

Area Maritime Security Committee
Port Business Operations Sub-Committee

Meeting Notes

June 26, 2008

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by Chair Lisa Himber, and participants introduced themselves. A list of attendees is attached to these minutes.

Ms. Himber introduced, Capt. David Scott, Captain of the Port and Federal Maritime Security Coordinator, who briefly outlined the make up of the AMSC and its sub-committees, and thanked the members for their interest, time, and willingness to participate. He specifically referenced the timeliness and relevance of the Committee's reengagement given the work underway with the Port Security Grant program and the Port-Wide Risk Mitigation/Business Continuity Plan currently under development.

2. AMSC Brief

A. Security Sensitive Information – Mr. Robert Ward, USCG Port Security Specialist, distributed copies of the relevant language from the Maritime Transportation Security Act regarding the handling of SSI and briefly outlined the rules for handling sensitive data. Relevant information is posted to the committee website.

B. Homeport demonstration – Mr. Ward also provided a brief demonstration of the Homeport website, showing how the AMSC pages are organized and specifically citing the areas where PBO Sub-Committee materials can be found. Note: all AMSC and sub-committee members are expected to register with Homeport. Anyone who continues to have problems with the site should contact Ms. Himber or Mr. Ward.

C. General AMSC Organization – In follow up to Capt. Scott's comments, Ms. Himber outlined the processes by which information is distributed to/from the AMSC main body, its Managing Board (MB) and the sub-committees. Specifically, the MB may ask a sub-committee to undertake a specific task or conversely, sub-committees may make recommendations for either the MB or another committee's consideration. The Managing Board ultimately has decision making authority for the AMSC, and its decisions are provided to the FMSC for review and final approval.

She also reviewed the meeting schedule, noting that the MB and general body meet during alternating months. The next MB meeting is July 25 at 0900; the next main meeting is August 8 at 0900. Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are held in the Coast Guard Multi-Purpose room. All AMSC members are welcome to participate in MB meetings, however only members are entitled to vote.

D. Review of Charter/Subcommittee Responsibilities – The AMSC Charter has been posted to the committee website and is available for review.

3. CG Information Sharing interview

Ms. Himber then discussed the fact that Coast Guard Headquarters is sending a team to conduct interviews with key Coast Guard personnel and port partners about Information Sharing (communications, quality of contact, and effectiveness of results) with the Coast Guard and the port community. Information from this meeting will be used in reports to DHS and Congress, as well as improving procedures and methods in the Coast Guard and ports.

As part of this process, the team has asked to meet with a small group of members of the PBO committee on July 23 from 1:00 – 1:45 pm. Messrs. Tom Johnston, Kurt Reichert, Kurt Ferry and Doug Nicol volunteered to participate in this meeting.

4. Committee Business

A. TWIC Issues – The Committee discussed the current state of the card enrollment process as well as the upcoming rulemakings and pilot program for the use of TWIC readers. The NMSAC “TWIC Discussion Items” document was also discussed and briefly reviewed. No formal action is required of the Committee until such time as a proposed rule for the reader is published.

B. Terminal-Agent Communications/Gate List – Mr. Jay Jones, South Jersey Port Corp., discussed some of the concerns regarding the processes and receipt of timely information from vessel agents about who will need facility access. After additional discussion, the group generally agreed that the gate list notification process has improved over the last few years, but all agreed that standardizing the protocol to the extent possible would be very helpful. Mr. Jones agreed to facilitate an effort to develop a standard for committee consideration.

C. Vessel Security Boardings (advance notice criteria) – Ms. Himber discussed the role of the Maritime Exchange Maritime Operations Committee and how it serves as a forum for the private sector port business community to interact with federal agencies to solved problems and identify opportunities for improvement as vessel, cargo and crew processing issues arise. The MOPs Committee has presented a recommendation to the PBO Committee on a “Trusted Agent” program wherein participants could be provided with advance notice when vessel security boardings were to take place.

After review, Mr. Russell Davis, CARISAM, suggested that rather than creating a new program, perhaps the information could simply be treated as SSI and subject to SSI rules. The group agreed, and the recommend this as the first choice with the “Trusted Agent” program as a second option. Members voted unanimously to approve the recommendations as amended. A copy of the revised recommendation is attached to these minutes.

D. Port Security Grant Program – Following on Capt. Scott’s earlier comments, Mr. Kurt Ferry, Greenwich Terminals and Chair of the AMSC Grants Sub-Committee, briefly outlined the requirements of the grant and the steps his committee is taking to facilitate applications by Delaware River port stakeholders.

In short, the grant requires that all projects funded meet the criteria outlined by DHS (e.g., help implement TWIC, improve maritime domain awareness, training, etc.) but that starting with the FY07 supplemental round and continuing into the FY08 grant program, all projects must have regional benefit. Unlike previous years when all applications were submitted to DHS, now applications will be made to the AMSC, which will evaluate the applications and submit them to DHS through a local Fiduciary Agent (the Maritime Exchange). As a result, the program is more collaborative rather than competitive.

When the regional Plan is complete, it will identify gaps in security the projects can be designed to fill. However, because there is such a short window between when the plan is completed and when budgets and investment justifications are due, there is very little time for potential partners to develop appropriate MOUs for cost sharing and other consideration. Mr. Ferry indicated that his committee is working to release information from the Plan as soon as possible, perhaps in July rather than in August when the Plan is finalized.

The group briefly discussed the types of projects that might be of benefit to the private sector stakeholders. Among these was the consideration of a regional electronic access control system, which all Committee members agreed would be an extremely beneficial project. However, due to the lack of time, no additional ideas were put on the table. Committee members are encouraged to submit other ideas for consideration.

Mr. Jones offered to take the lead on the development of an investment justification for a regional access control system; even if work cannot be completed in time for the current grant, the Committee can look to a future round for funding this project.

5. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12 noon.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa B. Humber
Committee Chair
June 30, 2008