

**FINAL DRAFT  
SUMMARY OF THE PORT OF BALTIMORE  
HARBOR SAFETY AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
June 9, 2021 10:00 AM  
Conference Call**

***Attendees:***

*Assedo Consulting, LLC:* Odessa Phillip  
*Association of Maryland Pilots (AMP):* Captain Jesse Buckler, Captain Beth Christman, Captain Eric Nielsen  
*Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE):* Jim Burkman, James Casey, Kevin Costello, Bonnie Johansen, Geoff Thomas  
*Cashman Dredging & Marine Contracting Co. LLC (Cashman):* Norman Bourque, Michael Gerhardt  
*Chesapeake & Interstate Pilots:* David Lieberman  
*Gahagan & Bryant Associates (GBA):* Lauren Folkert  
*Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR):* Matt Negley  
*Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA):* Ryan Barry, Dave Bibo, Kristen Fidler, Margie Hamby, Holly Miller  
*Maryland Environmental Service (MES):* Mindy Strevig  
*Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA):* Robert McKenzie, Ruel Sabellano  
*McAllister Towing:* Mike Reagoso  
*Moran Towing Corporation:* Nathan Hauser  
*National Weather Service (NWS):* Wayne Weeks, Steve Zubrick  
*National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA/PORTS):* Chris DiVeglio  
*National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Coastal Survey:* Ryan Wartick  
*Ports America Chesapeake (PAC):* Bennett Creighton, Chuck Heinze  
*U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Baltimore District:* Jeremiah Spiga  
*U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Philadelphia District:* Susan Estes  
*U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), 5<sup>th</sup> District:* Jerry Barnes, John Frank, Albert Grimes, Scott Taylor  
*U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), Sector Maryland – National Capital Region (MD-NCR):* LCDR Sam Danus, Henry Hays, Ron Houck, Morgan Merritt, Chris Runt, CMDR Evelyn Samms

**Action Items**

**Philadelphia District – USACE**

P2 – Consideration of Arnold Point emergency anchorage/turning basin. *(Ongoing) (No update)*

**Baltimore District – USACE**

B6 – Deepen one of the Harbor anchorages to 50-ft. *(Long-term request – The Seagirt Loop Feasibility Study, which is a three-year, \$3M joint venture between USACE and MDOT MPA, to deepen the Seagirt Loop channels started back in October 2020 and is also looking at deepening one of the Anchorages to 50-ft.)*

### **USCG Sector Maryland – National Capital Region**

- C6 – Evaluate traffic separation scheme (TSS) at Smith Point. *(Ongoing - 5th District intends to conduct a Port Access Route Study (PARS) to determine existing or additional routing measures and is seeking input on the particular geographic area to be studied (i.e. how large of an area in the vicinity of the TSS should the USCG study). Once initiated, the study may take up to a year to conduct and may lead to future rulemakings or appropriate international agreements. 5<sup>th</sup> District Point of Contact: LTJG John Frank; [John.R.Frank@uscg.mil](mailto:John.R.Frank@uscg.mil), 757-398-6298.)*
- C26 – Discuss relocating and rebuilding of Craighill Channel Range with the MD Pilots. *(Ongoing– Planned construction to begin in April 2022 and complete by February 2023.)*
- C30 – Put together a sub-committee to aid in bridge air draft issues; *(Ongoing – The Air Draft Subcommittee meeting met on 4/14/2021 to discuss the future of the committee. It is recommended to the committee that the Air Draft Subcommittee transition to the Port Guidance Subcommittee. This Port Guidance Subcommittee would meet on an ad hoc basis as directed by the committee. The chairperson and vice chairperson would assemble subcommittee membership based on the issue at hand.)*

### **MDOT MPA**

- M6 – Evaluate the possibility of dredging in two (2) areas around the Seagirt Marine Terminal to address areas of concern identified by the MD Pilots as pinch points: an area around 3SW Buoy turning into Seagirt and widening an area off Buoy 1C in Colgate Creek. Priority would be area off Buoy 1C in Colgate Creek. *(Ongoing – Buoy 3 was moved as part of the Seagirt Berth 3 Dredging project. MDOT MPA is widening Colgate Creek in two phases, which would adjust the area of Buoy 1C. The first phase of dredging is expected to start in June 2021.)*

