

LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER WATERWAY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
(LMRWSAC), taken at the U.S. Coast Guard Sector New Orleans, 200 Hendee Street, New Orleans,
Louisiana 70114, on Wednesday, the 23rd of April, 2014.

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REPORTED BY:

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APPEARANCES:

CHERYL D. FELDER, Chair
ARNOLD ROTHSTEIN, Ingram Barge Company
CAPTAIN PETER GAUTIER
OLIE F. MORTON, Turn Services
ALAN J. SAVOIE, Marine Center, Inc.
CAPTAIN JOY M. MANTHEY, Licensed Mariner
CAPTAIN JAMES E. CRAMOND, Crescent City River Port Pilots Association
CAPTAIN JAIME COLON, Associated Federal Pilots and Docking Masters of Louisiana
MICHAEL R. LORINO, JR., Associated Branch Pilots
GEORGE E. DUFFY, NSA Agencies, Inc.
NICHOLAS YOKUM, Moran-Gulf Shipping Agencies
KARL C. GONZALES, Gulf South Marine Transportation, Inc.
JOHN F. FAY, Admiralty and Maritime Law
CHRISTIAN D. BONURA, Port of New Orleans
SHARON J. BALFOUR, Port of South Louisiana
OSCAR M. SMITH, Liaison for Port of South Louisiana
JOHN L. PENNISON, Port of Plaquemines
GEORGE C. WHITE, Port of Greater Baton Rouge
DIANE T. BAUM, Environmental Specialist
ZELAND D. DELOACH, Licensed Mariner.
APPEARANCES (CONTINUED):
KAREN [REDACTED], U.S. Coast Guard Auxillary
MICHELLE KORNICK, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
LT. CHRIS NORTON, U.S. Coast Guard
VICTOR LANDRY, USACE
DAVID GUARINO, Port of New Orleans
WILLIAM L. HEUER, VTC New Orleans
STEPHEN HATHORN, NOBRA
LOUIS WATTIGNEY, NOBRA
JIM STARK, GICA
MATT LAGARDE, AEP River Operations, MNSA/TSAC
ROBERT TURNER, SLFPA-E
WILLIAM FOGLE, SLFPA-W
JAMIE GATZ, U.S. Coast Guard, VTS-LMR
[REDACTED], U.S. Coast Guard Auxillary
JIM MURPHY, MARAD
BEN CURRY, Traylor Bros., Inc.
CLAIR STEWART, Massman Construction Company
TROY HOTARD, Florida Marine Transporters
TOM BURGESS, Louisiana LNG Energy
JIM LINDSAY, Louisiana LNG Energy
LCDR [REDACTED], U.S. Coast Guard

CDR [REDACTED], U.S. Coast Guard
CAPT PAUL SCHIFFLIN, U.S. Coast Guard
LCDR [REDACTED], U.S. Coast Guard, D8

APPEARANCES (CONTINUED):

[REDACTED], U.S. Coast Guard, D8
JIM OSBORN, NOAA
LTJG [REDACTED], U.S. Coast Guard

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MS. FELDER:

Good morning, everyone. Thank y'all for being here. It's been a little while since we had our last meeting, December of 2011. It took us a little while to get the charter renewed and the committee appointments made, but here we are, and that's great. So thank y'all very much for being here.

Let's go ahead -- before I start, I want to thank [REDACTED]. She has done a remarkable job, because there was a gap. She had no one before her, because David Chapman was long gone, to guide her and tell her what went on, what needed to happen, that kind of thing. And she's just done a great job, and I really appreciate it.

So thank you very much, Colin. Thank you. (Applause.)

MS. FELDER:

All right. Why don't we go ahead and start with introductions. I'll start with you, Captain Gautier.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Captain Pete Gautier, captain of the port.

MR. MORTON:

Frank Morton, director of Turn Services.

MR. DELOACH:

Z. David DeLoach, owner of DeLoach Marine Services in Port Allen.

MR. WHITE:

Courtney White, and I'm with the Port of Greater Baton Rouge.

MR. PENNISON:

John Pennison, deputy director of Plaquemines Port Authority.

MR. SMITH:

Mitch Smith, operations director, Port of South Louisiana.

MS. BALFOUR:

Sharon Balfour.

MR. BONURA:

Chris Bonura, director of industrial development for the Port of New Orleans.

MR. FAY:

John Fay. I'm the owner of the maritime law firm Fay, Nelson & Fay.

MS. FELDER:

Alan?

MR. SAVOIE:

Alan Savoie. It says Marine Center, but it's vice president, Cooper Consolidated.

CAPTAIN MANTHEY:

Joy Manthey. I'm a Captain with Kirby Inland Marine.

MR. COLON:

Jaime Colon, Federal Pilots, (p)resident.

MR. CRAMOND:

Jimmy Cramond. I'm the president of Crescent Pilots.

MR. LORINO:

Mike Lorino, Bar Pilots.

MR. DUFFY:

George Duffy, Maritime Services.

MR. GONZALES:

Karl Gonzales, executive vice president of Gulf South Marine and president of Greater New Orleans Barge Fleeting Association.

MR. ROTHSTEIN:

And last, but not least, Arnie Rothstein with Ingram Barge.

MS. FELDER:

Karen, would you like to --

MS. [REDACTED]:

[REDACTED], Coast Guard Auxillary.

MR. [REDACTED]:

Erston Reisch, Coast Guard Auxillary.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Jamie Gatz, Vessel Traffic.

MR. FOGLE:

Bill Fogle with Port Authority West.

MR. TURNER:

Bob Turner, Port Authority East.

MR. GUARINO:

David Guarino, captain, program manager for Port of New Orleans.

MR. LANDRY:

Vic Landry, Corps of Engineers.

MR. [REDACTED]:

[REDACTED], Prevention Chief, MSU Baton Rouge.

MS. KORNICK:

Michelle Kornick, Corps of Engineers.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

[REDACTED] District Eight, Waterways and Western Rivers.

MR. LAGARDE:

Matt Lagarde with AEP River Operations, the Maritime Navigation Safety Association, and TSAC.

MR. STARK:

Jim Stark, Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association.

MR. WATTIGNEY:

Toby Wattigney, NOBRA Pilots.

MR. HATHORN:

Steve Hathorn, NOBRA Pilots.

MR. HEUER:

Bill Heuer, Vessel Traffic Center, New Orleans.

MR. PETRAS:

George Petras, here with Vessel Traffic Services.

MR. MCDANIEL:

Jay McDaniel, Kirby Inland Marine, LOMRC chairman.

MR. AINSWORTH:

Ben Ainsworth, Port Captain, ARTCO St. Louis LOMRC co-chairman.

MR. WETHERINGTON:

Jim Wetherington, U.S. Coast Guard, District 8, Bridges.

MS. GAGLIANO:

Donna Gagliano, U.S. Coast Guard, District 8, Bridges.

MR. MEULLER:

Bob Meuller, Turn Services.

