

FINAL
SUMMARY OF THE PORT OF BALTIMORE
HARBOR SAFETY AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
September 14, 2022 10:00 AM
Association of Maryland Pilots
3720 Dillon Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21224

Attendees:

Association of Maryland Pilots (MD Pilots): Captain Beth Christman, Captain John Kinlein, Captain Eric Nielsen
Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE): Bonnie Johansen
Burns & McDonnell: Cody Duplisea
Chesapeake & Interstate Pilots (C&I): Captain David Lieberman
Dominion Energy: Jerry Barnes
Gahagan Bryant Associates (GBA): Jake Derolf
Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA): Dave Bibo, Holly Miller, Rocky Truelove
Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Stephanie Peters
Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA): Bob McKenzie
Moran Towing Corporation: Nathan Hauser
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Coast Survey (OCS): Ryan Wartick
NOAA Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS): Chris DiVeglio
National Weather Service (NWS): Steve Zubrick
Ports America Chesapeake: Bennett Creighton
Stantec Engineering: Matt McCarty
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Baltimore District: Graham McAllister, Andrew Payson
USACE, Philadelphia District: Michael Hart
U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), District 5 (D5): Albert Grimes, Hal Pitts, Tom Rader
USCG, Regional Exam Center-Baltimore (USCG REC-Baltimore): Scott Taylor
USCG, Sector Maryland–National Capital Region (MD-NCR): Courtney Bailey, Sam Danus, Fred Dolbow, Ron Houck, Morgan Merritt, Joshua Motta, David O’Connell, Courtney Perry, Baxter Smoak
USCG, Sector Virginia: Matt Meskun
U.S. Wind: Ben Cooper
Vane Brothers: Bob Forrester

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 feet. *(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 in October 2020 and is also looking at deepening one of the Anchorages to 50 feet.) An economic study conducted as part of the Seagirt Loop Feasibility Study did not support a 50-foot-deep anchorage in Baltimore Harbor.

USCG Sector Maryland–National Capital Region

C5 – Construct upper reach York Spit Channel range lights to be positioned below York River Channel. *(On hold due to 50' Widening Study; completion of lights scheduled for 2020.) No update.*

C6 – Evaluate traffic separation scheme (TSS) at Smith Point. *[Ongoing – D5 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. D5 Point of Contact: LTJG John Frank; John.R.Frank@uscg.mil, 757-398-6298.] No update.*

C26 – Rebuild Craighill Channel Range lights. *(Ongoing – Update from CEU dated 9/13/22 indicates that the project is delayed a minimum of one year, with no firm start or completion dates.)*

C27 – Investigate possibility of replacing Curtis Bay Range with light(s) near the far end of the range line at Sollers Point.

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 – USCG moved Buoy 3 as part of the Seagirt Berth 3 Dredging project. MDOT MPA is widening Colgate Creek in two phases. The first phase of dredging occurred in June-August 2021. USCG relocated Buoy 1C during the first phase of dredging and returned to its post-dredging position on March 30, 2022.)*

General Action Items

- Overcrowded VHF-FM Channel 13: D5 (bridges) and C4ITSC in Norfolk are examining a solution to reduce the number of bridge-to-bridge users on channel 13. The D5 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 D5 Bridge Branch has advised that he will be sending information to the bridge owner in April 2022, focusing on Knapps Narrows). Mr. Pitts and Mr. Kinlein have coordinated with MDOT SHA regarding this radio. Both will be on-site on Friday, 9/16 to coordinate with the bridge operator and resolve the radio issue.*

- Proposal for Aids to Navigation (ATON) planning meeting: Captain Kinlein proposed a regular ATON planning meeting occur, with attendees from the Association of Maryland Pilots, Chesapeake & Interstate Pilots, USCG MD-NCR, USCG D5, and USCG Sector Virginia. (*Ongoing – USCG is coordinating internally to determine a date for a meeting, potentially in December 2022*).
- MDOT MPA, NOAA, USACE, and the Pilots will coordinate to identify locations where the NOAA ENC does not accurately reflect channel conditions and to determine how to resolve the inaccuracies, and then NOAA will update the ENC with accurate information.

