

DRAFT
SUMMARY OF THE PORT OF BALTIMORE
HARBOR SAFETY AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
March 12, 2025 10:00 AM
Association of Maryland Pilots
3720 Dillon Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21224

Attendees:

Anchorage Marina: Wayne Easton
Association of Maryland Pilots (MD Pilots): Captain John Kinlein, Captain Noah Seiple
Baltimore City DOT-Dockmaster: Michael McGeady
Community member: Will Feuer (via phone), David Lieberman (via phone)
Gahagan & Bryant Associates (GBA): Jake Derolf
Interport Pilots: Mark Roesner
Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR): Ken Choi, John Gallagher, Micheal Lathroum
Maryland Port Administration (MPA): Ryan Barry, Dave Bibo, Danielle Fisher, Brian Miller, Rachel Miller (via phone), Rockye Truelove (via phone), Andrea Williams (via phone)
Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA): Ruel Sabellano, James Turner (via phone)
Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Stephanie Peters
McAllister Towing: Robert Dempsey
Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC): Valerian Riviere
Moran Towing: Jonathan Steinberg
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Ocean Service: Jay Dawsey
NOAA Office of Coast Survey (OCS): Ryan Wartick, Darren Wright
NOAA Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS): Chris DiVeglio (via phone)
Norton Lilly International: Don Young
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Baltimore District: Kiara Ehle, Kevin Fenyak (via phone), Jo Ann Grundy, Rachel Kierzewski, Eric Lindheimer
USACE, Philadelphia District: Michael Hart
USCG ANT Baltimore: Morgan Merritt
U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), Auxiliary: Henry Hayes
USCG, District 5 (D5): Albert Grimes (via phone)
USCG, Navigation Center (NAVCEN): Courtney Gamache
USCG, Regional Exam Center-Baltimore: Scott Taylor
USCG, Sector Maryland–National Capital Region (MD-NCR): Chris Briggs, Doug Bullock, Fred Dolbow, Joshua Motta, Kate Newkirk
USCG Sector Virginia (VA): Justin Strassfield (via phone)
US Wind: Ben Cooper
Vane Brothers: John Shkor (via phone)
Virginia Harbor Safety Committee: Raymond Newlon (via phone)

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 and 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. *Update: Project completion estimate now March 2026. On-site work set to begin April 2025. All lighting equipment has been ordered.*

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

- Mr. DiVeglio will send an email to Captain Kinlein providing information about the installation plan and details on what will be mounted on the Brewerton Channel Range Front Light.
- Mr. Hart will conduct a survey at mid-point to assess the draft restrictions in the C&D Canal Approach Channels for Captain Kinlein.
- Mr. Sabellano will check with the Key Bridge reconstruction design team to determine how much proposed dredging and will email the information to Mr. Bibo.

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 attending by phone introduced themselves and stated whom they represent.

2.0 Approval of Summary for Record

Dave Bibo, MPA

- Mr. Bibo asked for a motion to accept the December 11, 2024, meeting summary.
- The motion was put forth and the summary was accepted.

3.0 Salvage & Marine Firefighting Subcommittee & 2025 Hurricane Season MTS Recovery

Fred Dolbow, USCG MD-NCR

- Mr. Dolbow emphasized the ongoing issue of shipboard fires, citing recent incidents involving the Grande Congo in Newport News and the Grande Brasil in the Dover Straits.
- In Maryland, land-based firefighters can take a Marine Firefighting course; Baltimore City is hosting a session in June.
- A fire exercise for a Ro-Ro vessel located at a pier is planned for later this year or early next year.