MR. LINDSAY:

Jim Lindsay, Louisiana LNG Energy.

MR. BURGESS:

Tom Burgess, Louisiana LNG Energy, and we have that LNG project at Mile Marker 46 on eastbank.

MR. HOTARD:

Troy Hotard, Florida Marine Transporters.

MR. STEWART:

Clair Stewart, Massman Construction.

MR. CURRY:

Ben Curry, Traylor Brothers Construction.

MR. MURPHY:

Jim Murphy, Maritime Administration.

LCDR [REDACTED]

Waterways.

MS. [REDACTED]:

U.S. Coast Guard D8, Waterways.

CAPT SHIFFLIN:

Phil Shifflin, Sector New Orleans, Deputy Sector Planner.

CDR [REDACTED]:

, Chief of Prevention Sector, New Orleans.

MS. FELDER:

All right. And I would like for us all just to pause for a moment to remember our good friend and colleague, Mike Rooney.

(Pause.)

MS. FELDER:

Thank you very much. At this time, I'd like to turn the show over to Captain Gautier, and I would also like to congratulate him on his selection to flag. That's great. So congrats.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Thank you very much, Cherrie. I'd like to add my warm words of welcome as well to this LMRWSAC meeting. The last time we had a LMRWSAC meeting, in reading the last minutes, I was brand-new here at the sector, and that was over two years ago. So the good news is for folks who don't like to go to meetings, we haven't had one in a while. But the good news is also that I don't think we've had real pressing items, weighty items of interest in terms of regulatory matters on the Lower Mississippi River for some time.

And so, therefore, we haven't had a stacked up agenda that -- where we really needed to have a meeting in the intervening years between now and then. So that's good news as well, but it's good news that's we're meeting here today after quite a long time with some really good agenda items in order to tackle here moving forward.

The Coast Guard really appreciates having a representational group of professionals that represent a cross section of the maritime industry interests on the Lower Mississippi River to help advise us in some of these key regulatory matters that we do need to look at moving forward.

The Mississippi River is a complex, dynamic system. Things never remain the same. There are potential bills that are being addressed in Congress which may have impacts in terms of depth and operations on the river, where this group would be important in order to address safety concerns stemming from those, and so on.

So I think this body, notwithstanding the meeting schedule that we've had recently, is an important one that the Coast Guard cherishes moving forward.

I would like to thank the Crescent pilots for the donuts and water and the sandwiches that they provided outside as well, so please take advantage of those.

And I will leave it at that and then turn it over to Colin for some safety and some other administrative issues.

LTJG [REDACTED]:

Good morning, everyone. I'm Lieutenant Junior Grade [REDACTED]. I've worked with a lot of you, through my waterways management function here, and then a lot of you are familiar with me through my persistent e-mails. So thank you for helping me get this up and running.

Just to note for the committee, in the front of your binder, there is a no-lobbyist form that I'll need signed and returned to me before you part today. And then everyone in the audience and on the committee has the agenda, the membership list of the committee, and the minutes from the previous meeting, and the charter.

Also, there is a packet of slides floating around, so if you want to pass them around and take a look at those.

As the captain said, there's refreshments outside. Please help yourself. The restrooms are just down the hall, right past the vending machines on the left side. And, obviously, there's an exit out through the lobby, through this lobby, and outside here.

So with that being said --

CAPT GAUTIER:

[REDACTED], I believe I have one -- I have one more administrative item that's required in the procedures of this body. I need to read a statement, and it says, "As stated in this agenda, at this meeting we will be reviewing a list of issues that you can see on the agenda itself. None of these issues is a particular matter for the purposes of the criminal conflict of interest statute."

I can answer -- or I can attempt to answer any questions after the meeting what that statement means, but nevertheless, that's what's required. Thanks.

MS. FELDER:

Thank you very much. The first item on the agenda really is the approval of the minutes from the December 6, 2011, meeting. As Colin said, they are in your binders, and --

MR. GONZALES:

Move.

MS. FELDER:

Thank you, Karl.

MR. DUFFY:

Second.

MS. FELDER:

Second, George Duffy. All in favor, "aye."

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

MS. FELDER:

Any opposed? (No response.)

MS. FELDER:

No. Great. And I'd like to thank [REDACTED] for transcribing the 100-plus pages of court reporter notes into something that we can all read and understand. So thank you, Karen, very much. Appreciate that.

Okay. We're going to move on to agency updates and start with the Coast Guard, Lieutenant

[REDACTED].

LT [REDACTED]

I'm back.

MS. FELDER:

I was wondering.

LT [REDACTED]:

Good morning, everyone.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Good morning.

MS. FELDER:

Good morning.

LT [REDACTED]:

I've been here now for about three years, so I'm seeing a lot of familiar faces in here. I worked -- been a chief of prevention up in Baton Rouge.

I've been able to work with a lot of people in this room over the last three years, and just to give -- since we hadn't met in a while, just to give you a background, we have an annual meeting up in Baton Rouge after high water to talk about lessons learned.

It usually every year is October/November time frame, and we discuss lessons learned to see how we can improve the **Waterways Action Plan, and this year we had a really productive meeting.**

We actually had less changes. As the years progress, there's less and less changes happening to the WAP. The meeting was on November 21st of last year. We had 12 towing companies represented.

We also had representative -- Ms. Cherrie Felder here was via phone conference, representative of MARSEC. We had a LOMRC chairman and co-chairman on scene. We had GICA represented. We had

Army Corps of Engineers represented with the Port Allen and the Bayou Sorrel lock masters. VTS New Orleans was represented.

And we had -- we only had five small changes to the Waterways Action Plan this year, and I'm going to break it down by geographical location.

The first is the Port Allen lock. What we did at the -- what everybody proposed changed as a -- as a 33-foot trigger. There was proposed change to allow northbound vessels exiting the lock if they had approval through VTS and they were using the towing assist vessel.

Instead of going south and topping around at Mile Marker 221 to head north again, if it was clear and they were given approval from VTS, they could exit the lock using the towing assist vessel and turn north and immediately head north. And that was a change that was made -- or proposed change at the 33-foot trigger.

At the 35-foot trigger at the Port Allen lock, we put that same requirement in place. So as long as you're exiting the lock with the approval from VTS, that it's clear that you have enough time to come out the lock and exit to head north, you're allowed to do so.

For northbound traffic, from Wilkerson Point, though, during that time period, it's closed to traffic. You can only go Wilkerson Point southbound during daylight ops only. So northbound traffic is only for during nighttime. So you'd have to go down and hold up in that situation.

The next geographical location is Wilkerson Point. At Wilkerson Point we never had a 30-foot trigger. Everything took place at 28-foot. So the recommendation that was brought to the subcommittee this year was to kind of split the 28-foot requirements up and kind of split them up into two. So we'd have a 28-foot trigger, and now we'd have a 38 -- I mean a 30-foot trigger.