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 and those available by phone introduced themselves and stated whom they represent.

2.0 Approval of Summary for Record

Dave Bibo, MDOT MPA

- Mr. Bibo asked for a motion to accept the June 2022 meeting summary. The motion was put forth and the summary was accepted.

3.0 Baltimore Gas and Electric Crossing Update

Bonnie Johansen, BGE

- Ms. Johansen stated that BGE is focusing on the removal of oil from underwater cables; 67% of the work is complete. Removal is achieved through displacement first by nitrogen, and then by water displacement. Work is anticipated to be substantially complete by the end of September, with some additional tasks to be done in October.
- Demolition at the Hawkins Point and Sollers Point substations has begun. Both sites will be returned to a natural, vegetated state. BGE and MDOT MPA have an existing arrangement regarding future use of the Hawkins Point location; BGE is working with MDOT to develop a purchase agreement for the Sollers Point location. Ms. Johansen expressed gratitude for the partnerships that have allowed this project to be successful.
- The project should be complete by the end of 2022.
- BGE is working on a construction video for the project that Ms. Johansen would like to share with this committee at its December meeting.

4.0 Port Guidance Subcommittee: Dead Ship Movement

Sam Danus, USCG MD-NCR

- Mr. Danus stated that the subcommittee's first meeting was held in August. While many points of concern were discussed, there is still some work to be done before the existing port guidance can be updated.
- The committee's next meeting is scheduled for Monday, 9/26 at 1:00 pm.

- Mr. Danus thanked the subcommittee members present today for their participation in the meeting.

5.0 Salvage and Marine Firefighting Committee Frederick Dolbow, USCG MD-NCR

- Mr. Dolbow stated that the committee’s first meeting, which occurred on July 25, was well attended. The focus was vessel response plans and electric vehicle hazards on roll on/roll off (RO/RO) ships.
- The next meeting will be held on 11/3 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at USCG Sector MD-NCR. In the future, local fire departments will be invited to access some container ships and RO/RO ships so that their first experience on such a vessel is not during an emergency. Invitations for the second meeting will be sent out the week of 9/19.
- A total of \$2.1 million in Port Security Grants were awarded to several Baltimore port community applicants this year.
- A full-scale active shooter exercise was conducted on 8/9, with participation by federal, state, local, and industry partners.
- The next Area Maritime Security Committee (AMSC) meeting will be held on 11/8.

6.0 Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Cable Crossings and Protection Measures Jerry Barnes, Dominion Energy

- Mr. Barnes provided information per the attached presentation.
- Dominion Energy will have one crew transfer vessel with 2 crews to facilitate maintenance; eventually there will be 2 to 3 such vessels. A service operation vessel should be under contract by the end of the year. Numerous vessels will be on site during construction.
- Dominion Energy has begun hiring wind technicians for the site. During the first 10 years of operation, the half of the technicians will be Dominion employees, the other half contracted. At the end of the 10 years, it is anticipated that the technicians will be Dominion employees.
- There has not been a consistent method of charting offshore wind sites and safety zones associated with them. Safety zones would be desired when personnel are conducting maintenance activities on site; the ability to broadcast these zones via AIS would be ideal. Dominion is open to NOAA’s suggestion on the best way to chart the site.
- Per recently released USCG guidance, significant peripheral structures will have AIS signals at all times; all structures will be AIS-capable.
- Dominion has shared its bathymetric data with NOAA for its potential use in chart updates.

