

Vessel Safety**Foreign Vessels**

Strategic Goal – Eliminate substandard foreign shipping from U.S. waters.

Strategies:

- Prioritize USCG marine inspector and boarding team member training to provide appropriate tools and knowledge for quality inspections, movement controls, and professionalism to the marine industry and the public that we serve.
- Continue to conduct local risk analysis and evaluation to correlate any relation between foreign flagged vessels and their corresponding boarding priority from the national targeting matrix and vessel casualty data.
- Continue to build relationships and coordinate activities with Transport Canada, sister agencies in the Department of Homeland Security, the Washington State Department of Ecology, marine Class societies, Puget Sound pilots, vessel agents and other local industry representatives to optimize resource usage and conduct inter-organizational training.

Domestic Passenger Vessel Safety

Strategic Goal – Manage, measure and reduce risk to passengers carried on commercial vessels built in Puget Sound or operating in Puget Sound waters.

Strategies:

- Execute all mandated inspection programs & accurately track results.
- Maintain current levels of new construction oversight.
- Develop program for risk based, unannounced domestic vessel exams.
- Seek non-regulatory standards of care for Puget Sound operators where possible.
- Develop Radar Observer Endorsement Program to address the need for operators of high speed, high capacity passenger vessels to obtain and maintain an appropriate radar observer qualification.
- Continue to closely monitor the operation of DUKW vessels in this zone.

Washington State Ferries

- The current Crew Endurance Study will continue to provide feedback on the WSF watch system and to facilitate better endurance management.
- MSO personnel continue to work with WSF on the long term project of implementing the lifesaving regulations in Title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, Subchapter W.
- A Go/No-go Manual (to be jointly developed with WSF) will provide guidance on what circumstances should prompt a ferry's removal from service. This effort will capture extensive corporate knowledge of long-time inspectors and engineers.
- Continue to measure, monitor and evaluate the programs this branch is responsible for to ensure our resources are appropriately focused. The MSO will continue to develop appropriate measures and risk mitigation plans based on risks identified.

Crew Endurance Evaluations

- Expand on the effort undertaken with WSF to other operators within the port.
- In conjunction with the USCG Research and Development Center and USCG Headquarters (G-MSE-1), the MSO is developing a Crew Endurance Assessment Tool that can be used to evaluate watch schedules within any maritime industry sector. This is the initial stage in a plan to identify individual vessel needs on the vessel's Certificate of Inspection as a means of ensuring adequate crew endurance.

Vessel Security

Strategic Goal – Protect our marine transportation system by assisting Puget Sound vessel operators fulfill their primary responsibility to ensure physical security and safety of their vessels in accordance with the latest guidance and/ or regulations.

Strategies:

- Develop systematic method for notifying stakeholders of security level changes.
- Establish program for verifying compliance with security guidance/ regulations.
- Work closely with the local industry to fully implement the requirements of the recently published MTSA Regulations.
- Continue the aggressive outreach to vessel operators to ensure security plans in place are adequate and being followed by each operator.
- Continued systematic approach to addressing the risks as prioritized in the completed vulnerability assessment. Awareness may be best raised by further development of the Coastwatch program, to include operators, masters, crews, terminal managers and terminal personnel, on passenger vessels in Puget Sound.
- MSO Puget Sound will continue to provide a Coast Guard presence at the terminals and on the vessels of ferry and small passenger vessel operations in Puget Sound.

Pollution from Vessels

Strategic Goal –Prevent discharges of oil into the marine environment from commercial vessels.

Strategies

- Verify vessel operator compliance with oil prevention regulations
- Assist in vessel oil discharge investigations where equipment failure/ misuse is a suspected cause.
- Improve protocols, understandings and relationships with Washington State Department of Ecology to leverage resources.

Tank Vessels

- Due to the single-hull phase-out requirements of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, many of these TAPS vessels are reaching the end of their service lives. Coincidentally, The Coast Guard has witnessed recently some fracturing casualties that could indicate that closer inspection might be warranted. Enhanced inspection schedules for these vessels are being explored for these vessels.
- Correlate the frequency of casualties with amount of oil carried to develop a relative risk factor for tank vessels.
- Continue coordination with the American Bureau of Shipping to optimize inspection efforts and focus of both organizations on Alternative Compliance Program (ACP) vessels.

Fishing Vessels

- Assist in the development and implementation of a Thirteenth District Business Plan pertaining to Fishing Vessel Safety.
- Development and implementation of a useful database to track important information related to Fishing Vessel Safety not captured in MISLE.