So at 28, everybody gets together on a phone call. We discuss what the river's doing. If it's on a rapid rise, we can put those requirements in place, but if not, we'll wait to 30. And those requirements at the 30-foot trigger would be the same requirements that was before at 28 feet. We would just require a maximum tow of 36 feet -- I mean 36 barges and 240 horsepower per tow.

And another thing we added was to allow an 8,000-horsepower tug to push a 35-barge tow. It's 400 horsepower less than the requirement. But that exemption is -- already into WAP at all the positions above and a 35-foot trigger, and a 40-foot trigger, and a 43-foot trigger, for whatever barges that was in place. But for some reason it was left out at the 30-foot trigger, so we put that in place.

The next location I can go to is 81 Mile Point. At 81 Mile Point there was a trigger. At the 40-foot trigger, there was a restriction in place for us to issue an advisory. That advisory was for -- to tell all northbound traffics to stay 3- to 400 feet off the left descending bank when transiting around 81 Mile Point, but that advisory was left out at the 35-foot trigger.

So last year we had a lot of problems with northbound vessels heading up around 81 Mile Point getting caught in that eddy and getting sucked in and grounded.

So all we did, we took the 40-foot trigger advisory and we added to a 35-foot advisory, and maybe that would reduce the groundings around 81 Mile Point.

And the last change to the WAP was in the Bayou Sorrel high-water section. There was verbiage in there stating maintain no discernable weight no more than 1 inch.

Well, we thought the 1 inch was a little out there, so we just took the 1 inch out and just, you know, maintain speeds to -- maintain slowest safest speeds and reduce weight when traveling through Bayou Sorrel.

And then an addition we added to the WAP was GICA and Army Corps of Engineers came up with locking protocols for when Algiers lock was down, and we had a lot of traffic through the Bayou Sorrel area.

So we added an appendix to our Waterways Action Plan with that protocol in the back. That way, in the future, if the Algiers locks or one of the other major locks closed down again and we have high congestion in that area, we have something in writing that worked before, that when everybody in this room is -- or especially me, gone into my next unit -- somebody will be able to pick up the WAP, look what was used and worked, so we're not starting from ground zero all over again.

And then the only other changes is we -- as of March, we had a new -- we have a new chairman and co-chairman for LOMRC. Jay McDaniel from Kirby Marine is the chairman, and Ben Ainsworth from ARTCO is the co-chairman, and those small changes will be made.

And that's all the changes we had from Baton Rouge.

MS. FELDER:

Who was the co-chair? I'm sorry.

LT [REDACTED]:

Ben Ainsworth.

Is there any questions for me?

MR. DELOACH:

I just have a comment about when we put all those high water action plans regarding Port Allen lock together -- and it started sometime in the '90s -- we hadn't seen a ship in the general anchorage in about 20 years, and I've already had a couple of boats complaining about the ships in the general anchorage this year when they're coming out of the Port Allen lock, that they might be a little wider than they could be.

And, Alan, I don't know how that will affect your fleet, if they could move in some, but we might want to have some conversations with the NOBRA pilots and ask them if they can tug those ships in a little closer to the Westbank.

MR. SAVOIE:

How far down below the bridge do they go?

MR. DELOACH:

Below the bridge?

MR. SAVOIE:

Yeah.

MR. DELOACH:

It's probably around the -- the picture that someone sent, it's kind of hard to say exactly where the ship was, but it's probably around the upper to the middle end of your fleet, but he's about midway of the river. I don't know exactly where the edge of the anchorage is, but he was probably on the channel side of it.

And it just gives some of those guys coming out of the locks and going southbound heartburn when they have to shove out past that ship and then come back around --

LT [REDACTED]:

Okay. Yeah, that's --

MR. DELOACH:

-- the Port Allen lock.

LT [REDACTED]:

That's definitely something we could do.

MR. DELOACH:

Just something that needs to be discussed.

LT [REDACTED]:

Yeah, I think Steve and (inaudible) after this, and we can get together and --

MALE SPEAKER:

Z., has it been a big issue, or it's just once in a while?

MR. DELOACH:

There you are. I was looking for you.

I've had two boats make comments, and it's not that it was causing a problem, but they just said if those ships would move in just a little bit, it would be a whole lot --

MALE SPEAKER:

And we're talking about when the river's up --

MR. DELOACH:

Yeah.

MALE SPEAKER:

-- not when it's low?

MR. DELOACH:

Yeah. And I understand when the river's down low, you can't get in too close on that bar. But when the river starts giving you a little leeway --

MALE SPEAKER:

I had a comment too. It may have been overlapped with the ones C.J. got --

LT [REDACTED]:

Right.

MALE SPEAKER:

-- but I do get the same complaint.

MALE SPEAKER:

We can address it.

MALE SPEAKER:

Yeah, I'd get with Steve, and then we can get some people together, and we'll discuss it and see what it triggers. We'll start those recommendations and put them in place.

MS. FELDER:

Any other questions?

(No response.)

MS. FELDER:

No.

Thank you so much. Appreciate it.

██████████, you ready to talk to us about the RNA?

LCDR ██████████:

I think so.

MS. FELDER:

It is our rule.

LCDR ██████████:

It is. It is.

Good morning, everyone. ██████████. I've been here for three years. Obviously, got to work with a lot of you also, so it's great seeing you all here.

It's kind of interesting, because as Captain Gautier said at the last LMRWSAC meeting in December, I had been here for about six months, and at the end of that, Mark Wright had made a recommendation about something called the RNA, the hurricane RNA, and Captain Arenstam told me that -- kind of take point on that.

And I didn't realize at the time how many challenges that was going to be, and it's been a lot of work from the work group and industry and the Army Corps.

And so it's been great, and I'm happy to announce today that in -- actually April fools, so it's not a joke -- that that was signed by the district admiral.

So we're real pleased about the progress and all the work that all of you helped us in making that happen.

For those of you who may not be quite familiar with that, after, obviously, the devastating effects of Katrina and Gustav with the city flooding, et cetera, the Coast Guard partnered with the State and the Army Corps and our local industry in trying to create a unique regulated navigation area on the canals. That's the Westbank, Algiers, and Harvey, and obviously on the Eastbank, the IHNC, Lake Pontchartrain, the locks, et cetera, kind of going out to the new surge barrier and a little bit past that.

What we're going to do in there, how we're going to mitigate risk, so that's essentially what this long process has been, is how we're going to do that, and basically all the floating vessels need to get out of there unless you meet certain criteria.

So over the last several years we had an interim rule, followed by a supplemental rule to open up a comment period; and after a lot of work, we've finally finalized with a final rule that we have in place right now.

As I said, that was signed by the district admiral April 1st. It is in effect. We are going to enforce that this year. We know we need to be a little bit flexible because of the signing that just happened.

What you will see today, or early tomorrow, the Coast Guard's going to send out the Marine Safety Information Broadcasts, just pointing you in the right direction, telling you where that final rule's at. It's in the Federal Registry, but we're also going to have it on our home board.

