

**SUMMARY OF THE PORT OF BALTIMORE
HARBOR SAFETY AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
September 11, 2024 10:00 AM
Association of Maryland Pilots
3720 Dillon Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21224**

Attendees:

Association of Maryland Pilots (MD Pilots): Captain Noah Seiple, Captain John Kinlein, Captain Eric Nielsen
Gahagan Bryant Associates (GBA): Jake Derolf, Brian Newbury (via phone)
Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR): John Gallagher, Ken Choi
Maryland Port Administration (MPA): Dave Bibo, Brian Miller, Darren Swift, Rachel Miller, Richard Scher, Rockeye Truelove, Andrea Williams (via phone)
Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA): Tekeste Amare, James Harkness
McAllister Towing: Mike Reagoso
Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC): Valerian Rivere
Moran Towing: Jonathan Steinberg
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Coast Survey (OCS): Ryan Wartick
NOAA Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS): Chris DiVeglio
Norton Lilly: Mike Cureton
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Baltimore District: Joe Bieberich, Kevin Fenyak Rachel Kierzewski, , Eric Lindheimer
USACE, Philadelphia District: Michael Hart
U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), Auxiliary: Henry Hayes (via phone)
US Coast Guard (USCG), District 5 (D5): Albert Grimes (via phone)
USCG, Port Recovery: Fred Dolbow (via phone)
USCG, Regional Exam Center-Baltimore: Scott Taylor
USCG, Sector Maryland–National Capital Region (MD-NCR): Chris Briggs, Doug Bullock, Pat Burkett, Natasha Hand, Brian McGee, Kate Newkirk, Derek Richburg (via phone)
USCG Sector Virginia (VA): Patrick Grizzle, Juliana Medina (via phone), Chase Rodriguez (via phone), Justin Strassfield (via phone)
US Wind: Ben Cooper

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 MPA, to deepen the Seagirt Loop channels started in October 2020, also looked 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. *No update.*

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.*

C26 – Rebuild Craighill Channel Range Lights (LLNR 8040-Front/8050-Rear): Contract Awarded December 15, 2023, with estimated completion by December 19, 2025. *Cleveland Engineering Unit (CEU) update: CEU is continuing to receive and review project submittals as of 23 July 24.*

C27 – Curtis Bay Directional Light (LLNR 20870): PEL has been purchased. Installation timeline still tracking for summer 2024 pending manufacturer installation contract. *Update: Project complete.*

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. 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

- Captain Kinlein will provide feedback to Mr. Grimes regarding Chesapeake Channel Buoy 63A.
- Mr. Grimes requested feedback on Potomac River Buoy D at Captain Kinlein's convenience.
- Mr. Fenyak will provide a shapefile for the Seagirt Loop Modification Project to Mr. Wartick.
- Mr. Amare will gather updates regarding the I-695 bridge fendering system project, for the next meeting of this committee.

Statements for the Record

1.0 Greetings and Introductions

Dave Bibo, 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.
- Mr. Burkett introduced himself as the new Sector Commander of USCG Sector MD-NCR, starting in June. He looks forward to continuing to work with everyone and the community.
- Mr. Briggs introduced himself as the new Chief of Prevention for USCG Sector MD-NCR. He is excited to be a part of this group and looks forward to everybody's partnership over the next three years.

2.0 Approval of Summary for Record

Dave Bibo, MPA

- Mr. Bibo asked for a motion to accept the March 13 meeting summary.
- The motion was put forth and the summary was accepted.

3.0 Salvage and Marine Firefighting Subcommittee & 2024 Hurricane Season MTS Recovery

Fred Dolbow, USCG

- Mr. Dolbow expressed his deepest thanks to everybody who supported the recovery effort on the Key Bridge.
- Mr. Dolbow stated that the next Salvage and Marine Firefighting Subcommittee (SMFF) meeting will be held on October 3, 2024. It will be held at the Curtis Bay Coast Guard Yard, in Berry Hall. An invite will be sent out at the beginning of next week.

