

## Executive Summary 2022-2023

The Harbor Safety Committee continued its collaborative process to engage the maritime community in supporting navigation safety in the Bay.

During 2022-2023:

- The Harbor Safety Committee has continued to hold hybrid meetings, with options available online, as well as rotating physical locations around the bay. With these in-person meetings again, committee members gladly welcomed the return of breakfast offerings.
- At the beginning of 2023, the Chair of the Harbor Safety Committee, Captain Lynn Korwatch, retired after 50 years in the maritime industry, and 22 years of service in leadership at the Harbor Safety Committee. Her accomplishments are numerous, and she will be missed.
- Scott Humphrey became the Executive Director of the Marine Exchange and the new Chair of the Harbor Safety Committee. And a few of the work groups also saw some personnel changes, such as the new addition of Jim Haussener as the chair of the Dredge Issues Work Group.
- The Navigation Work Group discussed discontinuing use of the Sea Buoy racon, and the Ports Voice phone service. The racon is mainly used by pilots and ship captains in rough seas. While potential virtual AIS spoofing is a concern, the Bar Pilots support keeping the racon in place.
- The Dredge Issues Work Group has continued concerns with the Pinole Shoal Channel shoaling. Pinole Shoal Channel should be a two-way channel but is not fully usable due to shoaling. Marathon has sent a letter to the USCG requesting emergency dredging, however the USCG determined that emergency dredging is not needed at this time. The USCG advised that an appeals process is available and the USCG will continue to participate in Work Group meetings on the issue. The work group chair advised that shoaling is not static and is continuing to progress. The Bar Pilots and Baykeeper support emergency dredging. Other work group meetings discussed the next year's budget process and other dredging recommendations, such as the Santa Fe Channel and Islais Creek.
- The Navigation Work Group drafted a letter to be sent to USACE regarding the Oakland Harbor Turning Basins Widening Study. The letter expresses the HSC's support for turning basin widening to promote navigational safety, as a wider turning basin is necessary for safety due to the increased size of modern container ships. The letter was approved by the committee and signed by Capt. Korwatch and Capt. Paul Ruff, Bar Pilots.
- The Prevention Through People Work Group participated in BAMO meetings where they discussed concerns with derelict vessels resulting from the closure of the Oyster Cove Marina, storm related issues including a damaged fuel dock since repaired, a Work Group published brochure on Rule 9 and 10 violations which should be made available to recreational boaters and yacht clubs, and, as there have been leadership changes at regional marinas, an updated contact list is being developed. Also, abandoned vessels have been a concern, and so surveys for abandoned vessels were conducted by marina operators, and funding concerns were discussed.
- The Tug Work Group has reviewed and is updating the HSC Emergency Towing Plan and Dead Ship Tow Best Maritime Practices.
- The Navigation Work Group discussed large ships transporting windmill parts which are planning to come to Stockton in 2024. The proposed ships are converted bulkers and have a large deck load which severely reduces visibility and would require multiple pilots to transit into port.

There are significant safety concerns with the planned transits, and the deck load may need to be reduced. As safer alternatives are available, the Bar Pilots are against allowing these ships to transit unless safety concerns can be mitigated. The transits require USCG Letters of Deviation.

- Additionally, the voluntary Vessel Speed Reduction (VSR) program for whale protection starts on May 1st. Several whales have been observed in the Bay and information on the program is included in the Local Notice to Mariners. At the time VSR compliance has been mixed, and the plan to expand VSR in the Bay encountered problems and is currently on hold. A proposal to establish a new HSC Work Group to address VSR issues was made.

