U.S. Department of Transportation
United States Coast Guard

Commandant
U.S. Coast Guard

2100 Second Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20593-0001
Staff Symbol: G-MWP-1
Phone: (202) 267-6164

COMDTPUB P16700.4
NVIC 1-00
25 APRIL 2000

NAVIGATION AND VESSEL INSPECTION CIRCULAR NO. 1-00

Subj: GUIDANCE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEES UNDER THE MARINE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM (MTS) INITIATIVE

Ref: (a) U.S. Department of Transportation, "An Assessment of the U.S. Marine Transportation System: A Report to Congress," September 1999
(b) COMDTINST 5420.37, Committee Management Policy and Procedures
(c) U.S. Coast Guard, "Harbor Safety Committee Study," by RHH Associates, Inc., February 2000

1. PURPOSE. The Interagency Committee for the Marine Transportation System (ICMTS) elected to use this document as a vehicle to provide guidance for local coordination of Marine Transportation System issues such as ports and waterways safety, security, mobility and environmental protection. Reference (a) has called for improved coordination of MTS issues at all levels by public and private stakeholders. This Navigation and Inspection Circular (NVIC) provides guidance for possible ways to accomplish this at the local level. This NVIC is careful not to mandate the formation of new local MTS committees or to force adoption of all MTS issues by existing committees. This NVIC does encourage local stakeholders and/or existing committees such as Harbor Safety Committees to review their current state and to use this guidance as necessary to improve local coordination of issues within our MTS. Although titles vary by locality, for the purposes of this guidance, a port MTS coordinating body or committee will be referred to as a "Harbor Safety Committee" (HSC). HSC responsibilities include recommending actions to improve the safety, security, mobility and environmental protection of a port or waterway. An HSC is typically comprised of representatives of governmental agencies, maritime labor and industry organizations, environmental groups, and other public interest groups. HSC is used as a term of convenience and it is not necessary that existing or new committees be called HSCs or that these groups concern themselves solely with safety.

DISTRIBUTION- SDL No. 137

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
A																										
B		8	10		1			1							1											1
C					*						2		*	2*												
D	1	1		2*							1	*														
E														2												
F																										
G																										
H																										

*NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION: (See page 5)

2. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. None

3. BACKGROUND.

a. HSCs have long been recognized as a key to safe, efficient and environmentally sound operations. In the 1996 *U.S. Port and Terminal Safety Study*, the Independent Terminal and Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO) noted that port complexes, their associated waterways, and terminals have extremely diverse infrastructure, quality control, management, procedures and functions. HSCs are often the only local bodies available for facility operators and port users to meet and discuss mutual safety, mobility and environmental protection issues. These committees have varying degrees of scope and effectiveness. There have never been standard guidelines, expectations, representation or organizational structure, nor has there been a national coordinating mechanism to achieve consistency or synergy among the many autonomous harbor committees.

b. At the MTS National Conference in November 1998, senior stakeholders agreed that:

(1) there is a strong need for effective local coordinating organizations,

(2) successful local committees can serve as models for other ports seeking to establish coordinating organizations or to improve the effectiveness of existing organizations,

(3) there is no consistent mechanism for communication among local public and private sector entities.

c. After the MTS National Conference, the Secretary of Transportation established the MTS Task Force mandated in the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1998. The Task Force assessed the adequacy of the nation's marine transportation system in a report delivered by the Secretary of Transportation to Congress (ref. (a)).

d. A primary recommendation from the report was the creation of a stakeholder coordination framework. Two key elements are the MTS National Advisory Council (MTSNAC) and the ICMTS. The Council, comprised entirely of private sector members, and the ICMTS, comprised of federal government agencies, will provide a structured approach for addressing national-level issues and recommendations. Other key elements of the MTS coordination framework include regional (where needed) and the local committees. The report's recommendations addressed the calls for local coordination and leadership by endorsing HSCs as the mechanism in the proposed coordination framework.

e. Committees, as recommended in the MTS report, already exist in many ports, but they may need to be modified to respond to the MTS recommendations found in reference (a). The Coast Guard recognizes the importance of specialized structure and leadership in existing HSCs that will vary from port to port, conforming to the needs and characteristics of each region or locality.