So you guys can go there and just read it in its entirety, and of particular interest is just all the comments. And we did get some comments on that, several comments, and we took a lot of time to try to address those.

I would point out just a great effort working with the Army Corps on this. One of the comments that we had at the beginning of this three years is that they really want to see the Coast Guard and the Army Corps work closer together.

And I can really attest to the value that they've provided in this and the time that they have been working with us on that.

So just real quickly, that RNA is the 33 CFR 165.838. So it's 838. It's the same reference that has been in the interim rule and the supplemental.

And essentially, what I had said, it requires all floating vessels to leave the canals and meet unless you meet certain criteria.

And just in brief, those criterias are, on the west side, certification by a professional engineer indicating mooring arrangements, will withstand winds of 140 miles per hour, surge water levels of 8, current of 4, and a wave height of 2.5.

Obviously, with the flood protection systems now, we don't have to have surge levels of 10 and 11 feet like they were before. So we had to take all that into account, which was one of the primary reasons we were needing to finalize our rule, because we now have the flood protection system, the perimeter system around us.

On the east side, same thing; certification by professional engineer of up to 140 miles per hour, water levels of 11 feet, currents of 4 miles per hour, and wave heights of 3 feet in the RNA.

And those parameters were given to us in a collaborative effort with the Army Corps of Engineers based upon certain height walls -- I walls, T walls -- flood potential, rainfall amounts over a 24-hour period; and we feel that those certainly greatly reduce risk.

Continuing, in the annual hurricane operations -- well, let me go back. That's what we're going to require, is for all of those facilities in that area to submit an annual hurricane operation plan, of which the Coast Guard will review.

And continuing on in that plan, a description of number of vessels at the facility location, a detailed plan for any vessels which will be sunken or grounded in place in the event of the RNA enforcement, a diagram of the facility or fleeting area, name, call sign, official number, your operational status, et cetera, vessel characteristics, 24-hour contacts, et cetera.

Also, in addition to the professional engineer certification, we want to be able just to have full insurance disclosure to captain and port when requested, similar to like a cop asking you to show us your insurance, make sure that we're all covered, et cetera.

Compliance, weekly inspections during hurricane season, maintain some facility records of your inspections, and there's also compliance with on-scene tugboat requirements for an approaching tropical storm. Essential, if you have eight or more vessels, it's one tug, up to fifty.

Most of those things you have seen in the supplemental. They've been out there for quite a while. But that's essentially what's in there, what's required.

And when I send out the MSIB, you'll have that location, you go through it, and you'll get more details of specifically what we're looking for. And the Coast Guard's going to be working with you on those.

I'm leaving this summer. I'm actually leaving fairly soon. Lieutenant Commander Jamie Gatz, who's been here for a year, who's now the vessel traffic center director, he's going to be assuming my job, so he's going to be working closely with you. So there will be some real good continuity in all that we have worked over, you know, the past three years.

So when those hurricane operation plans come in, Jamie will be heading that up. We've got folks that are going to take point in the west.

Talking on that, just so you know, this year, as far as when the -- starting in the hurricane season, the Coast Guard will be partnering with the Army Corps again, as well as the Flood Protection Authorities, East and West. We'll be doing our joint monthly patrols together.

So we're out there. We're partnering together. We know what's on there. We've got a real-time snapshot of what's there. The Army Corps will also play a role, and when we get those plans, we want to make sure that they're looking at our plans and we're not missing something.

So I think that's a real good thing that has come in the last three years, is that we're working together on those patrols, so that when something bad's happened or we have a tropical event approaching, we kind of know what's out there.

Another thing that the Army Corps has really helped us on is we do a throughput analysis. So when we go out there, we get a real accurate count of what's on the water and how long it would take to lock those vessels out, so that every month we kind of have a real-time analysis of what we're looking at, and so we can get those vessels out there very quick.

So, in short, that's kind of the RNA. Are there any questions?

MS. FELDER:

I would just ask -- I think so far, even though it hasn't been a final rule, but everybody's been complying with it. I mean, is it working pretty well? Are folks cooperative?

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Yes, Cherrie, it sure has.

And, in fact, during Isaac we did that. During Tropical Storm Karen we were able to work real well together, making that happen.

Isaac provided a lot of good lessons learned that we've implemented, and we've actually established a few small work groups on that with, particularly, like the fishing vessels coming in through the west closure complex and how we can work better at that.

So those were successes, and nothing's ever perfect when you're dealing with all those moving parts, but I'm just really proud of the work that industry and the levee protection and the Army Corps -- how we work together, and I'm looking forward to continue to partner with that.

MS. FELDER:

Thank you.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Great.

MS. FELDER:

Anyone have any questions for -- no.

Great. Thank you very much.

Electronic navigation, Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED], making her way to the front.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Good morning, everyone. I'd like to welcome you on behalf of Captain John Arenstam. He has very few weeks left here at the Coast Guard. He's retiring in May. We're definitely sad to see him go, with his wealth of knowledge for western rivers and New Orleans and the district.

So if you have a chance to see him before he retires, wish him good luck and farewell.

In May, Captain Chris Palmer, who is our district prevention officer, will assume the duties of the Western Rivers and Waterways Management Office.

So today I'm here to just kind of touch the top of the subject on e-Navigation, on our projects and how we're working with Coast Guard headquarters to work on an e-Navigation system.

And I know that you've probably heard a little bit about e-Navigation as virtual buoys and that sort of thing, but when we're talking about e-Navigation, we're always also talking about broadcasting or taking stuff that would be in our Local Notice to Mariners or Broadcast Notice to Mariners and making that available on whatever you're using on your -- in your pilot houses to receive AINS information.

So -- and there's an example. It's overlaid on a raster chart, but if you could think of these on an electronic chart where there would be a symbol that would talk about navigation that is out or it would have a defined area or a temporary restricted area.

I know our friends on the West

Coast in San Francisco during the America's Cup used electronic navigation zones to help define where ships couldn't go during -- around sailing areas. So that was very successful for them.

Really, what we're looking for is what we can do to improve our dissemination of information using what we have for electronics to take the local -- the issues in the local notice and the broadcast notice, and also information from NOAA and the Army Corps -- maybe depths of channels, current information for NOAA, and that sort of thing -- and bring all that information together in one place for your vessel operators.

Some of the other things that you might find would be captain of the port order information, restrictions that might come out of the Waterways Action Plan at certain gauges. That's the kind of thing we're looking to incorporate into e-Navigation and the information systems.

Next slide.

Thank you.

Just a basic on actual AIS ATON, so this is the E-ATON. There's three types of E-ATONs. The first is real AIS ATON.

So that's taking -- let's say we'll take a buoy, and putting an AIS unit on that's actually broadcasting the signal from that aid. And some -- you know, that's an -- the disadvantages of that is what if we lose the aid, then we lose the AIS.