4.0 U.S. Coast Guard Updates

Kate Newkirk, USCG MD-NCR
Albert Grimes, USCG -D5
Brian McGee, USCG MD-NCR

- Ms. Newkirk provided information regarding Action Items, General Action Items, and Aids to Navigation per the presentation provided in **Appendix A**.
- Captain Kinlein indicated that he will follow up with Mr. Grimes regarding feedback on Chesapeake Channel Buoy 63A. He noted that this buoy has been a concern due to various issues; the buoy is not necessary.
- The Pilots would like to retain the Potomac River Mid-Channel Buoy D but are fine with giving up Buoys A, B, and C.
- Mr. Grimes acknowledged those issues and requested feedback on Potomac River Buoy D at Captain Kinlein's convenience.
- Mr. McGee introduced himself as a cyber specialist for Sector MD-NCR. His role is to serve as a liaison between industry and the Captain of the Port for cyber-related incidents, resilience, exercise, initiations, etc. An increase in incidents within the Marine Transportation Safety arena is affecting maritime operations; this trend is unlikely to decline in the near future. Mr. McGee will provide his contact information to anyone with questions or concerns. He recommended that attendees create a Homeport account to stay informed about the information distributed to the maritime community by USCG.
- Mr. Dolbow encouraged attendees to contact him with any issues related to accessing the Homeport website.
- Mr. Bullock provided information regarding the Sector MD-NCR Waterways Management per the presentation provided in **Appendix A**.
- The annual ice meeting will occur in late October or early November, with invitations going out soon.
- The Bay Bridge Paddle will require a regulated area; the event will occur on Saturday, September 14 from 8 to 11 am.

5.0 Philadelphia District Corps of Engineers

Mike Hart, USACE Philadelphia

- Mr. Hart stated that the 2023 maintenance dredging operation concluded on March 31, 2024, during which just under 500,00 cubic yards of dredged material was deposited in the

Pearce Creek dredged material containment facility.

- The 2024 maintenance dredging contract is currently in progress. Advertising will begin in the next week or so; award is anticipated at the end of October, with operations scheduled to begin sometime in November or December 2024.
- St. Georges Bridge construction is ongoing and is expected to continue through October 2024. No air gap restrictions or channel restrictions are associated with this work. When the breakdown of the bridge repair equipment occurs, bridge shielding on the other side will be needed. This will reduce air gap, temporarily.
- Reedy Point Bridge construction is ongoing. No air gap restrictions or channel restrictions are associated with this work.
- Mr. Hart is advertising a contract for summer bridge repairs that is expected to be posted today. The bridge repair will involve painting, which will require an air gap restriction. More information will be available once a contractor work plan has been received.
- Mr. Bibo inquired about the coordination process for ships approaching St. George's Bridge while the repairs are underway. Mr. Hart explained that dispatch will notify them when a ship is on its way. The channel will then be cleared until the ship passes, after which work can resume. Mr. Bibo asked how much advance notice is needed. Mr. Hart responded that the construction crew will have two hours from the notification to clear the channel for the vessel's passage.
- Captain Kinlein inquired about the date for the summer bridge restrictions. Mr. Hart stated that he does not yet know when the contractor is planning to complete the work. He mentioned that the period of performance for the painting is probably 40 days. Once the contractor has their work plans finalized, Mr. Hart will review the restrictions to determine a specific date.

6.0 Baltimore District Corps of Engineers

Eric Lindheimer, USACE Baltimore
Joe Bieberich, USACE Baltimore
Rachel Kierzewski, USACE Baltimore
Kevin Fenyak, USACE Baltimore

- Mr. Lindheimer commended the team at the district for all their hard work.
- Mr. Lindheimer introduced Joe Bieberich as the new Section Chief of Navigation; however, Mr. Bieberich's last day will be next week. Mr. Lindheimer expressed appreciation for the excellent support he has provided to the team.
- Mr. Bieberich, Ms. Kierzewski, and Mr. Fenyak provided information per the presentation provided in **Appendix B**.
- Slide 2: Once funding is received, USACE will be able to proceed with the award process. The dredging will begin once the time of year restriction is lifted on November 15 and will run through April 1, 2025.
- Captain Nielsen inquired if the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality issued a response regarding the Federal Consistency Determination; Ms. Kierzewski responded that they issued a response that is only valid for this dredging season.
- Captain Kinlein stated that he has been receiving reports from pilots that some of the work during the Key Bridge recovery may have caused an odd shoaling rate, specifically in the Brewerton Angle and Craighill Angle. He mentioned that the red side of the Brewerton Angle is experiencing noticeable effects. Captain Kinlein has requested a survey of these

areas to assess the situation.

