

Title: International Maritime Information Safety System

Overview

The International Maritime Information Safety System (IMISS) is a joint Coast Guard, MARAD and industry initiative started as part of the Coast Guard's Prevention Through People program. It is an analysis and feedback system designed to capture non-reportable near casualties. The benefit of capturing this type of data is that companies, individuals and government will become aware of safety issues before catastrophic events occur. Awareness will lead to prevention. It is generally acknowledged that actual incidents are rare; therefore, statistical trends take a long time to develop. Near Incidents occur with much greater frequency allowing safety issues to be identified earlier. Information gathered through IMISS will be kept free of identifying data. The system is designed to be voluntary and non-punitive.

Status: The Industry led, SNAME chartered working group successfully delivered a prototype system to the SNAME Committee. Implementation of the system was halted because recurring funding was not obtained.

Background: The Coast Guard and Secretary of Transportation have accepted IMISS as a strategy to reduce the number of high-risk vessel casualties, especially those involving passenger vessels.

The Coast Guard and MARAD entered into an MOU to develop a near miss reporting system. Together they proposed the project to SNAME. SNAME supported the idea and formed a Working Group as part of their Human Factors initiative. Industry and labor and the state of California became members of the SNAME working group. Industry and labor provided leadership with guidance from CG and MARAD as the group's secretaries. CG R&D Center with assistance from MITAGS developed the system, which is modeled on the Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASRS). Other members developed legislative wording and the marketing plan for the system. The group asked the CG to fund IMISS just as FAA funds ASRS. They also pointed out that a successful system would require immunity not only for the reporter, but also from litigation and criminal prosecution that might occur based on the safety announcements generated by the system.

The full working group approved the IMISS prototype in May 2000. NASA was brought on board to administer IMISS just as they administer ASRS. MARAD, CG and NASA entered into an MOU to formalize the agreement. The IMISS prototype was delivered to NASA for refining and implementation.

Implementation was "put on hold" because the two requirements for success identified by the working group could not be met. The CG was denied funding for IMISS in its FY01 budget with prejudicial language specifically stating that the system "...appears more appropriately funded by industry, and not by the CG..." During this period it also became obvious that legislation to provide immunity would be disapproved.

Status of program and initiatives:

- The Coast Guard and MARAD continue to support IMISS.
- The Maritime Industry including Labor continues to be interested in the System.
- A funding source for recurring costs of over \$500,000 has not been identified.
- A legislated protection for both reporters and industry affected by safety announcements does not seem possible.
- IMISS cannot be implemented without an identified stable funding source.
- The Coast Guard will maintain background historical knowledge and to respond to inquiries on this issue. However, CG will not pursue in the absence of funding.

Date Completed/Revised: 1 November 2002

Coast Guard Point of Contact: [CAPT Karr \(G-MOA\)](#) (202) 267-1413 & [LCDR Jager \(G-MOA-2\)](#) (202) 267-0715