



LOS ANGELES/LONG BEACH HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE

Mandated by
California Oil Spill Prevention and
Response Act of 1990

MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE LA/LB HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE Wednesday, 3 February 2021

The One Hundred and Eighty-Second Meeting of the Los Angeles/Long Beach Harbor Safety Committee was convened by video teleconference using “Zoom” Technology due to COVID-19 protocols preventing an in-person meeting. **Vice-Chairperson Betz** called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. **Chairperson Strong** had an excused absence. **Executive Secretary Louttit** determined that a quorum was present as listed below:

**FOR THE PORT OF
LONG BEACH**
Mr. Glenn Farren

**FOR THE PORT OF
LOS ANGELES**
Capt. Jay Dwyer
(LA Pilot Service)

**FOR THE LONG BEACH
PILOT ORGANIZATION**
Absent

**FOR THE TANKER
OPERATORS**

Capt. Rob McCaughey
(Jankovich)

**FOR THE LOS ANGELES
PILOT ORGANIZATION**

Capt. Jeff White

**FOR THE OFF-SHORE
TERMINALS’ MOORING
MASTERS**
Absent

**FOR TUG & BARGE
OPERATORS**
Brian Vartan
(Centerline)

**FOR DRY CARGO VESSEL
OPERATORS**
Capt. Michael Jessner
(APL Maritime, Ltd.)

**FOR PLEASURE BOAT
OPERATORS**
Capt. John Betz
(CBYC)

FOR ORGANIZED LABOR

Mr. Eric Bland
(IBU of the Pacific)

**FOR THE CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION**
Mr. Jonathan Bishop

**FOR MARINE OIL TERMINAL
OPERATORS**
Capt. Sean Merchant
(Valero)

**FOR U.S. COAST GUARD
SECTOR LOS ANGELES and
LONG BEACH**

Capt. Rebecca Ore, USCG

**FOR THE NON-PROFIT
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION
ORGANIZATIONS FOR
SANTA MONICA BAY**
Vacant

**FOR THE NON-PROFIT
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION
ORGANIZATIONS FOR LA/LB**

Vacant

FOR THE CDF&W/OSPR

Mr. David Mighetto

**FOR PASSENGER FERRY
OPERATORS**
Mr. Erik Bombard
(Catalina Express)

FOR THE USACOE

Mr. Jim Fields

c/o Marine Exchange of Southern California
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**FOR THE CALIFORNIA
STATE LANDS COMMISSION**
Vacant

FOR THE NOAA/NOS
Mr. Jeffrey Ferguson

**FOR THE SHIP'S AGENT
ORGANIZATION**
Absent

**FOR COMMERCIAL
FISHING**
Mr. Daniel Strunk
(San Pedro Bait Company)

FOR THE U.S. NAVY
Absent

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Capt. J. Kipling (Kip) Louttit
(MX SoCal)

ALTERNATES, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, and OTHER PARTIES (SEE ATTACHED LIST)

Vice-Chairperson Betz welcomed everyone in attendance and thanked all for their interest in and participation on the Los Angeles/Long Beach Harbor Safety Committee. **Vice-Chairperson Betz** welcomed **OSPR Administrator Tom Cullen** to the meeting. The Committee thanks the Jacobsen Pilot Service for making their "Zoom" Technology account available for this gathering. **Vice-Chairperson Betz** and **Executive Secretary Louttit** reviewed "Zoom" virtual meeting protocols, took attendance, and validated a quorum was present.

ACTION ITEMS:

Mr. Mighetto announced the following appointments to the LA/LB HSC:

Capt. Thomas MacKrell was appointed as Member representing Marine Oil Terminals.

Capt. Sean Merchant was appointed as Alternate Member representing Marine Oil Terminals.

Oath of Office: Because we were not meeting in person, **Mr. Mighetto** had been instructed to administer the California Oath of Office via remote means. **Mr. Mighetto** read the California Oath of Office to both appointees at once. **Capt. MacKrell** and **Capt. Merchant** affirmed they had raised their right hand and responded in turn by saying "I do" to **Capt. Louttit** and **Ms. Joyce Kaplan** (MX Staff). **Mr. Mighetto** instructed both appointees to sign the oath documents that were provided, and scan and return them. When **Mr. Mighetto** receives the signed oaths, he will have them recorded at the Secretary of State Office in Sacramento. Congratulations!