- Mr. Rivere inquired about the funding for the Seagirt Loop Modification Project. Mr. Fenyak stated that there is no update to the status of funding.
- Mr. Wartick asked if there are plans at Seagirt to widen the federal project to take over maintenance of improvements done by the state in the past few years. The project includes both deepening and widening of the West Seagirt Branch Channel per the figure on Slide 5.
- Captain Kinlein explained that the purpose of the Seagirt Loop Modification Project is to accommodate the larger ships operating in the port, minimizing the need for ships to turn around in the turning basin by allowing them to move forward through the loop.
- Mr. Wartick asked for preliminary shapefile of the Seagirt Loop Modification Project. Mr. Fenyak will provide the file.

7.0 NOAA/NOS/NWS

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

- Mr. Wartick stated that every chart is now either canceled or in its last edition. By the end of this year, all paper charts and other products will be gone.
- There is work that is still needed to be completed on the Electronic Navigation Chart (ENC) gridding process. The area from Baltimore to Annapolis is nearly complete. The area from Annapolis to the southern Chesapeake Bay area has not been started yet.
- Mr. Wartick inquired about any issues or concerns about the S-102 chart format. Captain Kinlein acknowledged that there are concerns, but the Pilots are still in the beta testing phase. He noted that the wetting line on some terminals is problematic, with certain dry areas incorrectly indicated as wet and appearing to be covered in water. Specifically, the Dundalk Marine Terminal berth is not visible on the S-102. As a result, they are having to revert back to the traditional chart. This issue is occurring frequently in the areas of berths.
- Mr. Wartick noted that the soundings for the section of the channel where the Key Bridge was located have been reinstated on the updated charts. Although these soundings were removed during the update process, they have now been restored to the hydrographic surveys.
- The process of putting hydrographic survey or soundings into federal projects in the ENC is still in progress. However, there hasn't been much progress since the last meeting due to various issues related to the Key Bridge.
- For the benefit of the new USCG staff, Captain Kinlein reviewed the ongoing issue on the ENC charts of showing hydrographic survey information versus spot soundings. This has created operational challenges in automated voyage planning software and may not be the most user-friendly situation. The previous Captain of the Port was inclined to use spot soundings instead of the project depths.
- Mr. DiVeglio provided information per the presentation provided in **Appendix C**.
- Slide 2 presented a map of NOAA's meters in the Chesapeake Bay. Since the last meeting, NOAA has renewed the five-year agreement with the Maryland Port Administration, who graciously supports this system that enhances safety and efficient navigation up and down the bay.
- Slide 4: NOAA deployed a buoy in the ten days following the Key Bridge incident, in support of salvage operations. The buoy deployed provided a variety of data types,

including information on currents, meteorological conditions, and salinity.