However, achieving MTS expectations from reference (a) and increasing local/national connectivity requires some consistency in HSC organization, membership and COTP participation.

4. DISCUSSION.

a. There are several options to facilitate local coordination of MTS issues. Local conditions should drive selection of the appropriate option:

(1) Enhance an already existing committee or HSC

(2) Add an MTS subcommittee to an existing HSC

(3) Consolidate several committees into one body

(4) Allow several committees to remain separate

(5) Create a new committee

Coordinating MTS issues through one committee as opposed to several committees in a given port or waterway area may be easier from a resource efficiency and coordination effort perspective. Using an existing committee may also be preferable to forming a new committee for the same reasons. There are instances, though, in which several committees may be necessary or preferable or in which an existing committee does not want to be considered the port's local MTS coordinating committee and formation of a new committee is more desirable.

b. HSCs were suggested as the best mechanism for local coordination of MTS issues because they have a proven track record in dealing with port safety issues, have a diverse membership which includes most MTS stakeholder groups and because HSCs already exist in most ports and waterways. The last point is important because there are already a plethora of stakeholder committees in existence and the MTS initiative did not want to create additional port level volunteer committees unless necessary. Although some existing committees focus solely on safety issues and may find expanding to address MTS report recommendations beyond their ability or undesirable, many MTS issues such as mobility, security and environmental protection are related in some way to safety. Therefore, it is recommended that local MTS stakeholders first consider expanding existing HSCs before moving to establish new local coordinating bodies to address MTS issues beyond safety.

c. Local coordination plays a critical role in improving our MTS. It is recognized that the establishment or enhancement of HSCs may add time, effort and possible funding burdens to local port stakeholders. However, HSC establishment/enhancement is a key first step in moving forward with many of the recommendations in the much larger MTS initiative, in which HSCs are viewed as key coordinating bodies.

d. There are also numerous advantages to HSCs using the guidance outlined here. Enhancing local coordination and plugging into a national coordinating structure allows a stronger local voice for vetting issues to a higher level, facilitates more efficient handling of port issues and results in a better run, safer and more economically efficient port or waterway. Through adopting those traits that have helped other HSCs, using tools and assistance that the Coast Guard can provide and addressing issues that can advance our MTS as a whole, each individual port is improved.

e. Local port stakeholders should view this NVIC as assistance, guidance and support. It is not the intention of the Coast Guard to mandate or control these organizations, but it is our intention to actively promote and encourage the establishment and expansion of these organizations commensurate with their importance as a local MTS coordinating body. Individual HSCs can use this guidance to the degree necessary to increase their effectiveness. The decisions regarding how to achieve this are left to the discretion of each HSC and local stakeholders.

f. Enclosure (1) contains generic characteristics and organizational structure that HSCs can use as a blueprint or guide. A summary of the recommendations from reference (a) with the most direct relevance to HSCs is also included as a catalyst to further discussion about the potential responsibilities and missions envisioned for HSCs. In addition, the enclosure discusses two of the tools developed by the Coast Guard for enhancing HSCs' ability to fulfill their mission. The first of these tools is the "Harbor Safety Committees National Information Clearinghouse & Exchange," a communications and information hub (web-site) designed to facilitate access to useful information and to allow communication between HSCs and to the national coordinating bodies. The second is a suite of risk assessment and risk management tools that will be available through the local COTP to assist HSCs in defining and managing the safety, security, mobility and environmental risks of their waterway.

g. There are important issues related to HSCs that are best resolved within each region or locality. We urge local stakeholders to give these careful consideration:

