOE, NOAA, CPAP, CBP, EPA, TSA.

ACOE discussed support initiatives to double exports within 5 years, the Panama Canal changes update, Environmental Improvements to bring 53 harbors to be able to handle larger ships due to Panama Canal update, NY, NJ, Miami, Savannah, etc. Challenges include the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund funding, Inland Waterway Trust Fund, Export Initiatives and reduction in Navigation Program Funds.

NOAA – Capt. Lowell spoke on how the changes to the Panama Canal would require deeper harbors for our ports, they are doing scans of water with 3 Hydrographic Ships, one in the Great Lakes, one in Houston and one in Narraganset Bay; Arctic Navigation increase requires new charts and tide and current charts as well.

Richard Parrish spoke about CPAP's, 4,500 locations in the Country, Feb. 2010 started inspections of the top tier, highest risk 216 facilities, compliance visits to assist in compliance.

CBP – Erik Shoberg spoke about 100% screening of shipments around the world, however, we are unable to put SFI into place in other parts of the world. In our ports require 91% compliance for inspection.

EPA – Discussed issues with Diesel Emissions, reduction of sulphur in emissions for on road, off road and marine uses. Also discussed was the Clean Ports USA program, which involves voluntary retrofit technology.

TSA – Gary Gordon commented on passenger security for TSA/USCG and AMSC cooperation SEACAP screening technology methods and layered screening to improve security.

Stormcap – Training initiatives to train and implement new technology.

Now have Maritime Security Grant Program, and Canine Team Program.

USCG – Raju Khandpur addressed MTS, Bridge Administration, Great Lakes Pilotage issues, Polar Ice Breaking, the USCGC Polar Sea is being scrapped, USCGC Polar Star is being rehabbed and will be back in service in 2013 and USCGC Healey is active now; ice patrols, ATON management of 51,000 buoys, electronic aids, waterway management, navigation standards; coastal and marine spatial planning; ocean & transport policy. New overlay of traffic plans for shared use of the waterways including wind energy etc. Aids to Navigation, looking at aids vs. GPS/AIS etc. there are navigation issues with depending on GPS.

Capt. Maguire – spoke about “Predictable Surprises”, recognize predictable surprises and be ready.

Don Bruce – AMSC Houston/Galveston spoke about TWIC and having a working group to address issues with TWIC; Mariner Access and other issues with the port.

A very interesting session was held on Seafarer Access, including the need for education and outreach, the General Rights document. It appears that there is a variety of issues with access across the country and from company to company in ports. Many of the problems come because the port is owned by one firm, operated by another and the ship also has multiple layers of management/ownership. Some ports require those coming to take mariners ashore to load a vehicle and take it outside the gates; leave that group then come back and take another group, others won't let mariners off the ship but will let clergy and other service organizations aboard if properly documented, others have charges, there needs to be a standard practice for all ports.

Some of the issues foreign mariner Visa requirements and time lapses from Visa issue to arrival.

Excessive terminal procedures

Excess transit fees

1 to 5 ratio escort requirements

Terminal owners charge 3-400\$ for moving mariners

Timeliness of system and should be Free.

33 Terminals totally restrict access

131 Terminals require Seafarer Center to provide the transport

Need USCG access enforcement process

Need stakeholder involvement

Critical security issue as unhappy mariners translate to security risks.

Issues of escort & port police

CBP regulation and policy interpretations, require passport or seaman's book, VISA, etc.

Terminal operators want sustainable and reasonable process

Issues of who should pay, terminal vs. ship operator

Panel on Port & Facility Activities

Question of whether we have done everything possible to "buy down risk"?

Role and responsibilities of USCG

Vessel tracking

Higher Risk Cargo

Key Ports

Potential Security gaps

Review current MTSA Regs. & possible changes

Use MSRAM to support recommendations

Use Technology Research

Work with industry partners

First report on these issues due Oct. 2011, Final 2012, need to do the right things to keep commerce moving, make sound judgments and sound decisions. Need one Federal Plan.

Ocean Policy – David Kennedy NOAA – Spatial Planning and Offshore Installations

Need to engage stakeholders, consider Eco systems, Ocean Use, Tradeoffs, Governance, mapping of Atlantic East coast being done now.

AMSC is critical to port operations and security, need to include industry partners in planning and collaboration to implement emergency plans and share Intel.

Carolyn Belmore