ITEM I: APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:

- (1) **Vice-Chairperson Betz** called for a motion to approve the minutes of the 181st Meeting on 2 December 2020. **Capt. White** made a motion, seconded by **Capt. Dwyer** to accept and approve the Minutes of the 181st Meeting on 2 December 2020. There were no comments, corrections, or discussion. The motion carried by a unanimous voice vote from voting members present.

ITEM II: OLD BUSINESS:

- (1) **Vice-Chairperson Betz** called for an update on Marine Exchange Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) activities from **Capt. Louttit**, who reported:

a. Incidents:

- i. There were 3 incidents since the last Harbor Safety Committee Meeting on 2 December. The final incident of 2020 and 12th of the year was a tanker 2 miles South of the Long Beach sea buoy inbound with a pilot aboard that experienced a blower issue that limited the tanker's speed.

CG Sector LA/LB authorized the tanker to proceed to an inside anchorage with one additional tug.

- ii. There were a total of 12 incidents in 2020. 9 were propulsion issues, 2 were Search and Rescue Cases (both Jet Skis), and 1 was evacuation of the Marine Exchange due an adjacent brush fire. For comparison, in 2019, we had the same number of propulsion issues, 1 steering issue, and 1 advance notice of arrival violation, for a total of 11. Thus, comparing the 2 years, the number of incidents were essentially the same, which is good.
 - iii. There were 2 incidents in 2021. The first incident of 2021 was a cruise ship 8 miles northwest of Avalon outbound in the Southern traffic lane that the VTS observed stopping. The VTS called the cruise ship who reported they had lost power and had already informed the Coast Guard. The cruise ship got underway on one shaft intending to return to an outside anchorage for class society inspection. Later, the Coast Guard cleared the cruise ship to resume its voyage South without returning to anchor. The second incident of 2021 was a collision between two anchored container ships on the morning 25 January at approximately 0430 during the storm where wind gusts exceeded 50 knots. Both container ships got underway for storm avoidance, as did 17 other ships. There was no pollution or lost containers. The Coast Guard is conducting an investigation.
- b. **Traffic Report:** Capt. Louttit referred to the handout that was sent with the read-aheads. New information since the last HSC meeting in December was highlighted in light blue.
- i. **Arrivals:** There were 352 arrivals in November, 351 arrivals in December, and 350 in January, which continues the levels we saw earlier in 2020. The 2 big ship populations that are arriving at reduced levels are cruise ships and foreign tankers. There were 4,205 arrivals in 2020, which was the lowest number of arrivals since modern Marine Exchange records start in 1980. There were 356 fewer arrivals in 2020 than 2019, and 353 fewer than 2018. Looking back at all of 2020 in comparison to 2019 in terms of arrival routes, arrivals from the North were up 10 percent to 52 percent, arrivals from the West and South were down 5 percent to 16 percent and 30 percent respectively, and arrivals from the Chevron Offshore Terminal in El Segundo were essentially steady at 2-3 percent.
 - ii. **Departures:** Departures were essentially unchanged between 2019 and 2020. Departures to the North were 43 percent, departures to the West were 20 percent, departures to the South were 35 percent, and departures to the Chevron Offshore Terminal in El Segundo were 2 percent.
- c. **Comment on the shipping backup:**
- i. There were record levels of vessels, primarily container ships, at anchor during this period. As of this morning there were 50 vessels at anchor of which 36 were container ships. We continue to manage the situation working with port partners. The Jacobsen Pilot Service and Los Angeles Pilot Service pilots have been fabulous.

- ii. We ran out of anchorages several times during this backup. The last time we ran out of anchorages was 2004 and we used pre-planned “drift boxes” or circles. We started using the pre-planned drift boxes for this backup but found the ships drifted at different rates and it did not make sense to bunch the ships close together. Learning from our experience, we started using "drift areas" that we work out with each ship's captain based on his/her preference for his/her ship. Our area of responsibility is 50 miles in diameter, so leaving the ships spread apart increases safety and comfort of the captains. We work with each captain to ensure he/she does not choose to drift or steam slowly somewhere they aren't supposed to be, such as in the shipping lanes or too close to shore, and we are requiring ships to remain at least 2 miles apart. This “drift area” process is working well. We had as many as 24 ships in drift areas at one time using this process during the 24-25 January storm. We intend to continue using it.