Leverage technology to optimize communication of information

Better use of the Internet will be explored to actively “push” marine safety related information to industry, other regulatory agencies, and the general public. Electronic newsletters, open forums, and easy access to helpful marine safety information are envisioned. The Internet will be the primary means through which the Coast Guard communicates marine safety related information, news and lessons learned to the public.

Marine Casualties

Investigations

Although safety recommendations are made regularly, a more aggressive and expanded approach to providing relevant safety information to other Coast Guard units as well as members of the maritime industry must be fully implemented in order to provide near real time feedback to all involved parties and mitigate any further risk before another incident occurs. Investigation reports, conclusions, and recommendations should be posted and distributed by the most appropriate means and within a timely period following the closure of the case to improve lessons learned capture and distribution.

Oil Spills

- Implement the protocols developed under the recent Thirteenth Coast Guard District/ Washington State Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). This includes finalizing the development of procedures for Washington State Department of Ecology (WA DOE) to conduct facility inspections; development of a standard Pollution Removal Funding Authorization to allow WA DOE to monitor abandoned and derelict vessel responses; and WA DOE response to spills from non-commercial and/or non-maritime sources. (Current and projected state budget realities make this implementation a challenge)
- Target mobile facility transfer operations for examination and transfer monitoring.
- Conduct more vessel boardings and transfer monitors, particularly of uninspected vessels.
- Distribute more lessons learned; offer more training opportunities to industry groups.
- Support and encourage Geographic Response Plan updates and conversion of the NWACP to a web/GIS based document
- Respond most aggressively to larger spills *and* spills from commercial sources where there is a high potential threat, and/or high expectations for pollution prevention (i.e. inspected vessels, foreign flag etc).
- Develop relationships with state and local officials so that we can rely on them to respond to smaller incidents with confidence.
- Continue to visit and train with local contractors and Oil Spill Response Organizations to improve responder expertise.
- Provide leadership to, and ensure adequate participation in NWAC/RRT activities.
- Ensure facilities incorporate lessons learned from drills and actual events into their Facility Response Plans.
- Distribute more lessons learned; offer more training opportunities to industry groups. Conduct increased outreach, with both “lessons learned/good practices” and preparedness issues. Provide HAZWOPER and response training to fire departments, marinas, Auxiliary groups, etc

Salvage

- Continue to incorporate salvage aspects into annual local port oil spill exercises.
- Continue development of a MSO Puget Sound Casualty Extended Response Team.
- Obtain computer hull models for frequent callers in the port. These models are used during salvage analysis and if immediately available can save critical time and effort in initial assessments and response efforts. These models have been developed for all WSF Vessels and will be shared with the USCG Marine Safety Center.
- Continue involvement with area municipal and state agencies and the Marine Fire Fighting Consortium to improve regional coordination and response to marine fires.

Port Safety and Security

Containers and Hazardous Material Inspections

- Increase container inspection activities with the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection, including cross-training, targeting, and joint inspections.
- Continue to exceed minimum standards for annual container and hazardous materials inspections.

Facility Security

- Currently, designated waterfront facilities in Puget Sound have security plans developed in accordance with the Pacific Area Instruction, Guidelines for Facility Security. These plans are, and will continue to be reviewed to identify necessary changes required in anticipation of the domestic regulations governing facility security, the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, and NVIC 11-02.
- Continue an aggressive outreach to facility operators to ensure security plans in place are adequate and being followed, ensure a well-developed response network for a terrorist incident through Port Security Committees and facility security plans, and awareness is at the highest level. This will include a continued systematic approach to addressing the risks as prioritized in the completed vulnerability assessment.
- Provide industry training and meetings to discuss implementation and requirements of the ISPS Code, 33 CFR 105, and NVIC 11-02.
- MSO Puget Sound will continue to provide a Coast Guard presence at the facilities and terminals in Puget Sound through focused shoreside harbor patrol activities.

Waterways Management

- Improve analysis of regulatory compliance, accident rate, and significance of MTS impact associated with activities that have the potential for MTS traffic interruption.
- Continue implementation of the developed Harbor Safety Plan and Standards of Care.
- Continue active participation in the Harbor Safety and Security Committee

VTS

Integration of Canadian Data and Picture

To most effectively manage the waters of Puget Sound (in all mission areas) requires being able to see those areas one is managing. The CVTS agreement outlines which geographic areas will be monitored by which traffic center for the traffic safety mission. However, there are many other mission areas (marine safety, port state control, homeland security, law enforcement, etc.) that are involved in the management of the waterway.