7.0 U.S. Coast Guard Updates

**Sam Danus, USCG MD-NCR
Ron Houck, USCG MD-NCR
David O’Connell, USCG MD-NCR
Joshua Motta, USCG MD-NCR
Hal Pitts, USCG D5
Scott Taylor, USCG REC-Baltimore**

- Captain O’Connell stated that the summer search and rescue season was very busy. The first Salvage and Marine and Firefighting subcommittee meeting occurred. A small passenger

vessel operator active shooter response exercise was held with the small passenger vessel industry and first responders. Last week, Fleet Week returned after a 4-year hiatus; the event involved coordination with the Navy and other port partners.

- Mr. Motta provided updates regarding action items and Aids to Navigation (ATON), per the attached Briefing Sheet.
- An update to the Craighill Channel Entrance Light Extinguished item (item #11): the requested waiver was received the morning of 9/14.
- Mr. Kinlein remarked that the Craighill Channel Lower Range Light is critical to safe navigation. Ms. Merritt was able to recently resolve a recent outage quickly, but this may not always be the case.
- Mr. Kinlein remarked that the Brewerton Extension PEL is also a vital ATON that was requested as an emergency measure while waiting for the permanent range to be constructed. Each day that the PEL is delayed is a risk to safe navigation. He noted a similar issue at Curtis Bay Range. Mr. Kinlein praised the work of the local sectors and D5 but worries about the persistent issues at a higher level. Mr. Danus stated that D5 and USCG DPW is closely tracking the status of these ATON. Mr. Rader added that these items are at the top of the D5 worklist. Mr. O'Connell added that the safety of the Chesapeake is a priority, though there are competing priorities nationwide.
- In response to the concerns regarding the inactive Curtis Bay Range, Mr. Lieberman suggested a range near Sollers Point as a replacement.
- Mr. Meskun remarked on issues handled by USCG Sector Virginia: the Rappahannock Shoal Range daytime lights are currently being installed; this will take a few days. Buoy 42 racon may have been completed yesterday. The TSS removal will require a study of the waterway, which Sector Virginia will undertake, though this will take some time. Mr. Kinlein offered information regarding ship traffic if needed for the study.
- Mr. Pitts stated that he has learned that the operators of the Knapps Narrows Bridge are erroneously using high power on VHF Channel 13. He is attending a meeting with MDOT State Highway Administration on 9/16 to inform them that high power should not be used in this location.
- Mr. Pitts has received MDTA's plans regarding the upgrade of the Francis Scott Key (Key Bridge) Bridge navigation lights. Additional drawing edits are needed to meet USCG's requirements; however, he has approved the plan based on the detailed description of the plan. MDTA may need a stamped plan before they can move forward with the project. He will meet with Mr. McKenzie immediately today to discuss the necessary edits. Air gap data here is referenced to the navigation lights.
- Mr. Houck and Mr. Danus provided updates regarding Waterways Management per the attached Briefing Sheet. An additional dead ship movement will occur 9/17 for the USNS *Gilliland*, where it will be towed in dead ship status from its berth at Clinton Street to the Northwest Harbor East Channel, after which it will move under its own power.
- Mr. Taylor provided an update regarding mariner credentialing. USCG is working on a backlog of credentials; he urged those present to plan well in advance if their organization requires mariner credentials. Currently, processing of credentials is taking 45-90 days. USCG also audits maritime training programs that provide USCG-approved courses that lead to credentials for mariners; historically, these audits were not prioritized. USCG is re-prioritizing these audits.

- Mr. Danus stated that the annual Ice Ops planning meeting is scheduled for 11/15, 10:00 am to 12:30 pm. It is anticipated that the meeting will be by hybrid (virtual and in-person options) at the USCG Yard.