d. **Final Comments:**

- i. **COVID-19:** The Marine Exchange continues to work under our COVID-19 protocols with a mix of personnel working on-site and from home for the foreseeable future. Please let us know any issues in the spirit of continuous improvement.
- ii. **Los Angeles Port Police Radio Tower:** Work continues on the Los Angeles Port Police’s new 100’ radio tower and communications hut. Marine Exchange operations have not been affected and are not expected to be affected while the work is being done. We are happy to support the LA Port Police.
- iii. **Norcontrol Annual Maintenance:** 2 weeks of routine annual maintenance and software upgrades to our Norcontrol Vessel Traffic Service Computer System will be conducted later in February. For the first time this work is being done remotely from Norway due to COVID-19 protocols. The maintenance and software upgrades will be at all five sites in our shared Norcontrol system, (MX, LAP, JPS, CG, and POLB JCCC). We successfully replaced the Norcontrol recording systems at both the Marine Exchange and Jacobsen Pilot Service remotely from Norway in December, so we anticipate no issues with this maintenance. There should be no operational issues.
- iv. **Whales:** At the request of the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary we continue to advise all inbound and outbound vessels that there are whales in Southern California waters and vessels should take appropriate precautions.

(2) Update on USCG Sector LA/LB and AMSC activities: **Capt. Ore** combined her Sector and AMSC Reports due to the virtual format:

- a. The Coast Guard expressed appreciation for the partnerships and great work by port partners managing ship movements and dynamic situation during heavy weather the past few weeks. The communications have been “spectacular” and the incorporation of real-time lessons-learned is “fantastic.”
- b. Regarding the Port of Long Beach Deepening Project, the Coast Guard District 11 Office in Alameda and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are reviewing public comment solicited during 2019.
- c. The new Anaheim Bay civilian boat traffic channel opened 21 January. The new channel allows civilian traffic to transit in and out of Huntington Harbor without going through areas used by the U.S. Navy.
- d. Three new Maritime Safety Information Bulletins (MSIBs) were recently promulgated. MSIB 01/21 warns about a cyber event allegedly from a Coast Guard member to a merchant ship. The Coast Guard recommended HSC members advise their employees to be particularly wary about phishing attacks. CG Sector LA/LB’s Cyber Security Point of Contact is Mr. Chris Regan. MSIB 02/21 clarified CDC guidelines and options for non-Cruise vessels. A 3rd MSIB was sent on 1 February by CG Headquarters which clarifies that masks must be worn in transportation hubs and vessels.
- e. Marine Events are near zero. HSC Members are requested to help watch for events which might need a permit and advise planners of these events to contact the Coast Guard.
- f. The Coast Guard is continuing operations per its COVID-19 protocols and is managing its COVID-19 cases.

(3) Update on OSPR activities: **Mr. Mighetto** reported:

- a. OSPR is changing COVID-19 protocols and adopting new work from home and office protocols, which include a goal of 75% of members working from home.
- b. Non-tank vessel fee increase: OSPR is in the comment phase of this proposal. Written comments must be submitted by 22 February 2021. The increase is modest. Information is on the OSPR web site.
- c. **Mr. Mighetto** thanked the Marine Exchange and said they were doing a fantastic job producing the remarkable daily reports on the ship backup. The wind and 17-foot waves were amazing. **Mr. Mighetto** commented that the MX and CG members who staff that station are unique and not many are trained to do what they do.
- d. **Mr. Mighetto** solicited comments from **Administrator Thomas Cullen** and **Mr. Ted Mar of OSPR**. **Administrator Cullen** thanked everyone for the updates. **Administrator Cullen** added that non-tank vessel fee has not increased since 2012. There are 3 tiers depending on how much oil is being carried. The increase is about 15% increase which is proportional to the per-barrel fee being sought, which accounts for inflation during the past 9 years. Spill Management Team (SMT) regulations are being promulgated. Petroleum trends will be looked at with the shift to renewables, for OSPR currently only has authority to manage petroleum, but the renewables can be just as damaging to the environment and

wildlife. **Administrator Cullen** thanked **Capt. Betz** for his great work leading the meeting.