3.0 U.S. Coast Guard Updates

Chris Briggs, USCG MD-NCR
Kate Newkirk, USCG MD-NCR
Joshua Motta, USCG MD-NCR
Doug Bullock, USCG MD-NCR

- Mr. Briggs thanked Mr. Dolbow and the Salvage & Marine Firefighting subcommittee for their efforts in improving the USCG's capability and resilience. He also expressed his gratitude for everyone's help and support during the unprecedented and tragic mid-air collision incident that occurred in the Potomac River two months ago.
- Mr. Briggs mentioned USCG is still working to resolve many of the issues related to the unexpected ice season this year.
- Ms. Newkirk mentioned they have been selected for a Ports and Waterways Safety Assessment (PAWSA) in the fall. This assessment will cover the northern part of the bay, including the Port of Baltimore.
- Mr. Motta stated that since January 24, there have been 155 aids to navigation (ATON) discrepancies. His crew has corrected over 100 of those ATON discrepancies so far.
- Mr. Motta provided information regarding Aids to Navigation per the presentation provided in **Appendix A**.
- Slide 5: The Chesapeake Bay and Patuxent River buoys will be completed next week. The Annapolis Harbor Channel buoys are now complete.
- Slide 6: Choptank River and Eastern Bay buoys are now complete.
- Mr. Bibo inquired if there is funding for the new projects. Mr. Motta stated that the Elk River Channel North Range project design needs to come first and then they will get into the funding.
- Mr. Bullock provided information regarding Waterways Management per the presentation provided in **Appendix A**.

- Slide 11: A trestle system will be used to build the Francis Scott Key Bridge and demolish the remnants of the old bridge. All traffic will go through the main shipping channel, including recreational vessels.
- Slide 12: There is currently only one safety zone for marine events, located in the Potomac River near Reagan National Airport.
- Mr. Wartick asked if a safety zone will be established around the outside of the main channel when the Key Bridge construction starts. Mr. Bullock stated that this hasn't been determined yet.
- Mr. McGeedy introduced himself, mentioning that he was formerly involved with Seattle, Baltimore, and Fleet Weeks for 15–20 years. Although he no longer holds an official role due to a potential conflict of interest with his current position with Baltimore City, he still participates in planning meetings for the Sail250 event. Sail250 will take place June 24 to July 1, 2026. Planning meetings have started with the Living Classroom Foundation as the main festival and event producer, in partnership with the Naval District Washington. The event, which is designated or in the process of being designated as a Marine Event of National Significance, will feature a large flotilla of international Class A tall ships alongside the Navy. The planned route includes New Orleans, Norfolk, Baltimore, New York (for the International Naval Review on July 4th), and Boston before dispersing. Due to the large flotilla, no parade permit is being pulled. Instead, an organized arrival will occur over multiple days to manage limited resources.
- Captain Kinlein warned that the US Maritime Administration (MARAD) Pier's fendering isn't sufficient for a Navy combatant ship. He advised that any warship planning to dock there should do a site survey beforehand.

4.0 Philadelphia District Corps of Engineers

Mike Hart, USACE Philadelphia

- Mr. Hart stated that Chesapeake & Delaware (C&D) Canal Approach Channel maintenance dredging began at the end of February and has been making steady progress, with about 5,000 cubic yards dredged per day. A second dredge is being brought online, which should help maximize production. However, with the environmental window closing at the end of March, an extension may be needed. The dredger is currently working near Pooles Island. Once complete, they will move northward to Worton Point. All the material is going to Pearce Creek DMCF. Coordination with pilots and vessels in the channel is ongoing.
- Mr. Bibb asked if USACE had received any concerns from citizens about the Pearce Creek DMCF placement site. Mr. Hart stated he has received only a few complaints about the noise during the night, as the operation runs 24/7.
- Captain Kinlein asked Mr. Hart if USACE could conduct a survey at mid-point to assess the draft restriction; Mr. Hart confirmed that it is possible.
- Work on Summit Bridge will begin soon, with contractors mobilizing at the end of the month. There will be an air gap restriction, though the extent of the restriction is still unknown. They will only be restricting one half of the channel at a time. This project is expected to last until October 2026.