   (1) The feasibility and need for regional HSCs. Reference (a) advocates the establishment of regional coordinating bodies where they can be beneficial. HSCs should consider whether regional level organizations could assist them in addressing issues that are beyond their local scope to solve (e.g., proposed dredging that may affect waterborne commerce to an entire region and would benefit from regional coordination); and

   (2) The need for HSCs at smaller ports. There is no formula for determining when the benefits of forming an HSC justify its establishment by local stakeholders nor could this guidance properly determine the need for establishing additional HSCs at smaller ports. However, this subject should be considered by stakeholders to assure that attention is given to MTS coordination where needed to properly address local issues.

h. In coordinating, supporting or participating in the activities of HSCs you should be aware of the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) as implemented by reference (b). HSCs will not generally be advisory committees under FACA if they are organized and run in

accordance with the guidance contained in this NVIC. However, departure from this guidance, for example, through Coast Guard control of an HSC's governance or agenda, could convert an HSC into an advisory committee required to comply with the provisions of FACA. You should ensure that HSCs do not become advisory committees under FACA by familiarizing yourself with FACA, and reference (b). Any questions on this matter should be referred to your servicing legal office or Commandant (G-LRA).

5. ACTION. Coast Guard Captains of the Port (COTPs), other government agencies, maritime industry and interested stakeholders are encouraged to consider the expectations of reference (a). Existing HSCs are encouraged to evaluate their current organizational structure and agenda and can use this guidance to enhance and/or expand as necessary. If no HSCs exist in an area, the local MTS stakeholders are encouraged to consider the benefits of establishing an HSC as outlined in this guidance. Reference (a) and (c) can be accessed at (www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/mw/docs.htm).

R.C. NORTH
Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety and
Environmental Protection

Encl: Generic Attributes of Successful Harbor Safety Committees

Non-Standard Distribution:

C:e New Orleans (90); Hampton Roads (50); Baltimore (45); San Francisco, Puget Sound (40); Philadelphia, Port Arthur, Honolulu (35); Miami, Houston, Mobile, Long Beach, Morgan City, Portland OR (25); Jacksonville (20); Boston, Portland ME, Charleston, Galveston, Anchorage (15); Cleveland (12); Louisville, Memphis, Paducah, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Savannah, San Juan, Tampa, Buffalo, Chicago, Detroit, Duluth, Milwaukee, San Diego, Juneau, Valdez (10); Providence, Huntington, Wilmington, Corpus Christi, Toledo, Guam, Sault Ste. Marie (5).

C:n New York (70)

D:d Group/MSO Long Island Sound (6)

D:1 CG Liaison Officer MILSEALIFTCOMD (Code N-7CG), CG Liaison Officer RSPA (DHM-22), CG Liaison Officer MARAD (MAR-742), CG Liaison Officer JUSMAGPHIL, CG Liaison Officer World Maritime University, CG Liaison Officer ABS, Maritime Liaison Office Commander U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (1).

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (1).

Generic Attributes of Successful Harbor Safety Committees

This enclosure gathers and presents common best practices of HSCs. These practices were gathered during a national study of existing HSCs. Coupled with the recommended issue areas and beneficial tools that follow, these elements can be used by existing or developing HSCs to increase the effectiveness of coordinating local MTS issues. It is not the Coast Guard's intention that existing or developing HSCs view these guidelines as mandatory requirements or that all HSCs need to organize and operate in exactly the same manner. Instead this enclosure can be used as an aid to increase the effectiveness of HSCs without impairing the local flexibility necessary for these organizations to properly address their local stakeholders' needs and issues.

A. General Organization and Operation

1. **Mission** – All HSCs should have a written statement of purpose, guidelines and/or operating procedures that support a process that allows all stakeholders to effectively participate.

2. **Meetings** – Meeting frequency should be determined by each HSC according to its specific needs. The core component of any meeting is its agenda. The agenda must reflect all parties' issues and points of view must remain dynamic, or people will lose interest in the process. Focused, productive subcommittees are important.