8.0 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District Updates

Mike Hart, USACE Philadelphia

- Mr. Hart stated that USACE Philadelphia was issued by MDE an emergency Water Quality Certification (WQC) and authorization to dredge outside the usual environmental window, as of 8/31. Dredging contractor Kokosing resumed dredging work last week and thus far is making better progress than in their last dredging session. A new WQC will become effective in October. Kokosing will finish the incomplete work before moving to other locations.
- USACE should soon complete a modification to last year's contract to add this year's anticipated volume; the total volume of material dredged from now through March 2023 will be about 800,000 cubic yards.
- The FFY23 contract will be bid for approximately 450,000 cubic yards.
- Mr. Kinlein asked that USACE Philadelphia let the Pilots know when the draft restrictions for the Worton Point area have been lifted once the incomplete areas have been dredged.
- Mr. Hart remarked that the SR-1 bridge contract was completed in August. Work at Chesapeake City Bridge is ongoing. During a recent high wind event, a Safespan under the northern half of the bridge (which reduced the air gap) was impacted and is now unsafe. USACE awaits work plans and updates from the contractor; the Safespan will remain in place until issues with the contractor are resolved. Due to this Safespan blocking the sensor, the air gap sensor on this bridge currently reads zero.
- USACE is issuing contracts for work on the St. George's Bridge and the Reedy Point Bridge. Air gap restrictions will not be needed for either of these bridges, but in-water work will require a barge to be tied up against the pier, just outside the channel.

9.0 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District Updates

Graham McAllister, USACE Baltimore

- Mr. McAllister provided updates per the attached presentation.
- The next Harbor & Maryland Approach Channels dredging contract will specify, through a sequence of construction, where in Curtis Bay Channel dredging must occur.
- Regarding Action Item B6, the economic study conducted as part of the Seagirt Loop Feasibility Study did not support a 50-foot-deep anchorage in Baltimore Harbor. No other anchorages in the Baltimore Harbor can support 50-foot draft (nor is there placement capacity in the near term); Annapolis is the last deep-draft anchorage before reaching Baltimore Harbor.
- The Mid-Chesapeake Bay Islands project public meeting date has been changed from September 17 to November 19, at the Hoopers Island Fire Department.

10.0 NOAA/NOS/NWS Updates

**Ryan Wartick, NOAA/OCS
Chris DiVeglio, NOAA/PORTS**

- Mr. Wartick provided updates per the attached presentation.
- NOAA anticipates that all paper charts will be cancelled by 2025; at this time approximately

300 charts out of 1,007 are either cancelled or in their last edition.

- NOAA has six hurricane survey assets available in this region. The *Thomas Jefferson* is in the Great Lakes this year, so will not be available for this hurricane season. NOAA's larger ships do not have any projects in the Chesapeake Bay this year, though the smaller vessels, such as the *Bay Hydro II*, has had a handful of small projects, such as Cove Point, Hooper Range, and a Navy deep test area on the Patuxent.
- At USCG request, the NOAA custom chart tool no longer includes a note indicating that it does not meet carriage requirements, due to variations in carriage requirements depending on location.
- Mr. DiVeglio reported that the Chesapeake City air gap sensor performed at 32.3%, Key Bridge air gap performed at 99.7%, and Bay Bridge air gap performed at 99.6%.
- The Chesapeake City current station sensor performed at 100%. The Bay Bridge current meter performed at 42.8%. This sensor was down from 7/1/22 through 8/19/22. The Cove Point meter performed at 99.6%. The Rappahannock Shoal current meter performed at 98.7%. The Tolchester Front Range performed at 0%. This station will be transferred to a buoy mounted system in the future. In response to a pilot request for a meter on buoy 2BE, NOAA will coordinate with USCG on sizing and determining whether this meter will be transferred to an ice buoy each year; an exemption may be possible. Further south in the Bay, the Cape Henry station is down due to radio issues; it is unclear when this may return to service. York Spit is operational.
- All water level stations in the northern half of the bay operated at 95% or greater data returns.
- The second Bay Bridge air gap platform is anticipated be installed in November by MDTA contractors; the sensor will be installed this coming winter.
- NOAA is still working to address communications upgrades at the Key Bridge northeast tower. This location may not be able to connect into AC power. A second sensor is planned for the Key Bridge, as well.