And that's where we come into this new synthetic and virtual AIS ATON. Synthetic, in using the AIS network, the AIS towers, there will be a physical marker, whether it be a dayboard or a buoy or something out there, that's actually physically in the water, and then we're also broadcasting through the AIS system onto your -- whatever you're using to receive AIS information, the symbol for the electronic.

So if for some reason we lose the physical aid, some sort of ATON outage that's high water, low water, that that E-ATON will still be there in the position that the real ATON will be there as well.

And then we also have virtual ATON, and that is where there is no physical buoy there, and you can see the different ways that it's marked on the E-charts. So that's just a little picture of that.

There are -- right now we're doing a testing phase -- actually, the entire Coast Guard is working to do some testing and feedback on our AIS ATON. In the District 8 area, we have 20 on the lower, marking either bridge piers, so that would be a virtual AtoN where there's no ATON -- no physical ATON there, but it would be a bridge pier -- or synthetic, where it's overlaid on top of the physical buoy, is what you'll see on your AIS receiver.

Right now we have -- on the Highway 190 bridge at Mile Marker 233.9, we're marking bridge piers. On the I-10 at Mile Marker 229.3 we have synthetic buoys marking -- over the actual bridge approach buoys. On the Sunshine we have synthetic buoys over the bridge approach buoys. The Gramercy Bridge, also marking bridge piers. The Hale Boggs Luling Bridge piers are marked, and the Huey P., I believe those are the approach buoys that are marked there.

But we have a Local Notice to Mariners running right now that explains exactly what's out there, explains their light-list numbers, and the light list has been updated to reflect those AtoNs in the system.

But the Local Notes to Mariners has an e-mail. We're requesting feedback. We'd love to know if this helps, if it hurts, you know, how are you using it; especially on the bridge piers, because now you're getting approach information in your AIS to, like -- to gauge where you're coming into those bridge piers. So we're wondering if that's helpful at all while navigating.

We also have over in our -- sorry. I'm ahead of myself.

In Calcasieu, we have a range that we're having trouble rebuilding, and as a kind of a mitigator, until we can get the range rebuilt, we did synthetic ATON over the front range, front range rear, so we're looking for feedback on that one too.

But we understand that a physical range -- we understand the reason for the physical range, but this is just to help until we can get that range put back together.

The final thing, on May 7th at the Port of New Orleans auditorium, we're having a navigation listening session. We'll have members of the Army Corps, NOAA, and the Coast Guard who are all working together to figure out the best way to use technology to bring all this information together in a useful manner so that our operators can use the waterways safely.

We're not really looking for a discussion on the physical aids to navigation that are there or dredging or that sort of thing, but we really want to know what would be useful to you. With the technology that's out there, what is your company bringing in as far as technology, and what can we provide to you to help you with that technology, and what just won't work. That's what we're looking for.

So I hope to see people there, and we're really looking for some great feedback, and I'm looking forward to working together to get information out on E-AtoN and get feedback back.

Does anyone have any questions?

MR. HATHORN:

On the Crescent City Connection, what kind of AIS targets do you have? You have them on the approach buoys you said or --

LCDR [REDACTED]:

I don't believe --

MR. HATHORN:

-- or do you have --

LCDR [REDACTED]:

-- we have any on the Crescent City Connection.

MR. HATHORN:

I was just wondering because what we're seeing is you can see the piers on the chart -- on the actis (phonetic)[ECDIS] and our laptops, you actually see the piers. On the other positions you see the buoys, I think, the virtual buoys or --

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Okay. That's something I can take a look at.

MR. HATHORN:

Okay. I was supposed to pass this on to Chief [REDACTED], I believe. He wanted a -- he was looking for feedback.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Oh, yeah, he sure was, yeah. Yeah, I mean, actually, we're interested to see -- to know what you're actually seeing out there. That would be great.

MR. HATHORN:

How does that work, the piers come up; is that in the software, or that's nothing you --

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Okay. So if it's actual pier on the -- yeah, that's the -- whoever made the chart --

MR. HATHORN:

That's the --

LCDR [REDACTED]:

-- is putting the pier on there.

It's supposed to --

MALE SPEAKER:

Steve, that's going to be the ENC --

MR. HATHORN:

Okay.

MALE SPEAKER:

-- and that's what we need to take care of, and. I think that's why her hosting this mass session on the 7th is going to be good, because you want to make sure everything is uniformly applied.

MR. HATHORN:

Yeah, I didn't think --

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Yeah.

MALE SPEAKER:

When is the session? When?

LCDR [REDACTED]:

It is --

MS. FELDER:

May 7th, from 9:00 to 11:30 at the Port of New Orleans.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

If I could also just plug that meeting, I know I talked with Captain Arenstam, and he had made the mention -- and I know you've heard it -- a lot of times the Coast Guard just kind of comes out and says, "This is what we're going with."

The purpose of this is to really gain, from the mariner, your expertise in what you need and what you see, et cetera.

So I'd just really like to plug that meeting also. I think it's real important if you could try to make that, because your input is really going to be sought.

MS. FELDER:

How else are you getting the word out about this meeting? I guess, what audience are you really wanting to be there?

LCDR [REDACTED]:

I think there is a message out in the local. If it's not --

MALE SPEAKER:

It's not.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

-- it's intended to go out this week.

MS. FELDER:

Okay.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

But we can push an e-mail out through --

CAPT GAUTIER:

We can push it out to the Safety

Council and the LMRWSAC media list and --

MS. BALFOUR:

Same day as --

MR. CRAMOND:

Right.

MR. DELOACH:

Did I miss something or was there some sort of a notice that went out about -- that you actually do have the electronic buoys in place now, because I sit on the committee; I didn't even know you had them in. Last we talked about, you were discussing where to put them.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

They were -- it was done through a local.

MR. DELOACH:

Okay.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

I got the "hurry up and do it" from headquarters push, so we went ahead and got them out there and --

MR. DELOACH:

No problem. I was just --

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Yeah.

MR. DELOACH:

I think that --

CAPT GAUTIER:

This is like in the last week.

FEMALE SPEAKER:

Yes, sir.

MR. DELOACH:

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-- we may want to get --

LCDR [REDACTED]:

It's been a week.

MR. DELOACH:

-- like the Waterways Journal or someone and tell them about this so they can write a story and let industry know so we can tell our boat captains look for them, because if we don't -- if I don't know it on the shore and I'm not asking questions, I'll never find out.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Sure.

MR. DELOACH:

And then is there any other consideration -- further conversation about putting some on the Morgan City bridges? I see you got them on Calcasieu river now, and there was an issue because that was a different system, but now you got them there.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

I'd love an e-mail from you, and I'll -- as many as headquarters will let me test is what we'll try and do. So if --

MR. DELOACH:

Okay. The GPS guy in Morgan City said he would love to have those.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Well, that's my question and comment, is great for the listening session and great to have kind of a prototype. What's the plan, though, when you get feedback? Is it foreseeable that we will have these virtual aids up on when we can use more buoy systems and things moving forward?