### **General Action Items**

- Overcrowded VHF-FM Channel 13: A solution to reduce the number of bridge-to-bridge users on channel 13 is being examined by the 5<sup>th</sup> District (bridges) and C4ITSC in Norfolk. The 5<sup>th</sup> District’s Bridge Branch may require the installation of a sign on drawbridges, on the upstream and downstream sides, indicating that the bridge is equipped with and operates a VHF radiotelephone. The preferred working channel on the signage should be shown in the lower left quadrant and the preferred working channel should be shown in the lower right quadrant. C4ITSC recommended having two frequencies, one for recreational and channel 13 for commercial. *(Ongoing – Mr. Hal Pitts from the USCG 5<sup>th</sup> District Bridge Branch has advised that CG-BRG-1 has concurred with 5<sup>th</sup> District’s proposal to request applicable drawbridge*

*owners to update their Federal Communications Commission (FCC) license to allow them to use VHF-FM Channel 68 (as primary calling/working frequency) and retain VHF-FM channel 13 (as secondary calling/working frequency)/ Correspondence to bridge owners scheduled to occur. Mr. Pitt's number is 757-398-6222 and e-mail is [Hal.R.Pitts@uscg.mil](mailto:Hal.R.Pitts@uscg.mil))*

- Mr. Brian Miller (MDOT MPA) will help to form a subcommittee to support the BGE helicopter activities for the BGE Key Crossing Project. – (*Ongoing – committee formed and meeting again in August.*)

## **Statements for the Record**

### **1.0 Greetings and Introductions**

**Dave Bibo, MDOT MPA**

- Mr. Bibo welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.
- Attendees present on Microsoft (MS) Teams and those available by phone through MS Teams, introduced themselves and stated whom they represent.
- Mr. Bibo discussed the remote meeting rules and etiquette.
- Capt. Nielsen expressed his hope that the September Harbor Safety and Coordination Committee meeting will be held at the MD Pilot's headquarters.

### **2.0 Approval of Summary for Record**

**Dave Bibo, MDOT MPA**

- Mr. Bibo asked for a motion to accept the March 2021 meeting summary. The motion was put forth and the summary was accepted.

### **3.0 Ports America Chesapeake (PAC)**

**Bennett Creighton, PAC**

- Mr. Creighton confirmed the four cranes arrival to Seagirt Marine Terminal (SMT) were loaded in China on 6/8/2021 and are expected to depart 6/16/2021 and are anticipated to have a 60-day transit duration. Once the cranes arrive at the Annapolis Anchorage, the booms will be lowered from 80 degrees to 20 degrees to go under the Chesapeake Bay Bridge.
- Mr. Houck questioned if a safety zone will be established similar to when cranes previously arrived in 2012. It was determined a safety zone will be published in the Local Notice To Mariners for a range of days and will be narrowed once the final transit time to SMT has been determined. A subcommittee coordination meeting for crane arrival logistics is scheduled for the first week of August.

### **4.0 Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE)**

**Jim Burkman, BGE**  
**Bonnie Johansen, BGE**  
**Odessa Philip, Assedo Consulting, LLC.**

**Geoff Thomas, BGE**

- Ms. Johansen and Mr. Thomas presented BGE Key Crossing Updates for Summer 2021. Ms. Johansen remarked that the Key Crossing project is moving forward with minimal lost time due to a COVID-19 related incident. As a result, McLean is working six (6) days a week for twelve (12) hours each day to stay on schedule. Capt. Buckler remarked that there have been no issues or complaints with the project thus far.
- Mr. Thomas detailed the upcoming major construction activities as the following:
  - June-September 2021: Erect monopole section at all tower locations
  - September – October 2021: Conduct overhead line stringing operation
  - November 2021: Start installation of plastic lumber and fender panels
- Mr. Thomas remarked that there will be helicopter activity in Fall 2021 to help pull rope, wire, and conductors from tower to tower across the waterway. A total of fourteen (14) two (2) hour windows of closure might be needed to accomplish all helicopter tasks. Channel closures for large shipping traffic and coordination to close/block the river to recreational boaters will help accomplish this work safely. A subcommittee including MDOT MPA, MDOT MPA – Cruise Maryland, MDTA – Key Bridge, USCG, MD Pilots and BGE has been arranged to help coordinate the helicopter activity.
- It was previously noted USACE intends to dredge the Ft. McHenry channel in early 2022 and does not foresee any potential conflicts between the USACE maintenance dredging efforts with BGE Key Crossing Project schedule. Mr. Jeremiah Spiga will reach out to gather monopole tower locations in order to chart them on USACE plan drawings.
- Capt. Buckler wanted confirmation on the 231-ft. air gap at the extreme lowest point of the catenary wire and Mr. Thomas confirmed this was the case. He will confirm that the design considered sea level rise.
- Further updates on the BGE Key Crossing Project can be found at [www.bge.com/keycrossing](http://www.bge.com/keycrossing).