VTOS is installed at each sector at VTS Puget Sound, in the UPC Puget Sound operations center, and in the PACAREA operation center in Alameda, CA. Plans are underway to install the picture capability at Group Port Angeles and in the D13 command center. Ultimately it should be installed at

Navy Northwest Region, SubGroupNine, NAVSTA Everett, and/or in the future Joint Maritime Operations Center. VTOSS information is already available over classified networks to large cutters manned and outfitted to receive the signals.

Drift Analysis

Using the State Legislature's Captain of the Port tug fund, a process is in place to analyze heavy weather situations to determine if standby tugs are needed in anchorages. Without solid drift analysis for different types of vessels, it is difficult to predict how long a vessel can reasonably remain adrift under various wind/current scenarios with loss of power and/or steering. This data would allow a watch-stander to compare the calculated arrival time of tugs stationed in the closest ports with the worse case scenario of that days planned traffic to decide if a standby tug is in order.

Whale-watching vessel radar reflector analysis.

Whale-watching vessels come in all sizes, but generally, they are small vessels and a greater number of them are low profiled and open to the weather. With improved navigational equipment, the vessels can more easily operate in reduced visibility. To ensure that larger vessels see them, many of the whale-watching vessel masters have outfitted their vessels with higher quality radar reflectors. The BC Coast Pilots have agreed to provide comment to the Whale-Watching Association on the radar reflector's performance as viewed from the deep draft vessel radar when a pilot is transiting Haro Strait.

Pilot/Coast Guard Expectations

The relationship between the pilot aboard a deep draft vessel and the U. S. Coast Guard plays an important role in risk management. As agents of the public, the pilot is a highly trained professional with physical presence on scene, able to give key input into risk mitigation measures being considered by the Coast Guard. As such, a working document that outlines the expectations of the COTP, VTS and the Pilots would greatly assist in establishing written procedures.

Turn Point Standard of Care Measurement

The Standard of Care at Turn Point has proven to be an outstanding example of cooperation between government and waterway interests. Continued measurement and oversight of the standard of care will solidify the standard and keep communications open between all interested parties. Open communications can lead to improvements in other areas and aspects of waterway management.

Personnel

Drug and Alcohol Program Inspection

Increase personnel hours committed to Drug and Alcohol Program Audits to increase compliance rate of marine employers.

Licensing

Much work remains to be done in the implementation of STCW, particularly for licensed engineering officers and personnel serving on vessels less than 200 gross register tons engaged in foreign voyages. Direction for implementation is generally passed down to the RECs through regulation changes, Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circulars, and National Maritime Center policy letters.

Personnel Investigations

Continue aggressive investigation of mariners testing positive for illegal drug use. Seek settlement agreements with those mariners that require rehabilitation prior to returning to work aboard vessels. Continue to seek innovative remedial actions for mariners accused of poor professional conduct. Maintain active participation with REC to screen, evaluate, and investigate mariners with questionable criminal backgrounds.

Operations Readiness

Response Network

Develop a Puget Sound Port Response Network (PSPRN) to respond to the wide variety of potential contingencies. The PSPRN will be a major crisis response organization whose primary purpose is to augment responsible party resources when those would otherwise be overwhelmed by a situation.

The PSPRN will be a system of U. S. Federal, Canadian, Washington State and local agencies, commercial operators and other private sector organizations that have obligated resources, personnel or other services to provide a coordinated, robust response team in the event of a major crisis or incident. The response team will organize under the Incident Command System (ICS) structure for a response.

The area of concern includes the waterways within the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Puget Sound, the Strait of Georgia, Rosario Straits, and all other adjacent waterways. The USCG will assume the responsibilities of lead agency in the Port Response Network.

Since this network will in part be based on a volunteer program based upon the traditional mariner concept of providing assistance to vessels in time of need, the PSPRN will be exercised routinely in order to be prepared, but used sparingly in actual situations to ensure they serve the purpose for which established. The PSPRN will assign ICS functions to the appropriate agency or private enterprise dependent upon their resources and capabilities, and will ensure that all current plans and procedures are kept up to date.

Contingency Plans

- Continue development of contingency plans to meet and sustain the Homeland Security Missions as they are defined.
- Specific focus over the course of the next year will be on revising, updating and finalizing the Mass Rescue Plan, Contingency of Operations Plan and the Terrorism & Weapons of Mass Destruction Plan.
- The development of these plans will be linked very closely to the PSPRN described above.

Security Committees

Assist in the complete and effective implementation of the MTSA regulations within the Puget Sound area.