3. **Consensus and Management** – HSCs work because the Coast Guard and other government agencies are partners in the process, not controllers of it. Survey forms, interviews, and follow-up discussions with both government and industry organizations consistently indicated that in instances where government agencies support the consensus, the process works best.

4. **Structure is Important** - Even the most informal organizations that use ad hoc subcommittees must pay attention to structure. The structure must take into account the size of the geographic port area, and the type of industry within its infrastructure. For example, an organizational model that works well in an inland port may not work well in a large coastal port.

5. **Tracking Action Items** - By tracking and maintaining transparent issues for all who are interested, concerns may be dealt with in a more equitable manner. This will help avoid agendas being too narrowly focused or controlled by a few members.

6. **Funding** - A successful strategy for funding may rely on small public appropriations to provide human resource (not just fiscal) support to help with the administrative burden of keeping committees, subcommittees and their respective issues on track. Member contributions in the form of dues must be managed judiciously to avoid stakeholder exclusion or limit discussion. The Coast Guard, and some state agencies, may be able to provide

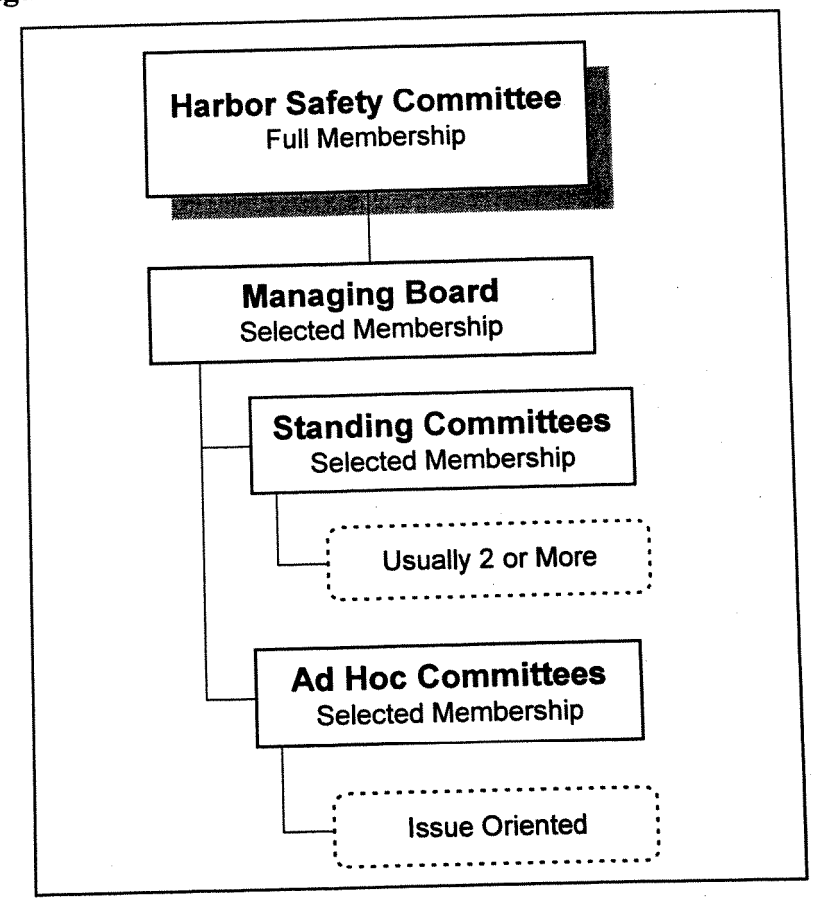
limited administrative support services. Similarly Marine Exchanges are funded voluntarily by their members and they can provide HSC-type services.

B. Organizational Structure

1. A general organizational structure can be applied to most HSCs, while the particular elements of HSC structures will differ from port to port. This is not surprising considering their varying compositions, methods of formation, and issue-oriented objectives, as well as the wide variety of size, configuration, age and complexity among the ports they represent. In many cases, HSC organizations have evolved to their present structure over time, and will likely see additional changes in the future in response to changing influences, including possible national MTS initiatives.