#### **5.0 U.S. Coast Guard: Fifth District/Sector Maryland – National Capital Region (USCG MD-NCR)**

**Jerry Barnes, USCG 5<sup>th</sup> District**  
**Sam Danus, USCG MD-NCR**  
**John Frank, USCG 5<sup>th</sup> District**  
**Albert Grimes, USCG 5<sup>th</sup> District**  
**Henry Hays, USCG MD-NCR**  
**Ron Houck, USCG MD-NCR**  
**Morgan Merritt, USCG MD-NCR**  
**Chris Runt, USCG MD-NCR**  
**Evelynn Samms, USCG 5<sup>th</sup> District**  
**Scott Taylor, MD-NCR**

- LCDR Danus remarked that USCG Headquarters (USCGHQ) is adjudicating comments on the possible establishment of shipping safety fairways along the Atlantic Coast of the United States identified in the Atlantic Coast Port Access Route Study (PARS). USCGHQ intends to wait for completion of USCG 1st District and 5th District supplemental PARS before moving the regulatory project forward.

- The Air Draft Subcommittee met on 4/14/2021 to discuss the future of the committee. It is recommended to the committee that the Air Draft Subcommittee transition to the Port Guidance Subcommittee. This Port Guidance Subcommittee would meet on an ad hoc basis as directed by the committee. The chairperson and vice chairperson would assemble subcommittee membership based on the issue at hand.
- Additionally, the subcommittee met virtually with Mr. Hal Pitts (USCG 5<sup>th</sup> District Division Chief) on 4/27/2021 to discuss the request by MDTA regarding bridge light modifications for the Francis Scott Key Bridge. Initial request to raise only the green light was denied with the opportunity to resubmit a bridge light arrangement consistent with the regulations.
- Mr. Runt noted that the Back Creek Range Rear Light installation is complete.
- Installation of the offshore Craighill Channel Upper Range Lights is planned for federal fiscal year 2023.
- The Brewerton Eastern Extension Range Rear Light was determined unsafe to climb and as a result will be extinguished long term. A traffic study will be conducted to determine when the Pilots pick up the Brewerton Eastern Extension Range.
- The Swan Point South Range's equipment to upgrade to light-emitting diode (LED) optics from incandescence is complete.
- The LED optics for the Tolchester Range have arrived and USCG is awaiting delivery of the batteries prior to installation.
- The Elk River South, Elk River East, and Swan Point North Range Lights will be upgraded to LED optics.
- The Coast Guard will be making a number of changes to the markings of the Choptank River. The HSC should reference the MD-NCR Harbor Safety Committee Brief for June 2021 for a full list of the proposed updates.
- The proposed redesign of the Upper Potomac River's Aids to Navigation (AtoN) system was approved by USCGHQ. The 145 aid changes are being advertised in the Local Notice to Mariners in five parts under the Proposed Waterway Projects.
- USCG has been working on a project to partner between AtoN Teams and the USCG's Dive Locker for removal of wreckage throughout their entire area of responsibility, particularly in shallow waters that are difficult to access with USCG's cutters. A significant percentage of this work is located in Aids to Navigation Team (ANT) Crisfield's area of responsibility. This work has been rescheduled for 2022 due to unavailability of the necessary vessel.
- USCG has the following expected personnel turnover:
  - Sector MD-NCR, Sector Commander: Change of Command was April 30. CAPT Joseph Loring was relieved by CAPT David O'Connell.
  - ANT Crisfield: Change of Command June 11. BMC Lee Durfee will be relieved by BM1 Lucas Jump.
  - ANT Baltimore: BMCS John Kopp was relieved by BMC Morgan Merritt.
  - Sector MD-NCR, Deputy Sector Commander: CDR Mathew Fine will be relieved by CDR James Bendle.
  - Sector MD-NCR, Chief of Prevention: CDR Evelyn Samms will be relieved by CDR Baxter Smoak.
- Mr. Houck remarked MD-NCR recently held a Marine Transportation System Recovery Unit workshop at the Coast Guard Yard in preparation for the 2021 Atlantic hurricane season.
- It was confirmed Nice-Middleton Bridge Replacement Project includes building a new bridge on the Potomac River between Newburg, MD and Dahlgren, VA. The scheduled work period

continues to November 2024. Major waterside hazards exist for crane workers suspending large piles. Mariners are asked to slow down and reduce wake while approaching the work site. See website [www.newnicebridge.com](http://www.newnicebridge.com).