LCDR [REDACTED]:

I think that's a -- Captain, I think that's a discussion that we're wanting to have at the listening session to see if that would be helpful.

MALE SPEAKER:

Captain, that's a great issue.

The answer is absolutely, yes, but how we're going to control and manage and make, just like you're talking about, people aware of where they are, how they're operating, where the need is, I think is part of this listening session, is to start a process to go forward.

I mean, honestly, I think the synthetic and the virtual systems are something that are going to be a tremendous resource, but it's going to have to be folded into the regular process of waterways management, both at the captain, the port level, as well as the district level, and I think this is a great opportunity on May 7th to start that discussion.

MR. DELOACH:

So if someone from the Waterways Journal contacts you, you can talk to them?

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Sure.

MR. DELOACH:

I'll get them to call you.

MR. DUFFY:

The following question is: How much funding do you have for this? I mean, is it unlimited, that you can put that it's recommended by industry and by a joint -- or are you only going to have a certain amount that you can put out?

LCDR [REDACTED]:

We don't know yet, because this is all a testing phase, and it's run from headquarters.

MS. FELDER:

Can't imagine.

CAPT GAUTIER:

I don't know the answer to that question, but the good thing is it's a matter of keystrokes and not infrastructure.

MR. DUFFY:

That's what I was getting at.

MS. FELDER:

Any other questions? Comments?

MR. PETRAS:

I've got two areas of concern. One would be this e-Navigation, it looks like, is a discussion mainly about AIS, and right now the only vessels that are required to carry AIS are those that are participating in a VTS area, and it's not out in other areas of the waterway throughout the Eighth District, or even within the sector.

And the second piece on that would be a standardization of electronic display systems onboard those vessels.

And I think those are two critical points that need to be addressed somewhere along the line, whether it's within this advisory committee or at that listening session. Those are two key critical gaps that I think need to be closed before we start looking at where these things are going to go.

MS. FELDER:

Thanks, George.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Certainly, those are two very good points.

MS. FELDER:

Bring those up at the listening session. It sounds like we need to do that.

Very good. Thank you very much.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Thank you.

0056

MS. FELDER:

Lieutenant Commander Gatz, you want to come up and talk to us about our anchorages, mile points?

LTJG [REDACTED]:

If I may, just one more admin item I didn't mention earlier. Just to assist in collecting minutes and that kind of thing, when making a comment or asking a question, if you could just state your name, that would be very helpful.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Good morning. My name is Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED]. I'm a vessel traffic services director for the Lower Mississippi River.

My presentation will cover the status of the Bayou Goula and Belmont Anchorage proposals and the status of the tower and sensor suite for an 81 Mile Point special area.

Bayou Goula anchorage was put out for comment, and the comments that came back was that there are pipelines in the crossing there and a revetment that the anchorage would have been sitting over.

So for those reasons, the anchorage was not -- we did not proceed forward with the anchorage, and -- but it would have supported two ships. The lower spot would have supported one deep-draft vessel, and the upper would have supported one light-draft vessel.

The anchorage was intended to help shippers provide -- by providing two additional anchorage spots aside from the two at White Castle between Burnside and Baton Rouge anchorages, which are nearly 60 miles apart.

From a VTS perspective, having overage anchorage spots is a critical -- it's critical for marine casualty response.

What this means to us is that if we have a marine casualty, aside from the two White Castle anchorage spots, if they are filled, a vessel may have to travel a longer distance, up to 60 miles, before it's able to safely anchor inside of an anchorage for repairs or further inspection.

The next slide.

Belmont Anchorage. The Belmont Anchorage was approved on February 20th of 2013. The anchorage supports three light-draft vessels and the combination of loss of the Reserve Anchorage due to fleeing, the increased vessel traffic at Zeno, Convent, and Nucor brought the need for additional anchorage space to the forefront.

Now, the fleeing that was put inside the Reserve Anchorage, it's not really a loss. The NOBRA points still use it, but in order to use it, they keep a pilot onboard, and it's really an emergency anchorage, from what I understand. It's due to the lay of the Reserve Anchorage and the way the fleeing -- they don't work well together.

All right. Next slide.

At 81 Mile Point, this is one of our special areas in the VTS. Currently, the only sensor we have at 81 Mile Point is VHF and AIS.

A tower that's being installed will add to that an additional AIS receiver, a VHF antenna, a radar, and closed-circuit television. This will bring it in line with what we have at Algiers Point, which has been very successful for the most part, and this helps assist our vessel traffic operators in controlling traffic during high water and preventing accidents.

The status of the tower -- just got off the phone with CEU Miami, and that's the Civil Engineering Unit overseeing the project. They're in the final stages of approving -- we have all the state and federal approvals we need for it, and in early May of this year, CEU Miami's going to give the contractor the notice to proceed, which will start the -- their time to complete the project.

Following that, we need to install all of the electronics that I mentioned earlier, the electronics suite, the sensor suite onto the tower.

So this tower, this sensor suite, this upgrade to the waterway, is in the near future.

Next slide.

And this is a diagram of the tower. It's 120 feet tall. The electronics will be housed inside of a concrete building that will be elevated approximately 20 feet above grade, and it will be installed with a gen-up (phonetic), a back-up generator, and fuel supply.

And with that, I open it up for comments or questions.

MS. FELDER:

Questions?

Alan?

MR. SAVOIE:

Alan Savoie, Cooper Consolidated.

Do you think the tower will be in effect by end of this year?

LCDR [REDACTED]

It's a very good possibility.

MR. COLON:

█████, I have a question -- I think we talked about earlier. Algiers Point, and maybe over on -- the Crescent guys can comment on it -- the VHF for communicating. I mean, are we looking into that or -- there seems to be problems communicating with other vessels in that area.

LCDR █████:

There definitely is. What I've heard is that there's interference caused possibly by the bridges in the area, but I don't know of a study that's been done to determine what the problem is there.

I know that our controllers oftentimes relay traffic --

MR. COLON:

Right.

LCDR █████:

-- across the point to facilitate communications. But that is a key thing, and I am looking into it.

MR. COLON:

But we don't know what time --

MS. FELDER:

Did this start recently or not --

MALE SPEAKER:

0062

It's been for a long time.

MR. DELOACH:

It's going to go on for a long -- goes all the way down through Valero.

MR. COLON:

Right. Yeah.

MR. DELOACH:

Used to think it was the high

lines. Now --

MS. FELDER:

You know our logic.

MR. COLON:

Right. And it's been going on forever, and it's just something that, I don't know if fixable or -- you know what I mean -- because it is a problem.

LCDR █████:

Right.

MR. COLON:

And some days it's fine, and then some days you can't talk to anyone. So it may be just something --

CAPT GAUTIER:

Well, is that something that we want to include in for business, just so we can keep that as a topic of conversation?