2. There are a number of organizational elements that are relatively common across all HSCs that can serve as an organization model for new or expanding HSCs. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1. Model HSC Committee Organizational Structure



3. The full membership of the HSC is composed of many entities (see section C below), with their attendance depending on interest and other factors. Members are defined as voting and non-voting.

4. The HSC commonly has a Managing Board, Board of Directors, or other body that oversees the day-to-day scheduling and operations of the HSC, and coordinates the agenda. This body is commonly elected from key elements (e.g. pilots, shippers, etc.) and usually includes representatives of government agencies. In some HSCs, each member of the Managing Board has an alternate. Members are voting or non-voting. The federal and state agencies are usually non-voting. Port Authorities and industry representatives are usually voting members. In smaller ports a separate Managing Board is usually not needed.

5. The full HSC or Managing Board relies heavily on the work performed by committees. Larger ports are usually more formalized and have several designated standing committees, which are long term or permanent committees. Examples of standing committees include dedicated MTS committee, Pilotage, Waterways Management, Navigation, Waterway Uses, etc. Standing committee membership is commonly selected by the full HSC or by the Management Board if present.

6. Standing committees may be led by a selected or elected Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, and may be supported by a Secretary.

7. Ad-hoc committees are established on an as-needed basis, with selection being made by the Management Board or the full HSC. An ad-hoc committee may report to a standing committee or directly to the Managing Board or the full HSC membership. Usually, the committee's work is first submitted to the standing committee, which may recommend changes, before going to the full HSC or Managing Board for a vote. Examples of ad-hoc committees include Rock Removal, Ballast Water, Marine Sanctuaries, Vessel Traffic Management, etc.

C. HSC Membership

1. One of the primary tenants of the MTS Initiative is stakeholder inclusion. It is vital to have all interested parties address the current and potential issues being considered. Therefore, HSCs should consider including the following organizations in their membership, to the extent that they are active in a particular port:

   a. Port Authority

   b. Vessel owners and operators (tankers, dry cargo, barges, ferries)

   c. Harbor pilots and pilot associations

   d. Marine Exchange

e. Docking pilots/tug and tow operators

f. Shipping agents

g. Terminal operators

h. Shipyards

i. Industry associations (national, state and local)

j. Organized labor

k. Commercial fishing industry associations

l. State and local government agencies

- Coastal Zone Management agencies
- Environmental Agencies
- Regional Development Agencies/ Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)
- Emergency Management Agencies/ LEPC/ fire and police departments/ harbor masters)
- Transportation Agencies
- Occupational Safety Agencies

m. Federal Government representatives

- USCG (COTPs, Groups, District Aids to Navigation/Waterways Mngmt/Marine Safety Branches)
- MARAD
- NOAA (hydrographic, fisheries, endangered species, etc.)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- FEMA
- OSHA
- INS/Customs/DEA
- U.S. Navy
- FHWA/FRA/FTA
- EPA
- Other government representatives, where appropriate (e.g., St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation)

n. Foreign government and maritime industry representatives where appropriate

o. Environmental / Citizens groups/ Waterfront developers

p. Recreational boaters
   - Rowing clubs
   - Yacht racing associations

q. Members of the general public

2. As port operations and development have the potential of affecting natural resources and other environmental issues, there will likely be increasing impetus to include environmental group representation in HSCs in the future. This is clearly indicated in the MTS Report to Congress:

   "The environmental protection of the MTS ensures its desired efficiency and safety. In recent years, there has been a growing public awareness of potential adverse environmental impacts from the MTS. ... Improving integrated and non-regulatory approaches that involve all levels of government, MTS users and all stakeholders is important in addressing the future trends and challenges in MTS environmental protection."