- Marine events, fireworks, and other events are returning and shared a list of events for HSC information. Notice was received that The Great Chesapeake Bay Swim is cancelled for 2021, the Bay Bridge Paddle is being planned for September 2021, and the Air Show Baltimore is working to return in 2022. For more information on event applications received please see the Sector's spreadsheet for marine event applications received, emails weekly, or refer to the USCG 5<sup>th</sup> District's Local Notice to Mariners, "Summary of Marine Events and Fireworks Displays in the Fifth Coast Guard District" section, for these and other events.

#### **6.0 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District (USACE Philadelphia) Updates**

**Jeremiah Spiga, USACE Baltimore**

- Mr. Spiga provided updates on behalf of Mr. Hart for USACE Philadelphia. He confirmed surveys of the Chesapeake and Delaware (C& D) Canal have been completed and are being processed to finalize locations and volume of material to be dredged. He remarked that the federal fiscal year 2021 maintenance dredging of approximately 350 key to be placed in Pearce Creek is expected to be awarded in September 2021.
- Mr. Spiga remarked that there are three (3) bridge contracts for Chesapeake City, SR-1, and St. George's bridges. Chesapeake City bridge contract award is anticipated for July 2021 and SR-1 and St. George's bridges' awards are anticipated for September 2021.
- Mr. Hart will follow-up on the air gaps for each bridge, if necessary.

#### **7.0 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District (USACE Baltimore) Updates**

**Jeremiah Spiga, USACE Baltimore**

- Mr. Spiga remarked that maintenance dredging of the Maryland Approach Channels, including Craighill Angle (785 key) and Swan Point (1.075 mcy) is ongoing. Cashman is actively dredging and placing material into the newly constructed cells 10 and 11 at Poplar Island. Dredging is anticipated to complete in August 2021.
- Capt. Nielsen questioned if the maintenance dredging will interfere with the crane arrival. It was confirmed Cashman is expected to be dredging Swan Point when the cranes are in transit and will not conflict with their arrival.
- Mr. Spiga remarked that a dredging contract for the Cape Henry Channel for 2.36 mcy will be placed at the Dam Neck Open Water Placement site. Award for this contract is planned for September 2021 and dredging expected for winter 2021/2022.
- Mr. Spiga remarked that the contract for the Harbor Channels and Maryland Approach Channels include 500 key for the Fort McHenry Channel to be placed at Cox Creek DMCF and 625 key from Craighill Cutoff Angle and 325 key from Craighill Entrance to be placed at Poplar Island. Solicitation is expected to be issued in September 2021 and dredging is anticipated for winter 2021/2022. The solicitation includes dragging of the Northwest Branch Channel to maintain a depth of -48 feet mean lower low water.