- Slide 5: Since the Key Bridge air gap sensor and meteorological station were lost, a temporary meteorological station was installed on the non-collapsed portions of the bridge to provide wind data for navigation. The non-collapsed portions of the bridge will have some demolition work going on through this fall and winter, so this station will be removed.
- Slide 8: NOAA has identified the area of New Point Comfort Light and are working with the folks there to install wind data sensors, which NOAA hopes to integrate into the PORTS system.
- Slide 10 showed plots with historical flood events that are not just related to storms. These screenshots are from Annapolis with long-term data sets from water-level stations around the Bay. Additional information regarding high-tide flooding can be found at <https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/high-tide-flooding/>.
- Slide 11: A report was published assessing the PORTS program and envisioning what a fully developed PORTS system might look like, particularly in areas that currently lack adequate gauging. It also explores potential governance structures for these systems.
- Mr. DiVeglio added that the meteorological station that was on top of the Key Bridge was at a high elevation, which was useful for deep-draft vessel traffic. Mr. DiVeglio has been working with the Pilots to identify a new location for the station that could potentially be at high elevation, as the bridge may not be rebuilt for some time. Captain Kinlein added that they are looking for infrastructure for the meter's installation. One spot that could work was the Upper Craighill Rear Range. He emphasized the importance of avoiding locating it beyond North Point, as the area is subjected to the full force of Chesapeake Bay winds, which is not reflective of what occurs in the harbor. Ms. Newkirk stated that she would like to engage in conversations about this topic another time.

8.0 Maryland Department of Natural Resources

John Gallagher, MDNR
Ken Choi, MDNR

- Mr. Gallagher sought feedback from the attendees; he was contacted by the Maryland Transportation Authority to implement a speed zone in the area of the Key Bridge (see **Appendix D**). The federal channel is not included in the zone. This area is still under the governor's emergency order, so a state regulatory zone could be created by public notice without having to go through the emergency regulation process. Captain Kinlein noted that the Pilots are now very accustomed to operating under varying conditions in this area. Mr. Gallagher mentioned that Maryland typically does not implement no-wake zones; instead, they establish a minimum wake zone. Implementing such a zone would allow the Natural Resources Police (NRP) to enforce speed restrictions in the zone. Mr. Gallagher may propose some buoyage to get feedback from the Pilots and the tugboat operators. Captain Kinlein agreed that as long as the buoyage remains outside of the federal channel, this proposal would not be a problem for the Pilots. This area is already a wake-sensitive area near MPA's Cox Creek dredged material containment facility.
- Mr. Gallagher noted that a request has been made to establish a speed zone around the Amtrak Bridge on the Susquehanna River. However, this will need to follow the regular process for emergency regulation. A speed zone already exists on the Havre de Grace side, extending up to the old railroad structure, and on the Port Deposit side, where a six-knot restriction is enforced. He thinks they intend to extend the speed zone across the entire river. MDNR welcomes any comments on this proposed speed zone.

- Mr. Wartick added that NOAA doesn't typically chart speed zones unless they are federally mandated in the Code of Federal Regulations. If for example, the Key Bridge speed zone is critical to have on the chart NOAA can add it, but posting in the Local Notice to Mariners and a Marine Safety Information Bulletin would be required. Mr. Gallagher said that DNR would coordinate with the USCG Fifth District for concurrence.
- Mr. Gallagher stated that MDNR received approval for a voluntary vessel turn-in program; MDNR is developing a regulation right now. This calendar year MDNR is focusing on at-risk vessels, such as those with first-generation fiberglass. The goal is to have individuals sign over these vessels to MDNR more easily, rather than being charged by the NRP with abandoning a boat. They hope to have the program running by next summer.
- Mr. Gallagher stated that MDNR is currently seeking development of regulations that would allow NRP to enforce federal vessel exclusion zones, such as those for fireworks or other Coast Guard zones. This is actively being worked on and will be presented to the delegates. This would allow a quicker NRP response when needed, as well as for MDNR placement of buoys. Mr. Dolbow added that there are already several MOUs that cover NRP enforcing the federal security zones; however, there may be some issues with implementation. Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Dolbow plan to meet offline to discuss this topic.