MR. COLON:

You know, and VTS does a great job of relaying -- relaying them, you know, passing agreements and -- but it's not good that you can't talk to a vessel, you know.

LCDR █████:

Right.

MS. FELDER:

We may need to revive our old communications committee from many, many years ago when they had all the interference issues and all that, so we may need to revise that.

MR. COLON:

And like I said, some -- some days it's fine, and some days you just can't -- go ahead.

MALE SPEAKER:

Captain Colon, Cherrie, you're exactly right. There's always been -- we've identified that there is an issue in New Orleans. I think it is like the dirtiest place with regards to ability to communicate on VHF.

And there's a study out there. It was done in the '70s. Maybe we can call our FCC folks to the next meeting and definitely ask for some advice on a way ahead of that.

And, again, that study was old. I think it's like the '60s --

MS. FELDER:

Yeah.

MALE SPEAKER:

-- '70s, but it identified those exact same issues that you're talking about, Captain Colon.

So definitely, a working group to address that on the side, that's something that we shouldn't wait --

MS. FELDER:

Ad hoc group.

MALE SPEAKER:

-- for six months or -- absolutely, absolutely.

MS. FELDER:

Okay.

0065

MR. LAGARDE:

I'm Matt Lagarde with AEP River Ops.

There is one other place in the river system that this does occur, and that's in Cincinnati.

It also has a lot of bridges that the radio communications above and below the harbor can't be heard from one vessel to another, but they can be heard by vessels up and down the river to a great distance on either side.

MS. FELDER:

Good to know.

FEMALE SPEAKER:

In Cincinnati, are they using a repeater to --

MALE SPEAKER:

I don't if they do or not, but it's been an issue up there for a long time as well, as well as Algiers Point. That's the only two places on the river I know of ever had issues.

FEMALE SPEAKER:

Yeah. In 2008, we put in a repeater up there, and from what I understand talking with some of the industry reps, that that kind of got lost, that it's actually there. But there is a repeater up there, and it's just not being used.

MR. PETRAS:

So I'll dust off that report and see what we can learn about that.

MS. FELDER:

Thank you, George.

Any other questions or comments?

(No response.)

MS. FELDER:

Thank you very much.

Captain Gautier, I'm going to turn it over to you now.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Just a couple of items on LMRWSAC as an organization itself.

One of the reasons which challenges us to have more routine LMRWSAC meetings is that we are on a staggered or out-of-sync schedule in terms of the two-year appointment for members and the two-year charter process.

Our charter was last June -- actually, just about two years ago, and unfortunately expires May 8th of next month.

However, Colin and the waterways staff many months ago put in the charter renewal process paperwork, and it has worked its way all the way up to the final signature authority at DHS; and we understand that DHS has stated to us that they recognize the importance of the LMRWSAC, and they're aware of the charter, and it needed to be signed, and so we are awaiting the signature from them so we can be re-chartered once again.

And then, again, next year the membership appointments will expire on around August of 2015. So we do have more than a year of -- you know, good time for the members who are here sitting at this table today.

The Coast Guard has been aware of this problem. It is not unique to this particular advisory committee. And so we are working through the legislative change process in order to find a remedy to get things both synchronized again and to address this constant re-chartering and re-chartering process that we find ourselves in.

We're looking to extend the charter, basically, from the legislative process.

These things also work slowly. They take acts of Congress, literally, in order to put it into place, but I wanted to let you know that these issues have been recognized and are being addressed, to the extent that we can, through the normal channels through the Coast Guard and Department of Homeland Security.

My change of command where I will step down from command is going to be the 27th of June of this year. It's hard to believe that three years have already passed by this quickly. But the change of command will be at 10:00 at the Port of New Orleans.

Thanks very much, Chris, for allowing us to use the outside space right there alongside the Mississippi River between the Port building and the river itself.

It's a terrific setting. I know it's summertime, but we're going to have a tent set up, and it's going to be a nice event with the Marine Corps band and Admiral Cook, the District 8 commander presiding over that.

Captain Phil Schifflin, I think most of you already know this, but he will be fleeting up from deputy to relieve me, where he'll take over the range as commander of this sector.

Captain, why don't you stand up anyway.

MS. FELDER:

Yeah, he's sitting in the very back.

(Applause.)

CAPT GAUTIER:

Phil -- I'm very pleased that Phil is the one who's going to be relieving me. He's been a terrific deputy, involved in all aspects of Sector operations, Captain of the Port issues for the past two years here as the deputy, and before that he's had distinguished performance as the chief of response to our Sector to the east in Mobile, Sector Mobile.

He's had some challenging legal tours in the prevention law aspects. He's been a cutter commanding officer, patrol boat. He's had time in command centers and has an incredibly well-rounded background in order to be able to take over command here.

We're fortunate in that Captain Select [REDACTED] our chief of prevention, is going to be remaining with us for another year.

Paul, could you stand up?

(Applause.)

CAPT GAUTIER:

And as you heard, we're going to be losing Sully, Commander [REDACTED]. He's just going to be crossing the river to go over to the command center at District 8, but we are going to sorely miss his leadership and his expertise as he does that, but we're welcoming Jamie Gatz to be fleeting up into that waterways position.

I'd also like to announce -- many of you know Mr. Ron Fogan, our chief of port state control, really a distinguished individual who we brought back on about 15, 16 years ago in order to manage the incredibly complex port state control process that we have here with 6,500 foreign flag arrivals every year.

It's with great sadness that I can say that Ron has taken a job in industry, and his last day was last Friday with Sector New Orleans, and so he leaves a big vacancy behind, but he also leaves an incredibly well-trained cadre of port city control officers.

So we're going to be filling the gap with an active duty lieutenant commander, a lieutenant, until we can get the civilian hiring process going, and then, to the extent that we can, replace him.

So, Cherrie, that concludes my remarks.

MS. FELDER:

Okay. Very good.

Moving on to the Corps of Engineers, Vic Landry. He's going to talk to us about a couple of pretty important issues.

MR. LANDRY:

Let me slip around.

MS. FELDER:

Yes.

MR. LANDRY:

Good morning, everybody.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Good morning.

MR. LANDRY:

Vic Landry, Corps of Engineers. Got me wedged back in this corner. I feel like I'm punished or something.

Okay. I can see the slide.

Before we get into it, I want to give you a brief overview of the IHNC plan for 2015. Just to follow up on Sully's RNA comments, he did a great overview, kind of said it all. So thanks to the Coast Guard for -- I think it's been a great partnership, and we were happy to be involved in that wonderful relationship.

As you know, the RNA is basically a risk mitigation feature. It will be called the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System. That's a long mouthful for essentially levees, flood walls, and gates.

The RNA measures, they've come a long way. We've already done one waterways patrol. It was essentially to get Jamie up to speed in the transition between Sully and Jamie.

We will be conducting our monthly waterway patrols in one of our survey boats, and we'll do an east and a west one every month. We'll still continue to work with you guys' throughput analysis and all that good stuff.