3. Reference (c) notes that while environmental groups are members of many HSCs, they are often unable to attend due to time constraints associated with being a volunteer organization. Nevertheless, they should be encouraged to become members and participate in the HSC process as much as possible and they should be kept appraised of committee work. Mailings, Internet homepages, and other methods of information sharing are low in cost and risk and high in impact, and may go a long way toward keeping all stakeholders informed.

4. HSCs and the Area Committees mandated by The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 are both viable forums for addressing environmental interests within ports or waterways. However, HSCs and Area Committees address different aspects of environmental protection. Area Committees focus on response while HSCs focus on prevention. Area Committees concentrate on protection of the environment from oil and hazardous substance spills while HSCs give attention to many non-spill related pollution issues such as Aquatic Nuisance Species, cargo sweepings, dredging, non point source pollution and floating debris and plastics. Presently, though, HSCs may not adequately address these issues.

5. Citizen groups, waterfront developers and MPOs also have important and legitimate interests in port activities and planning issues and should be considered as potential HSC members. In many cases they have the political access to potential sources of funding and can make themselves heard outside the HSC if they feel they are being excluded or ignored. Therefore, some sort of liaison with local, state and federal elected officials should also be considered.

6. Including recreational boating interests is vital because of the increased use of our ports and waterways by many users with conflicting interests. Recreational use of our ports and waterways, often intermingled with commercial users, is on the increase and presents increasing safety issues for HSCs. Therefore, regardless of their degree of involvement all stakeholder groups need to be provided agendas, minutes of meetings and other important information.

D. Recommended Issue Areas for Consideration by HSCs

1. Because HSCs are not a new type of organization most already have a mission focus. These are generally port navigational safety, marine pollution prevention or mobility issues. Reference (a), however, raised the level of expectation regarding the types of issues that benefit from some consideration or management at the local level. These recommendations are extremely important to the future direction of HSCs. They define the strategy for improvement of the present MTS such that by the year 2020:

   "The U.S. Marine Transportation System will be the world's most technologically advanced, safe, secure, efficient, effective, accessible, globally competitive, dynamic and environmentally responsible system for moving goods and people."

2. The recommendations in reference (a) are categorized under the following seven Action Areas:

   - Coordination,
   - Funding the MTS,
   - MTS Competitiveness and Mobility
   - Improving Awareness of the MTS
   - Information Management and Infrastructure
   - Security
   - Safety and Environmental Protection

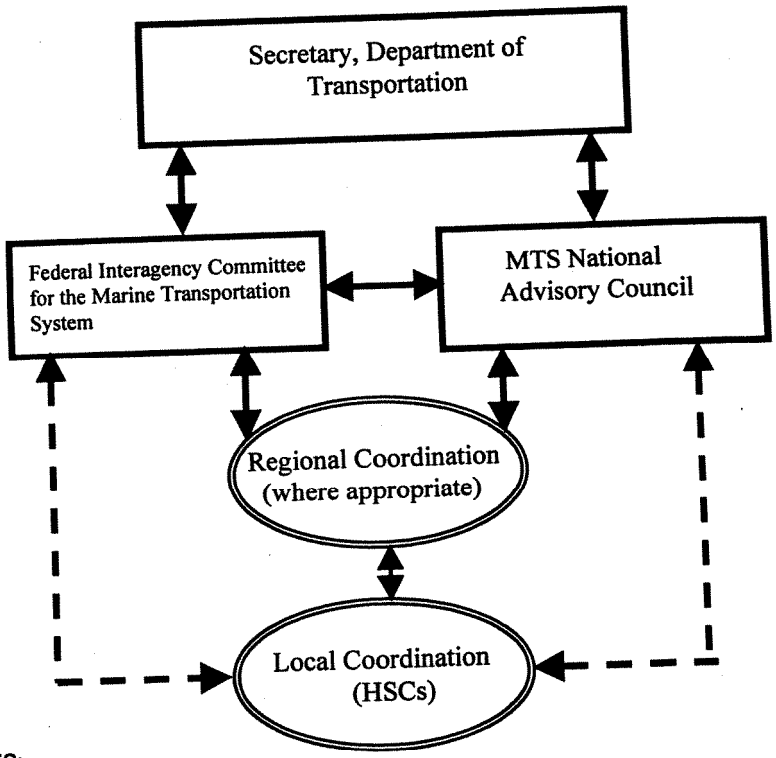
   Achievement of some of these recommendations hinges on local coordination while others will be initiated at the regional or national level, but will profit from input and/or awareness at the local level. These recommendations are designed to facilitate comprehensive management of the MTS. Therefore, it is important that existing and prospective HSCs be kept aware of how each of these recommendations affects the local MTS stakeholders. It is up to each HSC to decide how it will respond to the recommendations from the MTS Report. Local needs, issues and characteristics will determine which recommendations should be actively pursued and monitored by HSCs. The following summarizes some issues that call