5.0 Baltimore District Corps of Engineers

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

- Mr. Lindheimer introduced Jo Ann Grundy, Program Manager in the Navigation Section, who started in December.
- Mr. Lindheimer mentioned that changes implemented by the new administration are affecting the USACE Navigation Branch, particularly in terms of staffing, financial constraints, and survey capabilities. Requests for surveys may not be addressed right away.
- Mr. Fenyak, Ms. Kierzewski, and Mr. Lindheimer provided information per the presentation included in **Appendix B**.
- Slide 4: The target for dredging commencement is October 2026.
- Mr. Bibo noted that for the Barren Island project, the contractors will be dredging sand from the borrow area. There will be two types of dredging operations: a hydraulic dredge with a direct pump and a clamshell dredge. While no specific schedule is provided, Mr. Bibo emphasized the importance of being aware of when the project starts. Captain Kinlein mentioned that he and Trevor Cyran (USACE) have discussed this and have no concerns at this point. Any issues will be addressed as they arise.
- Sampling efforts are being coordinated with pilots, and the team is ready to proceed with the RV Virginia. Additionally, the dredging company Curtin has been highly praised for its communication and efficiency. Ms. Grundy asked Captain Kinlein to email this feedback to Mr. Fenyak for inclusion in USACE'S evaluation of the contractor.
- Mr. McGeady asked about the right entry point for the Baltimore City DOT director to start a dialogue with USACE regarding dredging from the federal channel inward to the west wall of the Inner Harbor. Mr. Miller indicated that discussions regarding this topic have already begun.

6.0 NOAA/NOS/NWS

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

- Mr. Wartick stated that NOAA is still working on figuring out a better way to chart the PEL lights.
- NOAA is also experiencing impacts due to the new administration, particularly with travel restrictions and potential reductions in sea days for their ships.
- Mr. Wartick provided information per the presentation provided in **Appendix C**.
- Slide 2: NOAA is developing several new electronic navigation charts for the southern Chesapeake Bay.
- Slide 3: A new page on the NOAA website explains how external source data is ingested and processed through the NOAA pipeline to update charts.
- Slide 4: Navigation Response Team (NRT) vessels will survey The Patapsco River next year, focusing on areas that are most impactful. Any questions about whether specific locations are being surveyed should be directed to Mr. Wartick.
- Slide 5: NOAA deployed an NRT vessel and introduced additional survey assets called echo boats. These autonomous survey platforms do multi-beam survey and side-scan sonar. The unique thing about these vessels is their low draft, which allows them to survey very shallow waters. The NRT vessels were used for the main channel surveying and providing

support for the autonomous vessels.

- Slide 7: The incident response required coordination with the Federal Bureau of Investigation; Washington, DC Fire and Emergency Medical Service; and the Navy Supervisor of Salvage and Diving team. This was the first response when all products were delivered through a geographic information systems (GIS)-based dashboard instead of PDFs or printed materials. The transition went well and aligns with NOAA's goal to use GIS moving forward. However, its success depends on the USGS having GIS-trained personnel, which is not the case in every district.
- Slide 11: NOAA's response included night operations to avoid diver conflicts and challenging weather conditions like freezing rain and strong winds.
- Mr. DiVeglio mentioned his office supported the Potomac River mid-air collision response by deploying buoys that measured the currents and meteorological data to aid recovery operations.
- Mr. DiVeglio provided information per the presentation provided in **Appendix D**.
- Mr. DiVeglio asked Mr. Motta if USCG would want to see an installation plan or details on the Brewerton Channel Range Front Light; Mr. Motta responded in the affirmative. Mr. DiVeglio will email this information to USCG within the coming days.
- Mr. DiVeglio mentioned that NOAA is engaging closely with the MPA and MDTA to ensure that future Key Bridge design plans include the necessary infrastructure for air gap observing equipment.

