

Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Committee
Meeting Summary
April 26, 2018
9:30AM
AVTEC Third Floor Conference Room
518 Third Avenue
Seward, Alaska

Attendees:

Committee Members:

Steve Catalano, CIRCAC – Primary
Todd Duke, Salvage – Primary
Bryan Hawkins, Port of Homer – Primary
Brad Kroon, Harbor Tug Operators – Primary
Rachel Lord, Environmental Organization – Primary
David Martin, Commercial Fishing Organization – Primary
Captain Paul Mehler III, Marine Oil Terminal Operators – Primary
Matthew Melton, Response Organization – Primary
Stephen Ribuffo, Port of Alaska – Primary
Scott Rosin – Marine Oil Terminal Operators – Alternate
Captain Pete Garay, SWAPA – Primary
Captain Sharm Setterquist, Tug and Barge Operators – Alternate

Managing Board:

Captain Ron Ward, Vice-President
Mike Munger, Secretary/Treasurer

Ex Officio:

LT Bart Buesseler, NOAA
CDR Justin Jacobs, USCG

Other:

Tim Robertson, Nuka Research and Planning Group
Greg Lebeau, Witt O'Briens
Kevin Schroder, Crowley
Terry Federer, AVTEC
Tom Rueter, Alaska Maritime
Sara Nichols, Nuka Research and Planning Group

The sixth meeting of the Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Committee was called to order at 9:32AM by Chairman Ribuffo.

Housekeeping Actions

Due to quorum issues, Mr. Ribuffo explained that the Managing Board held an email vote to amend the CIHSC Charter to allow for a quorum of the HSC to be “considered to be fifty percent (50%) plus one of the non-vacant seats of the HSC.” The email vote will go into effect at this meeting and will be ratified at the next Managing Board meeting.

Mr. Ribuffo also expressed the Committee’s gratitude to Safeguard Marine for donating the meeting room fee and to CIRCAC for donating the lunch costs for the Meeting.

<p>Motion Martin, Setterquist to approve the Agenda. Motion passes with no objection.</p>
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**Motion Catalano, Hawkins to approve the meeting summary of October 17, 2017.
Motion passes with no objection.**

Marine Safety and Recent Incidents

CDR Jacobs (USCG) reported that in the last 6 months there were seven oil spills less than 15 gallons reported as mystery sheens in Anchorage, Homer, Kachemak Bay, Ship Creek and the Whitney Road Retention Pond. There were also two incidences of reduction of propulsion reported. [USCG Cook Inlet Activity Summary.pdf](#)

Managing Board Report

Vice-President Ward reported that due to weak returns on fundraising efforts two years in a row, the Managing Board has determined that the CIHSC Organization cannot be sustainable without requiring seated HSC members to contribute in order to have a vote on the Committee. The group discussed the fact that some stakeholder representatives do not have the funding to come up with the contribution amount. Others expressed that they would like to see the budget and know what the approved 2018 budget of \$30K is used for. Nuka Research volunteered to provide the budget approved by the Managing Board and their contract and scope of work to those interested. Members of the Board expressed a willingness to work with the Committee and entertain all ideas to create a sustainable funding plan. The Board will revisit the discussion to see if there is a middle ground. All were in agreement that it is important to have a Committee that represents all segments of the marine industry in Cook Inlet and to try to include input from all the groups regardless of their ability to pay. There was general agreement that members should contribute to the Committee if they have the means.

Harbor Safety Plan Workgroup Report

LT David Parker was unable to attend the meeting and submitted the following written report to the group: "Since its inception, the HSP Workgroup has managed the development and maturation of the Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Plan. After a period of several years, the HSP has matured into a stable document and the workgroup has completed the heavy lifting required to get the document off the ground. At the Fall 2017 meeting in Nikiski, AK the CIHSC formally adopted the plan as amended. The role of the HSP Workgroup in the future will be to manage the inclusion of any additional topics recommended by the committee and developed by the appropriate subject workgroup. Unless the appropriate expertise only lies within the HSP Workgroup, the source of language for additional sections should come from a workgroup or other entity appointed by the committee. The role of the HSP workgroup chair at this point should be an administrative one, and seek to maintain the document as a relevant body of information for any maritime entity that seeks to operate in Cook Inlet. It has been a pleasure serving as the HSP workgroup chair for the past 2 years and I look forward to seeing the continued progress and good work of the CIHSC."