11.0 Maryland Transportation Authority Updates

Bob McKenzie, MDTA

- Mr. McKenzie had no additional information regarding the Key Bridge navigation light plan.
- MDTA is procuring the Bay Bridge air gap sensor; construction is anticipated in November.
- Mr. McAllister asked for information regarding a redecking project planned for the Bay Bridge in the next year or two; it may involve cranes outside of the channel that may swing into the channel. Mr. McKenzie will follow up within MDTA for additional information on this project.

12.0 Chesapeake & Interstate Pilots Updates

David Lieberman, C&I Pilots

- Mr. Lieberman thanked D5, Sector Virginia, and Sector MD-NCR for getting the racon back on Buoy 42.
- Mr. Lieberman requested that his suggestion to construct a light near Sollers Point, near the far end of the range line (as replacement for the defunct Curtis Bay Range) be formally made an Action Item for this committee.

13.0 Association of Maryland Pilots Updates

John Kinlein, MD Pilots

- Mr. Kinlein stated that the Pilots are moving a lot of bigger and deeper ships through the port,

as well as an increasing number of medium-sized ships with deeper drafts, all of which is requiring deeper channels and more ATON.

- Mr. Kinlein reiterated his position that virtual ATON does not work; gyro or repeater errors cause dangerous situations, including potential collision with the Bay Bridge.
- Regarding Knapps Narrows Bridge, he noticed that he could receive the bridge operators' radio calls up to 70 miles away from the bridge. It was determined that the operators are using a terrestrial VHF radio at 45 watts, which is more powerful than what is allowed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for this purpose. Mr. Kinlein reached out to SHA in Easton, who was receptive to resolving the issue. He will be present on Friday 9/16 while an SHA representative replaces the radio with a 1-watt marine VHF radio.
- Mr. Kinlein praised NOAA's rapid response to charting issues when brought up. He identified an issue with channel depths as shown on the electronic navigation charts (ENC) being shown as the most conservative depth in the channel, rather than the project depth. (For example, the depth shown at Seagirt Marine Terminal does not show a 50-foot depth, despite being dredged last year; it shows a depth of 41 feet.) During voyage planning, this is causing shipping companies to have to choose between believing official government charting software or the statements of the pilots on board; often the shipping company's choice is the government software. Mr. Kinlein stated that the ENC should be based on project depth rather than the conservative value. NOAA is working toward putting more information in the charts in the next version of the software.
- Mr. Bibo expressed concern that the appropriate depth for Seagirt is not shown on the charts, since a 50-foot depth is a selling point of the Port of Baltimore. Mr. Wartick will coordinate with MPA and USACE on the Seagirt charting issue.
- Mr. Kinlein added that there are other similar charting issues throughout the Bay, specifically in the York Spit channel.
- Mr. Kinlein reiterated his request from last meeting to set up an annual ATON meeting. USCG is coordinating internally regarding such a meeting; it looks like the meeting may be scheduled in December.

14.0 Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration Updates Dave Bibo, MDOT MPA

- Mr. Bibo stated that the upcoming Tradepoint Atlantic dredging project (~100,000 cy) did not receive any bids; dredging is postponed until 2023. MDOT MPA does not yet know when the USCG shipyard turning basin dredging project will occur.
- The Seagirt Loop dredging project is anticipated to occur in 2026 and 2027.
- Mr. Bibo praised the cooperation between USACE and MDOT MPA regarding the Mid-Bay project.

15.0 Comments/Adjourn David Bibo, MDOT MPA

- Mr. Hauser stated that Moran Towing has a new General Manager starting in October.
- Mr. Nielsen remarked that this committee needs a representative for recreational boating community. Mr. Bibo asked committee members to share with him any suggestion they may have for such a representative.
- The next meeting will be held on December 14, 2022.