

NTSAC MEETING MINUTES

June 14, 2022 – Virtual Meeting

I. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Mr. Matthew Layman, Designated Federal Officer (DFO): Called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present. Mr. Layman provided an outline of the meeting and discussed the process for both committee members and the public to provide comments and participate in the meeting.

NTSAC Chairperson, Mr. Steve Huttman followed with opening remarks thanking the committee and public for their participation

II. Roll Call:

Quorum was established.

NTSAC Members – Present:

1. Steve Huttman
2. Andrew Gauthier
3. Matthew LaGarde
4. Lindsay Price
5. Mark Sawyer
6. Angie Fay
7. Ray Richmond
8. Jonathan Steinberg
9. Laura Wilcox
10. Eric Johansson
11. Joy Terral
12. Jonathan Van Dusen
13. Brian Khey
14. Robert Keister

NTSAC Members - Not Present:

1. Marc Dial
2. Douglas Covil
3. John Hazel
4. John Arenstam

III. Opening Remarks:

Chief of the Office of Operating and Environmental Standards, CAPT Jerry Butwid then greeted the committee and expressed his gratitude for the committee's work and appreciation for the anticipated delivery of the first of hopefully many final reports to come.

IV. Acceptance of Meeting Agenda:

NTSAC Members were given a copy of the teleconference meeting agenda ahead of the meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Eric Johansson and seconded by Mr. Matt LaGarde to accept the Meeting Agenda. The agenda was unanimously accepted and added to the NTSAC administrative record without discussion.

V. Review and Approval of Inaugural Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Joy Terral and seconded by Mr. Matt LaGarde to approve the Meeting Minutes from NTSAC's Inaugural Meeting (conducted virtually on December 7, 2021). During discussion, Ms. Angie Fay proposed two edits that corrected minor errors in the document. Following rectification, acceptance of the Inaugural Meeting Minutes (as amended) passed unanimously.

VI. Final Report on Task 21-01 "Occasional Towing":

Mrs. Laura Wilcox, chairperson of the Task 21-01 Subcommittee, provided a detailed briefing on the Draft Final Report for task 21-01, "Recommendations for the Criteria Used to Apply the Term "Occasional Towing". Following the briefing, a motion was made by Mr. Andrew Gauthier and seconded by Mr. Ray Richmond to approve the "Occasional Towing" Final report and submit it to the Coast Guard. The motion passed unanimously.

Following the vote, NTSAC DFO, Mr. Matt Layman stated that the National Offshore Safety Advisory Committee (NOSAC) was planning to begin work on the identical "Occasional Towing" task statement and asked NTSAC members to consider participating in NOSAC's subcommittee as a towing industry SME.

VII. Subcommittee update on Task 21-03 "Industry Outlook":

Mr. Matt LaGarde provided an update on the work completed by the Task 21-03 Subcommittee. Mr. LaGarde communicated that significant effort has been focused on scoping the task into focused subsections. It is the hope that by breaking the final report into manageable pieces, the committee will be better able to accurately forecast and describe the major challenges facing the towing vessel industry in the near future. Although still in development, Mr. LaGarde shared that some of the proposed subsections to date include; vessel crewing/availability; work/life balance; long-term experience; infrastructure maintenance; dredging; drug testing; and regulatory issues.

Following Mr. LaGarde's briefing one comment was received from NTSAC. Mr. Eric Johansson communicated that the subcommittee may want to consider the possible impact of fuel/energy markets on the towing vessel industry (taking into account the current energy market climate). Additionally, one comment was received from the public. Mr. Pat Smith of American Commercial Barge Line (ACBL) communicated that the towing industry has significant concerns over the dry-dock interval requirements of Subchapter M and safety concerns regarding the necessary block height requirements needed for such examinations.

VIII. Subcommittee update on Task 21-04 "Covid-19 Impact":

Mrs. Angie Fay provided an update on the work completed by the Task 21-04 Subcommittee. Mrs. Fay communicated that the subcommittee was able to successfully liaise with the Department of Environmental & Occupational Health at the University of Washington who published a report on

mariner mental health that focused on the goals of characterizing mental health determinants, identifying barriers to accessing care, and prioritizing best practice intervention measures. Mrs. Fay stated that the subcommittee was coordinating a survey with AWO in the hopes of gathering information on the effectiveness of the CDC guidance and the Coast Guard mental health bulletin.

IX. FACA Planning & New Tasking:

Mr. Matt Layman, NTSAC DFO, provided a briefing on FACA administration and planning. Mr. Layman stated that the Coast Guard is considering issuing three new task statements to NTSAC. Prior to doing so, Mr. Layman communicated his desire to have the Vetting Subcommittee review each proposed task prior to formal issuance. The proposed tasks are as follows:

- “Report of Recommendations to the USCG for Rulemaking Improvements to Subchapter M”
- “Report on the Accuracy and Validity of Towing Vessel Examination Questions”
- “Recommendations for Training and Instruction Best Practices for Personnel working aboard Subchapter M Inspected Vessels”

Mr. Layman also shared that the USCG was eager to execute an in-person NTSAC meeting sometime in FY2022. Mr. Layman stated preliminary plans were to execute a meeting sometime in September in the Houston-Galveston region.

X. NTSAC Member Comments:

NTSAC members were given an opportunity to provide comment during the meeting. Mr. Eric Johansson took the time to bring attention to the Maritime Risk Symposium, an annual two and a half day conference in which government and maritime industry leaders, port representatives, researchers, and solution providers convene to examine current and emerging threats to maritime security. Mr. Johansson communicated that during the 2021 Symposium, the Coast Guard’s strategic long-term planning initiative known as the Evergreen Program highlighted the importance of the Inland Waterway System as a critical component of the nation’s supply chain capability.

NTSAC Chairperson, Mr. Steve Huttman, took the time to remind the audience that the comment period for the Coast Guard’s Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) regarding the carriage of Electronic Charts will close out on June 27, 2022 and encouraged all vested parties to submit comments as appropriate. Mr. Huttman also communicated that he appreciated NTSAC members work to date and understands the difficulty and limitations imposed by not currently being able to meet in-person.

XI. Public Comment Period:

None.

XII. Closing Remarks:

A motion to close the meeting was made by Mr. Matt LaGarde and seconded by Ms. Lindsay Price. There was no further discussion and the meeting was adjourned.

Mr. Matthew Layman, USCG

Designated Federal Officer