Navigation Workgroup Report

Captain Garay reported that his attempts to get the workgroup together were fruitless. He expressed that he is at a loss as to how to regenerate interest in the work of CIHSC, stating that without the LNG project, interest in the organization has waned. He further stated that it is important for the CIHSC to "keep the lights on" as there are major projects on the cusp of starting in the Inlet.

Salvage Workgroup Report

Mr. Duke stated that as the newly seated Chair of the Salvage workgroup he has not had the opportunity to meet with the rest of the group yet. He reported that it was a busy fall and winter for the salvage community with hurricane response. While hurricanes are not a concern in Alaska,

he has learned some valuable lessons that would apply to tsunami and earthquake response. Several Committee Members expressed an interest in hearing more details on the expertise of the salvage operations and Mr. Duke was asked to prepare a briefing for the next HSC meeting.

Marine Firefighting Workgroup Report

Captain Crisp was unable to attend the meeting, but Chairman Ribuffo reported that they are in the process of developing a MFF tabletop exercise for all departments on the Kenai Peninsula.

Chairman Ribuffo also stated that there is an overall need to challenge the CIHSC to keep the interest up so that issues which will certainly arise in the Inlet can be addressed by the maritime community in a coordinated fashion. All agreed that it is important to fight complacency.

Kevin Schroder volunteered to participate on the Marine Firefighting Workgroup.

Break 11:07 to 11:16

Cook Inlet Marine Risk Assessment Review

Mr. Robertson presented an overview of the Cook Inlet Risk Assessment (CIRA) Project. From 2011-2015, State and Federal agencies, Citizens' Advisory Councils, and Tesoro Alaska funded and managed a risk assessment of Cook Inlet marine traffic with the objective of developing recommended risk reduction measures. The project was conducted in two phases; Phase I – Identify Hazards and Consequences; Phase II – Identify Risk Reduction Options. Some recommended issues to be addressed by the Harbor Safety Committee are: Enhance ice monitoring to inform vessel operations; Participate in USCG's ice guidelines; Update Automated Wreck and Obstruction Information System (AWOIS) via NOAA; Update Coast Pilot; Further examination of self-arrest/rescue towing issues. The final CIRA Report concluded that the Cook Inlet maritime community is experienced and is committed to working together with applicable state and federal regulations, two spill response organizations with many risk reduction measures already in place. Still, strong currents, ice and other conditions challenge maritime operations and infrequent, unfamiliar visitors increase the risks. While "accessible" compared to other places in Alaska, some parts of Cook Inlet are far from rescue/response. [CIRA Presentation.pdf](#)

Self-Arrest Study, Safeguard Marine

Mr. Catalano presented the process and results of the Lower Cook Inlet Self-Arrest Study of oil tankers, done by Safeguard Marine for CIRCAC. The focus group participants included SWAPA Pilots, CIRCAC Representatives, and Safeguard Marine. The following results of the study were depicted: Simulations were realistic in terms of environmental conditions and vessel maneuverability; In all five locations, the vessel was in a temporary safe location; In all five locations, the anchor was sufficient for the vessel to self-arrest; The level of concern for the maneuver varied by location with Mid-Inlet Drift Transit being the lowest and Nikiski Range being the highest; There were ZERO anchor breaks during simulations, but the number of anchors used varied between 1 and 2 depending on location; Level of concern was not associated with the number of anchors used; Level of concern for self-arrest declined during the second day of simulations. All agreed that CIHSC should address and discuss ships operating outside of Kachemak Bay awaiting arrival at the Homer Pilot Station. The Study concluded with the following recommendations: The Cook Inlet Risk Assessment Final Report (2015) should be updated based upon this study; Local pilot participation in simulations to familiarize them with self-arrest maneuvers will increase the likelihood of success. Further research should be conducted in terms of developing best practices and the benefit of anchor gear for self-arrest in Lower Cook Inlet. [CIRCAC Self-Arrest Summary](#)