## 8.0 NOAA/NOS/NWS Updates

**Christopher DiVeglio, NOAA/NOS/PORTS**  
**Ryan Wartick, NOAA/PORTS**  
**Steven Zubrick, NOAA/NWS**

- Mr. DiVeglio remarked that all air gap sensors were operating at approximately 90% or better. The Chesapeake City Air Gap sensor performed at 100.0%, Francis Scott Key (FSK) Bridge Air Gap performed at 89.6%, and Bay Bridge Air Gap performed at 99.8%.
- The Chesapeake City current station sensor performed at 95.6%, the Tolchester Front Range current meter was still performing at 0% due to the meter's location being unknown. NOAA and MD Pilots are supportive of transitioning this to a buoy mounted station in the future, but air gap sensors have temporarily taken a higher priority. The Bay Bridge current meter performed at 90.6% and the Cove Point meter performed at 99.8% with meter equipment swaps for each occurring in May. The Rappahannock Shoal current meter performed at 58.1%. It was brought back online in early April following a several month outage and has since performed at 99.7%.
- The design options for the second Bay Bridge air gap station (150-ft. from the centerline) were presented to MDTA in November 2020 and MDTA approved. Reconnaissance trips to evaluate space and equipment for the current air gap stations on the Bay Bridge and FSK bridge will occur in June 2021.
- Water level sensor upgrades at Tolchester Beach (previously approved by MDOT MPA) were complete in May 2021.
- Mr. DiVeglio also shared appreciation to the Maryland Pilots and MDOT MPA for coordination on the value of the port system to Maryland for an upcoming NOAA outreach video. This video will be released in late June or early July to commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the PORTS program.
- Mr. Wartick made a presentation on the process of transitioning from the raster navigation charts (RNC's) to electronic navigational charts (ENC's). This process includes improving data consistency, providing larger scale ENC coverage, providing access to paper chart products based on the ENC data, and ultimately shutting down all traditional paper and associated raster chart production. He reiterated that the raster navigational charts (RNC) are in the process of being cancelled, which started in March 2021 and will continue for an expected four to five-year period. A six-month notice will be given via local notice to mariners before cancelling an RNC and another local notice to mariners will be issued just before the RNC is cancelled. Mr. Wartick remarked that this info is available on NOAA's website. See [https://distribution.charts.noaa.gov/weekly\\_updates/](https://distribution.charts.noaa.gov/weekly_updates/)
- He mentioned the major changes to the Watch/Warning/Advisory (WWA) system in the near future. "Advisory" headlines removed in favor of clear, plain language since the term "advisory" often is confused with "watch". The only exception will be small craft and tsunami advisories will become warnings. "Small craft advisory" will become "small craft warning". "Coastal flood advisory" will transition to a plain language headline. WWA Changes are anticipated to take affect not before 2024. See [weather.gov/hazardsimplification/revampprogress](https://weather.gov/hazardsimplification/revampprogress) for more details.
- NWS decided in April to begin issues watches to streamline the Impact-based Decision Support Services (IDSS) workload and to provide better continuity of services. NWS will issue the following watches:

- Gale Watch – 34 knots to 48 knots
- Storm Watch – 48 knots to 64 knots
- Hurricane Force Wind Watch – greater than 64 knots not associated with a tropical system
- The 2021 Atlantic Hurricane Season is expected to be an active season due to warmer than average sea surface temperatures in the Atlantic and Caribbean Sea, weaker tropical Atlantic trade winds, and enhanced west African monsoons. It is anticipated to have 13-20 names storms, 6-10 hurricanes, and 3-5 major hurricanes. It was noted the Baltimore area is statistically overdue for a high impact tropical system.

#### **9.0 Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Updates**

**Matt Negley, DNR**

- DNR is currently fielding complaints of debris, removing down trees from waterways, removing abandoned boats and recovering floating docks. Mr. Negley noted four boats have been removed from Maryland waters so far this season.

#### **10.0 Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) Updates**

**Ruel Saballano, MDTA**

- Mr. Saballano had no further updates.

#### **11.0 Chesapeake & Interstate Pilots Updates**

**David Lieberman, CIP**

- Mr. Lieberman had no further updates.

#### **12.0 Association of Maryland Pilots (MD Pilots) Updates**

**Captain Jesse Buckler, MD Pilots**  
**Captain Eric Nielsen, MD Pilots**

- Capt. Buckler had no further updates.

#### **13.0 Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA) Updates**

**Dave Bibo, MDOT MPA**  
**Mindy Strevig, MES**

- Mr. Bibo remarked that AMPORTS may have some minor dredging planned for the Chesapeake and Atlantic terminals for less than 10 key, which is scheduled to start after



6/15/21.

- Mr. Bibo remarked that National Gypsum is planning 6 kcy of maintenance work scheduled for spring or summer 2021.
- Ms. Strevig confirmed the Seagirt Berth 3 dredging project (481 kcy) is completed pending demobilization after other work around the Harbor. Ports America Chesapeake (PAC) Pocket Dredging (30 kcy) is anticipated to start in late July. Corman Kokosing is expected to be the contractor for the PAC Pocket dredging.
- Ms. Strevig remarked that the Colgate Creek (320 kcy) dredging project will be split into two (2) phases. Phase 1 (81 kcy) and is anticipated to start summer 2021 and Phase 2 (230 kcy) is anticipated to start by summer 2023.

#### **14.0 Comments/Adjourn**

**David Bibo, MDOT MPA**

- Mr. Bibo expressed thanks to the group for a productive and smooth meeting.
- The next meeting will be held on 9/8/2021.