for HSC and local coordination. These issues are exerts from chapter 6 of reference (a) and are listed in the same order as they are found in that report. Although local coordination is called for in each of the seven Action Areas listed in (2) above, most of the recommendations involving specific HSC involvement are located in *Safety and Environmental Protection*.

a. ***Coordination***: Improved coordination among the public and private MTS stakeholders at the local, regional and national level is a key element of the MTS envisioned by 2020. One coordination recommendation is to "Encourage the creation of Harbor Safety Committees and regional organizations, where appropriate, to address local concerns."

HSCs are first and foremost a principle building block in the National MTS Coordinating Structure. Local input and coordination are critical to achieving any future enhancement of our Marine Transportation System. Figure 1 shows how and where HSCs fit into the overall MTS coordinating structure and illustrates their intended lines of communication and connection.

Figure 1: ***Marine Transportation System Coordinating Structure***



NOTES:
1) Ovals contain groups with parallel functions and communication channels.
2) Dotted lines indicate alternate channels of communication.

b. ***MTS competitiveness and mobility***: As defined in the Report, "...mobility and competitiveness translate into a demand for intermodal services that provide speedy movement through the waterways, ports, and terminal transfer facilities to landside

transportation. Mobility and competitiveness also translate into a demand for ready access to the transportation information that is needed by all parties to the various transactions involved in trade."

- *Landside access to ports*:
  - "The proposed regional and local coordinating bodies can provide the forums to bring the ports, shippers, vessel operators, the landside transport modes, and governments together to address this issue."
  - "Encourage regional, state, and local planners to consider the benefits of an MTS that is an integral part of the local, state, and regional transportation system. This effort should consider reducing congestion by developing a smart transportation system, and encourage effective facility placement."

c. ***Improving awareness of the MTS***: The Report recommends, "State, local and private sector MTS stakeholders should give priority to promoting the overall value of the MTS through their existing trade associations and other outreach efforts. These stakeholders are encouraged to coordinate their efforts and message…[and] should also":

- "Employ new technology and develop effective communication tools designed to share best practices, personnel training, and collective approaches among the maritime user community and across government agencies;"
- "Develop programs and outreach efforts to promote the responsibility of the boater, mariner, and maritime professionals to improve MTS environmental soundness."

d. ***Information management and infrastructure***: Waterways Traffic Management Information: The Report recommends that the Coast Guard should:

- "Conduct port-specific assessments to determine the appropriate …information needs in each port. The port assessment should be conducted with the participation of all local port users…"
- "In collaboration with port stakeholders, investigate potential solutions to the voice communications problems…"
- "Continue to recommend upgraded information systems, with stakeholder participation."

e. ***Security***: The MTS Task Force concluded that many of the recommendations related to port MTS security will be considered by the Presidential Interagency Commission on Crime and Security in U.S. Seaports. It is likely that an HSC subcommittee on security can address items like terminal and ship vulnerability and threat assessments.

- Develop public/private sector MTS partnerships to establish security guidelines for onshore facilities, offshore facilities, and vessels. Implement incentive-based mechanisms to address MTS security vulnerabilities. The ICMTS and regional and

local coordinating bodies should be engaged on this issue. Participants should include USCG, USCS, DOD, MARAD, private sector organizations, State and local authorities, and labor organizations.