The Committee also received a number of presentations related to diverse topics including:

- Report on the AERAS Emissions Capture System. Clay Sandidge, of AERAS Technologies, gave a presentation to the committee on the AERAS Emissions Capture System. The system is being used in LA/LGB and planning is underway to bring the system to the Port of Oakland in 2023. Container ship diesel engines emit pollution including particulate matter and nitrogen oxides. New CARB regulations have been put in place which will require container vessels to use shore power when at berth or an alternate CARB approved emissions reduction technology. The CARB regulations go into effect for additional types of vessels including tankers in 2025 and 2027. The AREAS system is barge based. The barge docks beside a vessel at berth and attaches to the ship's stacks. Engine exhaust is captured and run through a large catalytic converter reducing emissions by over 90 percent. There is significant interest in the technology from other states and internationally.
- Report on Whale Safe San Francisco. Kathi George, of The Marine Mammal Center, gave a presentation to the committee on work being done to prevent whale – ship collisions. The Whale Safe project was developed by the Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory team and focuses on protection of endangered humpback, blue, and fin whales. Whale strikes are a major concern and many go unreported. Significant numbers of whales can frequent offshore shipping lanes and the traffic separation scheme which increases the likelihood of ship interactions. The Vessel Speed Reduction program is currently in place off California to help protect whales. The Whale Safe project aims to increase protection. Rachael Rhodes, of Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory, advised that the Whale Safe program sends real-time alerts to inform shippers of whale activity in waters being transited. Whale location data is collected by acoustic monitoring, sighting reports, and predictive modeling based on ocean conditions. The data is used to create a whale presence rating system for offshore transit areas. Whale activity alerts allow ships to increase vigilance when whales are present. CMA CGM is a partner in the program and sends the alerts to their ship captains. Publicly available AIS vessel speed analytics are also provided for ship operators which track compliance with speed reduction recommendations. Work is being done to increase the compliance rate. The Whale Safe project only collects data for endangered whales and does not include gray whales. Website: <https://whalesafe.com>
- Report on the Emergency Vessel Attachment & Towing System (EVATS). Mark Gregory, USCG D11 Response Advisory Team, gave a presentation to the committee on the recently acquired Emergency Vessel Attachment & Towing System (EVATS). The decision was made to purchase an EVATS due to recent adrift ship events including the Wan Hai 176 incident. The Wan Hai 176 incident occurred in heavy weather which prevented towing despite a tug being on scene. Due to the conditions, an emergency towing system was flown down from Alaska but not needed as

the tug was finally able to attach lines and tow the ship into port. Emergency towing systems are used to facilitate towing in adverse weather conditions when tugs are unable to attach lines by traditional means. The EVATS was acquired in November 2022 and is available for use in California, Oregon, and Washington. Exercises with the new equipment are being planned with the towing industry. The EVATS is designed to be transported by helicopter and can be deployed from a ship or tug. The system is stored at USCG Air Station Sacramento and is ready to be airlifted in a cargo net to the scene of an incident.

- Report on Sail Grand Prix 2023. Melanie Roberts, of SailGP, gave a presentation to the committee on the Season 3, Event 11, SailGP racing event. The sailing race was held on May 6-7 off the San Francisco City Front. Race rehearsal was on May 4-5. An exclusion zone was in place for rehearsal and race days. Free sailing took place on May 1-3 without an exclusion zone. Exclusion zone and racecourse maps were provided. Plans were similar to last year's event.
- Report on the Bay Ferry VI Maritime Security Exercise. Philip White, the Exercise Director, gave a presentation to the committee on the Bay Ferry VI maritime security exercise to be held September 18th -21st. Planning for the exercise is underway. The exercise will include scenarios testing preventative Rad/Nuc detection, shore-based active shooter response, ferry underway active shooter response, and IED mass casualty response. The Bay Ferry VI exercise is funded by a Port Security Grant Program grant. The Bay Area is considered the fifth most at-risk region in the nation for terrorism and the maritime environment is particularly susceptible. Ferry boats have less security than other modes of mass transit and their routes are predictable, increasing vulnerability. In 2021 a heavily armed man was arrested on a ferry in Washington State. Shore-based attack scenarios will be conducted at five locations around the bay. In the event of a ferry terminal attack, responders must be prepared to rescue people who jump into the water to escape. The ferry underway attack scenario will take place off Treasure Island. The main participants in the exercise are ports, ferry companies, law enforcement, and first responders. VMAP activation will be tested with VTS and Marine Exchange participation. Lead-up training will be provided prior to the exercise and other resources are available.

See Appendix C, Annual Work Group reports, for activities conducted over the previous year.