7.0 Maryland Department of Natural Resources

John Gallagher, MDNR

- Mr. Gallagher provided information per the presentation provided in **Appendix E**.
- Mr. Gallagher presented photos of icebreaking operations in Deale Island (slide 3), Rumbley Harbor (slide 4), Fishing Creek Coast Guard Station (slide 5), Smith Island (slide 6), and M/V Eddie Somers (slide 7).
- Slide 9: M/V John C Widener has been at the shipyard in Georgetown since July due to plating issues and is expected to be back by summer. This ship is normally stationed at Governor's Dock in Annapolis.
- Slide 10: M/V A.V. Sandusky is usually stationed at Kent Narrows during the winter but was moved to Annapolis before being relocated again to Choptank River.
- Slide 11: Mr. Choi created a map showing the different calls DNR responded to, and the various locations covered during the ice season.
- Slide 13: Mr. Gallagher presented a map showing that most of the work related to abandoned boats and debris in 2024 was concentrated in Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, and Queen Anne's County.
- Slide 15: Last year, 52 abandoned boats were dealt with, averaging roughly one per week. Debris flow is expected to rise, often due to the deterioration of aging floating docks. DNR works closely with Jeff Peacock (USACE) on these matters. Mr. Gallagher mentioned that assistance is available to federal partners for staging boats or accessing state facilities if needed.
- Regarding the Key Bridge safety zone, the proposal involves managing navigation around the trestle work without interfering with the federal channel, similar to what was done at the Bay Bridge. Once approved, coordination will be needed on buoy placement.
- Mr. Gallagher let Mr. Bibb know that a sunken boat off Poplar Island has been removed.

- Regarding the Sail250 air show: DNR normally provides buoys to create an “air box” exclusion zone. Mr. Bullock mentioned that the designated air box will likely be off Fort McHenry, similar to previous events.
- Mr. Gallagher stated that DNR has been requested to assist in removing a boat near the Vulcan Materials facility at their dock in Middle River. DNR plans to have the boat removed within the next couple of weeks.
- Mr. Bibo inquired about how fuel, oil, or boat remains are handled when pulling up abandoned boats. Mr. Gallagher responded that they either hire a contractor to remove the tank or remove the whole boat if possible. After the boats are removed, they are taken to a site where an excavator, is used to crush them; they are then disposed of in a dumpster; DNR recycles what they can. About 10% of the boats are handled by a contractor. Additionally, some grant money is given to municipalities, such as Annapolis, to manage the process locally. The process for boat removal involves the Natural Resources Police writing an abandoned boat report, which is then forwarded to DNR for further action.
- Mr. Bibo inquired if DNR is involved with removing ghost crab pots. Mr. Gallagher explained that DNR will receive grants from NOAA to hire watermen to retrieve the pots as part of a marine debris removal project. However, his team normally focuses on debris that poses a hazard to navigation, such as logs.
- Mr. Easton asked if there is a program for the disposal of abandoned boats that are already in marinas. Mr. Gallagher stated that abandoned boats can be claimed through boat titles (similar to a mechanic’s lien). Last year, the legislature approved a Vessel Turn-In Program; the regulations for the program are currently being written. This program assists owners facing hardships, to reduce the potential of them abandoning their vessels. Generally, Natural Resources Police typically do not intervene unless the boat was deliberately abandoned at a marina, rather than being left due to unpaid bills.
- Mr. Lathroum introduced himself as the boating stakeholder coordinator with the Maryland Boating Act Advisory Committee (BAAC). He explained that the BAAC is required by the state to review any changes to boating regulations and provide recommendations to the secretary of DNR, who has the final decision on the request. Any construction requests will be funneled through Mr. Lathroum, then reviewed by the committee and the secretary. Mr. Gallagher mentioned a DNR maintenance bill that is currently under consideration that includes a provision that if a public safety zone is declared by USCG, DNR could technically mark the zone under certain circumstances. Mr. Lathroum stated that if the bill gets through legislature and is approved, it would grant the secretary the authority to create a safety speed zone through public notice, which would reduce the timeline of the process.