10.0 Maryland Transportation Authority

Tekeste Amare, MDTA

- Mr. Amare provided updates on upcoming construction and inspection work on the Bay Bridge and a minor update on the Key Bridge.
- Chesapeake Bay Bridge: There is continued repair work throughout both bridge spans, which will have no impact on the main span or the navigational channel. The biggest work project is the eastbound span deck replacement, which includes utility relocation from the barrier to the truss, truss plating, repair replacement, and rework. The main work of the project is the replacement of the deck which involves cutting 30-foot sections of the deck, removing them, and replacing them with a new deck floor system. MDTA contractors are currently working on the eastern side of the suspension span, where the secondary channel is. The eastbound bridge deck replacement project currently has no activities that will impact the navigational channel. An inspection is planned this fall, from September through December, which may affect the air gap. Advance notice will be given when this inspection is scheduled. Additional information on construction work or traffic can be found on baybridge.com or baybridge.maryland.gov.
- More information on the Tier 2 NEPA study for the Chesapeake Bay Crossing is available at baycrossingstudy.com.
- Francis Scott Key Bridge: The MDTA Board has approved the progressive design-build contract be awarded for the rebuilding of the Key Bridge. There will be periodic updates on the Key Bridge on keybridgerebuild.com.
- Mr. Rivere asked if there were any decisions on whether the future Bay Bridge Crossing would be a tunnel or bridge. Mr. Amare stated that part of the Tier 2 Study is determining if it should be a tunnel or bridge. Once the study is released to the public the information will be available.
- Mr. Lindheimer inquired if there were any updates regarding the I-695 bridge fendering system. USACE received a permit application from the Maryland Department of Transportation to build out the fendering system at the I-695 bridge along Curtis Creek, shrinking the federal channel in that area. Additional discussion with the Coast Guard and

the Maryland Department of Transportation is required to account for that issue. Mr. Amare said that he will gather updates regarding that project for the next meeting of this committee.

- Mr. Wartick asked if the framework would be changed to reflect this reduction in channel width. Mr. Lindheimer responded that that is what USACE is trying to determine. The Coast Guard is the primary user of that channel so it would be important to coordinate with them. Ms. Newkirk stated that her understanding of the project, noting that it may shrink a certain amount but there was a point further down the channel that is even narrower, so this project would not actually be a choke point. Mr. Amare will check the information on the project and get back to the group.
- Captain Kinlein added that everything has been going smoothly with the air gap reductions that have been required. He expressed his gratitude to Mr. Amare's team for their efforts. Mr. Amare was pleased to hear that progress has been positive. He noted that the air gap subcommittee successfully established a way for everybody to be notified of upcoming work. Additionally, the construction team has learned from previous mistakes and was able to take this project seriously.

11.0 Association of Maryland Pilots Updates

Captain John Kinlein, MD Pilots

- Captain Kinlein mentioned that one aid to navigation, the Hotel Sierra Buoy, is critical because it separates traffic at a critical turning point in the main channel. So, the longer that the buoy is gone, the higher the risk they have of grounding. The Pilots do not want a lateral aid, nor a virtual aid; a physical buoy is essential. Captain Kinlein mentioned that he has been coordinating with the Fifth District, Sector MD-NCR, and USCGC Rankin staff to resolve the issue.
- Captain Kinlein reiterated the need to have the current sensor on Lighted Buoy 2BE swapped out; this sensor is critical to the Pilots. The cross-current in this area is very strong.
- The discontinuation of the Curtis Bay Range three years ago created a significant risk. Captain Kinlein has gotten back positive feedback on the replacement PEL from nearly all the pilots.
- USCGC Rankin was able to replace the 2 Dundalk East buoy but is still waiting for the foam buoy. A drag operation is needed to locate the lost buoy; USCGC Rankin plans to schedule a drag, which would negate the need for a survey in that area.

12.0 Maryland Port Administration Updates

Dave Bibo, MPA

- Mr. Bibo mentioned that dredging at the CSX Curtis Bay Coal Facility is still to be scheduled. The Facility's team is currently evaluating a dredging volume.

13.0 Comments/Adjourn

David Bibo, MPA

- Mr. Burkett stated that he would educate himself further on the various systems of communication integration and reaction.
- Mr. Burkett noted that the Coast Guard remains committed to providing support to the port community in the event of a cyber incident. There are assessment tools that can help institutions with conducting assessments of vulnerability or threat detection. This service is offered to the maritime community free of charge. He encouraged everyone to ensure that their systems, including phones and home computers, are kept up to date.

Harbor Safety and Coordination
Committee Meeting – September 11, 2024

- The next 2024 meeting will be held on December 11.