The group discussed options for mitigation in high risk areas and the idea of putting together a “pictogram” that describes procedure, hoping to offset language barriers. There was general agreement that the Harbor Safety Plan (HSP) should include the information in the Appendix and that the HSP Workgroup should take it up as a discussion.

Lunch Break - 12:07 to 1:04

SB92 Derelict Vessel Bill

Ms. Lord provided an update on SB92, stating that it has required a full re-write of the chapter, including an omission of the insurance requirement originally proposed. The Bill is currently in the House Committee and she remains hopeful that the Governor, who is in support of the Bill, will be able to sign it at the close of the Legislative Session. Ms. Lord added, in closing, that the Resolution passed by CIHSC last year has been very helpful and is much appreciated.

Winter Ice Guidelines

Due to its diverse coverage and responsibility, the USCG is no longer able to be the driving force behind the administration and oversight of the Cook Inlet Winter Ice Guidelines. They are looking the CIHSC to take it over. Captain Mehler stated that the process should be taken up by a sub-committee under the Navigation Workgroup, and that he is willing to take the lead on it. Details will be worked out at the workgroup level and taken up at a meeting coinciding with the pre-winter CIHSC meeting.

Discussion of 2018 work plan and priorities

The group reviewed a compilation of Workgroup Tasks dating back to the inception of the CIHSC and determined that there needs to be more activity on the Workgroup level in order for the organization to continue its effectiveness. The Navigation Workgroup added a task called “Ice Guidelines/Winter Operations” to their list. The HSP Workgroup acknowledged that an annual review of the Plan needs to be conducted. The Salvage Workgroup will develop a chapter for insertion into the Harbor Safety Plan and present the proposal at the next meeting. The Marine Firefighting Workgroup added a Peninsula-wide tabletop exercise to their list of tasks.

Another sub-group of the Navigation Workgroup was formed at the behest of Mr. Hawkins regarding a CIHSC response to the Pebble Mine Transportation Plan for Kamishak Bay. He agreed to take the lead, and Mr. Martin volunteered to help.

Harbor Safety Plan Chair

Mr. Ribuffo announced that Lt. Parker has resigned as the Workgroup Chair and requested volunteers from the group to take it on. Mr. Catalano stated he would step up.

Steve Catalano named as Harbor Safety Plan Workgroup Chair. Approved by Non Objection
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Commercial Fishing Workgroup

The group discussed the necessity of another Workgroup, and determined that commercial fishing is covered under the auspices of the Navigation Workgroup. It was requested that the next Agenda include a discussion of the commercial fishing routes and a corridor chart to be presented for approval to be added to the Harbor Safety Plan.

Review Action Items and Set Next Meeting

Captain Mehler requested that the Committee take this time go around the table and have each member briefly announce news and details from each of their respective industries. All agreed that this should be a standing agenda item going forward.

- Nuka Research will make the financial information of the organization available to Committee members;
- Todd Duke will prepare a Salvage Presentation for the next meeting;
- Captain Mehler will spearhead the Winter Operations Sub-Group;
- Brian Hawkins will lead discussions to formulate CIHSC comment regarding the Pebble Mine Transportation Plan for Kamishak Bay through a Navigation Workgroup sub-group;
- David Martin will provide a Commercial Fishing Corridor Chart to the Committee for approval and addition the Harbor Safety Plan;
- Nuka Research will create a standing agenda item for Committee Member Presentation at the end of each meeting.

The next meeting will be in the fall and coincide with the Pre-Winter Operations meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 2:23 PM

After adjournment, meeting participants were given a tour of the AVTEC Ship Simulator facility.