- Recommend cargo throughput practices that accommodate necessary security inspection while minimizing delay.

f. **Safety *and environmental protection***: Under this strategic area, HSCs are specifically called on to serve as local committees able "to pursue safety and environmental concerns related to the MTS and develop and execute collective actions," and it is envisioned that "the mission of the existing harbor safety committees or local planning groups could be expanded to conduct comprehensive assessments of local safety and environmental risks and needed actions." Safety and environmental protection issues include ship channel configuration, ship terminal interface, port/terminal development and operations including cargo handling, interaction of vessel traffic including ice navigation, vessel operations and the human element, pollution sources, non-indigenous species invasions, and recreational boating.

3. In addition to these recommendations, the ICMTS and MTSNAC are developing an MTS Implementation Plan. This plan identifies ongoing and planned activities to address the recommendations in reference (a), and can be used as a tool by HSCs .

E. Tools to Assist HSCs

1. **HSC National Web-site:**
   a. Communication and coordination among HSCs and between HSCs and the regional and national levels of the MTS Coordinating Structure is vital to local coordination of MTS issues. The Coast Guard has developed a National HSC Web-site, the "Harbor Safety Committees National Information Clearinghouse & Exchange," that will act as an information clearinghouse. The Internet address or URL for this Web-Site will be provided when the Portal becomes more fully developed. Horizontally, it will allow HSCs to access and share information. Vertically, it will allow a two way local, regional and national exchange of information. This has two major benefits:

   - It provides information sharing opportunities between HSCs, and
   - It allows important issues that cannot be resolved locally to be raised to the regional or national level

   b. The national web-site provides contact and general information for all HSCs and involved government agencies. An area is provided for HSCs to submit "best practices, success stories and lessons learned." Another area on the site will allow HSCs to elevate for "safety issues and concerns" to the national level. The site includes key word search

capability and provides a forum to pass information down to HSCs from the national and regional levels. This will include policy, surveys, help/tools, current issues and a library. Finally, there will be a links area for HSCs with home pages, and links to any other pertinent and/or interested organizations or agencies.

c. Current operational support technology used by HSCs includes letters, email, fax and telephone for correspondence and notification of upcoming meetings. However, the respondents polled in reference (c) universally endorsed the use of a Web page in some role, especially as a way to ease the administrative and informational needs of the stakeholders and to provide input to help them address and resolve issues. Additionally, outside interested parties currently may have a difficult time getting information regarding the HSC's activities, processes and recommendations. The Harbor Safety Committees National Information Clearinghouse & Exchange will assist in making the HSC's topics of concern and accomplishments available to the public, as well as to the national MTS coordinating structure.

2. **Risk Assessment/Management Tools:**
   a. A large portion of the recommendations from reference (a) require risk assessments to be conducted. This is especially true for recommendations under the Safety and Environmental Protection and Information Management and Infrastructure sections of reference (a). Additionally, many of the local stakeholders have realized the need for risk assessment and management tools to help their HSCs more effectively identify safety, security, mobility and environmental protection problems within their ports and waterways. The Coast Guard has identified a number of tools that can be applied to local waterways including the Waterways Evaluation Tool (WET), Ports and Waterways Safety Assessments (PAWSA), the Passenger Vessel Association Risk Guide, Risk-Based Decision-Making Guidelines (RBDM Guide, 1997 edition) and others. The RBDM Guide provides a broad assortment of tools that can be adapted to a variety of potential HSC needs and provides detailed guidance on how each is used. Some of these tools are still in development and others are already available to use and can be coordinated through the COTPs. Another resource is the Waterways Analysis and Management System (WAMS) coordinated through District Aids-to-Navigation and Waterways Management Branches. The Coast Guard will provide support to assist HSCs in adopting the most appropriate form of risk assessment for their areas.