- (4) California State Lands Commission (CSCL) activities: The seat is vacant. **Mr. Beckwith** reported that operations are continuing under COVID-19 protocols with some return to work on-site and interaction with the public. Several wharf projects continue with rebuilds or new construction. The Prevention First Oil Spill Symposium is due to be held this fall (every 2 years) but may be pushed back a year due to COVID-19 protocols.
- (5) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) activities: **Mr. Fields** reported that work will restart on LA River Estuary and LB Approach channel; the work should be completed by Memorial Day. Work on the LA/LB Breakwater is complete and the breakwater is fully functional. This work repaired damage from Hurricane Maria in 2014 and cost \$23M.
- (6) Update on National Oceanic and Atmospheric (NOAA) activities: **Mr. Ferguson** reported:
 - a. Regarding containers lost at sea: The Debris Removal Program is working the issue of two container ships that lost 700 and 1,000 containers respectively in the Pacific. Some of the containers may float and some may contain hazardous materials. NOAA intends to be proactive to track these containers. Make reports of sightings to NOAA.
 - b. The Marine Debris program is hosting a series of webinars at noon on the 4th Wednesday of the month to discuss the removal of derelict vessels and share lessons learned and best practices. The first webinar is 24 February.
 - c. New Channel into Huntington Harbor: The channel is complete. NOAA is working with the Navy to get information to update the charts, and with the Coast Guard to determine if any new navigational aids will be installed.
 - d. **Vice-Chairperson Betz** asked where NOAA was with the 5-year plan to discontinue paper Raster charts? **Mr. Ferguson** responded four years remain.
- (7) Area Maritime Security Committee: **Capt. Ore** reported that AMSC met this morning and the most significant item for the HSC was the Cyber Security MSIB reported earlier in the meeting.

ITEM III - NEW BUSINESS:

(1) Sub-Committee Reports:

- (2) S/C #1 (Navigation Safety) – **Capt. Betz** reported that the sub-committee has been meeting monthly and the primary activity is the Proposed ATB Rulemaking regarding tug escort regulations. The matter was referred to working group. The sub-committee will meet immediately following this meeting on the same Zoom link after a short break.
 - a) **Vice-Chairperson Betz** invited **Capt. Louttit** to brief the proposed change to the standard of care regarding wind strength and vessels at anchor. **Capt. Louttit** briefed that the Code of Federal Regulations states that vessels must take additional precautions when the wind speed exceeds 40 knots, but the Marine Exchange Vessel Traffic Service has noticed that as ships get longer and higher, in particular container ships and car carriers, a more proactive standard of care is needed. The Marine

Exchange proposal, which was approved by Sub-Committee 1, is that when winds are forecasted and/or observed at 35 kts or greater in the AOR (including wind gusts) vessels shall ensure their propulsion plant is placed in immediate standby and a 2nd anchor, if installed, is made ready to let go.” Marine Exchange General Manager **Capt. Patrick Baranic** added emphasis.

- b) **Vice-Chairperson Betz** made a motion that SC-1 recommends that the Full HSC **vote** to approve a wording change to the LA/LB HSP Chapter IV Anchorages, Paragraph D.2. by replacing that language in its entirety with the following language: “When winds are forecasted and/or observed at 35 kts or greater in the AOR (including wind gusts) vessels shall ensure their propulsion plant is placed in immediate standby and a 2nd anchor, if installed, is made ready to let go.” **Mr. Farren** seconded the motion. **Vice-Chairperson Betz** solicited for comments; there were none. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. There was brief follow-on discussion about the value of the Committee acting proactively.

(3) Administrator Cullen briefed:

- a. There is joint OSPR/Chevron oil spill exercise 22-26 February; members are encouraged to participate.
- b. There is a new bill, AB-339, regarding public meeting protocols that would affect public meetings such as the HSC. Members are encouraged to check out the new bill.

- (4) Mr. Farren** briefed that there are new regulations by CARB for vessels at berth for car carriers and tankers. Members are encouraged to check out the proposals and interact as appropriate.

ITEM IV – PUBLIC COMMENTS

- (1)** None.

ITEM V - ADJOURNMENT:

- (1) The next meeting will be 7 April 2021 at the 10:00 a.m., most likely by virtual means.
- (2) **Capt. Betz** made a motion to adjourn, seconded by **Capt. Dwyer**, and the meeting adjourned at 12:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

//signed//
Captain J. Kipling (Kip) Louttit
Executive Secretary
29 March 2021