8.0 Maryland Transportation Authority

Ruel Sabellano, MDTA

- Regarding the Key Bridge: geotechnical borings for reconstruction are ongoing and expected to be completed in approximately six weeks. A meeting between MDTA, MPA, and NOAA is planned to discuss initiating the MOU regarding air gap sensor installation, along with designs for the platform and sensor installation.
- Mr. Bibo asked Mr. Sabellano if he knew how much dredging is proposed for the Key Bridge reconstruction. Mr. Sabellano said that he doesn’t have the answer yet but will check with the design team and respond to Mr. Bibo.
- Regarding the Bay Bridge: ongoing maintenance is occurring, with no impact on the

navigation channels. A permit is valid until April for completing inspections and upgrades.

9.0 Association of Maryland Pilots Updates

Captain John Kinlein, MD Pilots

- Captain Kinlein expressed gratitude to the three federal agencies for their partnership, acknowledging their efforts despite ongoing challenges. He highlighted the presence of three dredges in operation, with another about to start, as well as three buoy tenders working across both sectors. He also noted the work of a transportable aids to navigation boat in the Chesapeake & Delaware Canal and ongoing survey activities.
- He praised the ice response efforts in the Potomac. His team provided support to the Potomac River pilots, including deploying a fast response cutter. He emphasized the continued need for good ATON, well-maintained channels, and accurate surveys in the Potomac.
- He agreed with Mr. Gallagher that they were fortunate with the ice conditions, noting that a few more days of cold could have made the situation worse. However, strong winds helped prevent additional ice formation.
- He also stressed the importance of navigation ranges, which kept the channels open when buoy lights were lost, making navigation in the dark particularly challenging.
- Captain Kinlein highlighted the critical need for strong federal infrastructure to support the port, including well-surveyed and dredged channels, accurate meteorology, advanced oceanographic sensors, and reliable and robust ATON. He highlighted the significant role of both public and private sector investments as the port grows, stressing that these infrastructure components are crucial for commerce. He pointed out that scaling back these systems would hinder the port's ability to keep pace with future demands.
- Captain Kinlein praised Chief Merritt for her leadership and work with the ANT team. She will be transferring to Chincoteague. He noted that her efforts improved communication and quickly resolved issues with navigation ranges.

10.0 Maryland Port Administration Updates

Dave Bibo, MPA

- Mr. Miller thanked the three federal partners and asked them to notify MPA of any challenges that might impact operational readiness, so they can be addressed early.
- Mr. Bibo mentioned that the pilots have requested dredging at Dundalk Berths 4 and 5; this will be addressed through upcoming dredging at Colgate Creek.
- Mr. Bibo introduced Danielle Fisher, who works as a part of MPA's outreach program. He highlighted her work in meeting the public and resolving issues before they escalate.
- Tradepoint Atlantic will begin dredging this year, with 350,000 yards of material going to the Cox Creek DMCF.
- USACE maintenance work will be going to the Masonville DMCF this year.
- Mr. Bibo mentioned that he is awaiting details on the dredged material needed for the Key Bridge reconstruction project. Previously, dredged material containing concrete, asphalt, and steel was transported off-site through Tradepoint Atlantic, and this may be the approach for the reconstruction project as well.

11.0 Comments/Adjourn

David Bibo, MPA

- Mr. Riviere added that MSC will start bringing in an Ultra Large Container Vessel (ULCV) to Dundalk Marine Terminal by the end of the month, with Gemini also bringing a ULCV to Seagirt Marine Terminal. Other shipping companies are also expected to bring ULCVs. He inquired if there had been any studies on the widening of the channel from 700 feet to 800 feet. He explained that vessels might need to sail early to avoid creating traffic issues in the channel. He noted that Ports America is currently taking the Evergreen ULCV vessel to Berth 5 at their own cost to bring the vessel into Seagirt. He noted that while only one ULCV vessel arrives per week now, these ships will call on the port more frequently, making the issue more pressing. Mr. Bibo said that he is not aware of any studies regarding widening of the channel and will speak with Mr. Riviere after the meeting. Captain Kinlein added that Virginia evaluated their channel width, and their recommended measurement is significantly wider. Their data may provide useful insights.
- Meetings for 2025 will be held on June 11, September 10, and December 10.