Michelle Kornick's going to be hosting the conference call again this year. I think those were very successful last year, especially during Tropical Storm Karen, and we'll continue those calls.

Anyway, the only other thing really with the RNA is we still will be continuing evacuating the waterway through the city locks on the east IHNC, on the Westbank, Algiers primarily, and Harvey as well, and we'll probably go to one-way operations to get everyone out to the river. That is, if the storm is approaching from the east, as we seem to have in the past.

So that's about it for the RNA, my portion. Are there any questions?

(No response.)

MR. LANDRY:

Okay. We'll move on to a brief on the IHNC planned dewatering for 2015.

All right. This is IHNC lock when it opened in 1923. That's opening day; paddle wheelers, steam vessels. The facility hasn't changed much in the 91 years it's been in operation.

Of course, you don't have all the people out there standing, looking over into the channel like you do, but really, it's -- a lot of the equipment you see today is what was there in 1923. And those original gates that you see that guy walking across with no handrails or anything, those are the gates -- those -- that was before OSHA and safety standards.

Anyway, those are the gates that we're intending to replace in 2015. They're the original 91-year-old gates. They still function well, but they're full of patches and Band-Aids. And they've served their life well, but we need a new -- we need some new operating gates, as well as the machinery that open and close the gates.

This is the kind of stuff we see today coming through the lock. Although primarily shallow draft barge traffic is our bread and butter, we still pass deep-draft vessels as well, going back to Cold Storage, going back to Southern Recycling.

But as you can see, a lot has evolved in the 91 years. However, the lock hasn't changed very much.

All right. Cost of new gates, about five and a half million. They're being fabricated by Steward Machines in Birmingham. They're almost halfway complete. We anticipate completion this January.

So they will be shipped over to us via barge, and we plan to install them in the summer of 2015.

I know summertime is not a good time to dewater the lock, as it coincides with hurricane season, but the driving fact behind that is we need a low river. We can't dewater the lock with high river stages, because the lock, it's a concrete U-frame chamber, but it's not pinned on pilings. There are no tension connectors. They're old timber piles, and if you had high river with all that hydrostatic pressure, the chamber could literally pop and rise out of the ground.

So as a result, we have to dewater during low water, which means July, August, September, heart of hurricane season.

So we're cognizant that, look, we need the RNA to be in effect. We'd like this to be a 45-day, possibly shorter, dewatering. Our own internal staff will be there. We're going to do it all. We'll install the new gates. We're going to install the new gate-operating machinery, modern hydraulic equipment, which will replace the old faulty strut arms which are 91 years old as well.

Let's see. Back in January we had an issue with a broken gear. We were down for 11 days. Luckily, we had a spare gear. We were able to swap it out. But still, it was a challenge. When we went back into operation, I believe there were over 90 vessels on turn, and it was a major inconvenience to everyone in this room. So we're well aware of that.

We've been working with all our partners, Coast Guard, the navigation industry, everyone to try to minimize the impacts and plan ahead so that we can soften the blow on you guys when this happens in the summer of '15.

These are the old gates in high water during 2012. That's when the river was at 17 on the Carrollton gauge.

So the lock -- we almost had to shut down lock ops, because the water was pretty much at the top of the gates, and these were the gates in operation. As you can see, the water's shooting through. We patched the holes, but it's still an issue we have to deal with from time to time.

All right. This is the emergency repairs last January, and these are the kind of things that when we have the new hydraulic equipment, we won't have these concerns with 91-year-old gears cracking and breaking, and it was a massive 15-foot diameter bolt here that cracked. It was on Gate No. 2 on the river end side of the lock.

Luckily, we were able to get everything done pretty quick. It was right after the new year. And these are the kinds of things we want to avoid in the future.

So with the dewatering, we'll be installing new gates, the four main operating gates on the river and canal end, as well as the lock operating machinery, and any other small things we need to do while it's closed.

And that concludes my presentation. Any questions?

MR. MORTON:

Vic, we had a 16-foot river during Katrina, and we had an 11-foot river during Isaac. Is your -- you're just comparing the risks, that you think that since the duration is not as long as it would be for naturally occurring typical high-water event, that the risk is not as great for the structure to float?

MR. LANDRY:

Yeah. I'm not as concerned with a brief surge coming up with the river. I mean, it's not an extended surge, and so you don't have all that hydrostatic head pressure. And that's what we're concerned with, with extended pressure on the chamber itself.

0080

MR. MORTON:

One year since Katrina we had high water in October. It was weird, but it happened.

MS. FELDER:

Alan?

MR. SAVOIE:

Vic, you mentioned you worked with the Coast Guard for an alternative, but where are we? What would be the alternative?

MR. LANDRY:

I'd like to let the Coast Guard answer that question.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Let me make a couple observations and then make a comment.

The RNA itself is more than the Coast Guard issuing citations to individuals who don't clear the RNA footprint prior to the gate closures.

The RNA is a complex interlocking system of plans and procedures that would, when activated, enable industry to either clear out, sink, or more sufficiently withstand what the projected storm conditions are.

Clearing out on the east side through the lock is a crucial part of that plan.

And so I finish with my statement, without those locks being available to clear out traffic in the Mississippi River, especially when storms approach from the east, the RNA, as it stands today, is unenforceable.

We simply could not give them the throughputs that we typically have in any given storm season during that RNA.

So that leaves us with a problem, and problems have many mitigating potential factors that include other things than evacuation. And so if you want to protect the storm system -- the storm -- hurricane storm reduction system, as we do need to, I think we all need to collectively look at other mitigating factors, short of full clearance of that canal through the locks, since that's not really possible.

We'd be doing this in the summer. We're not going to only do the RNA.

MR. LANDRY:

I agree. It's going to be a major challenge. And we've been meaning somewhat to discuss these things, but I think we should probably initiate some sort of a panel that maybe meets every other month for the next year leading up to this so that we can discuss, I guess, all the critical factors and things that we can do as a workaround or -- there's no true workaround, but if there's some alternates or alternatives we can come up with.

MR. SAVOIE:

I mean, dealing with a storm, I mean, we're going to deal with that within those 60 days -- 45 or 60 days. That I got.

What I'm more interested in is what are we going to do for commerce during those 45 or 60 days?

CAPT GAUTIER:

Okay. That raises a second point. The Coast Guard's been approached by several companies and organizations to discuss just that, Alan.

And I don't know if anybody, before I go into any detail, wants to comment on this.

MR. STARK:

I can comment. This is Jim Stark with GICA.

We committed a while ago to the Captain of the Port to come up with what we would think is a workable alternate route to allow barge traffic to travel east/west and west/east during the closure.

And we had scheduled a meeting and teleconference to work with several company representatives to discuss that very issue.

Unfortunately, that had to be postponed, and we're picking it up Friday, and I think we are still committed to Captain Gautier, to report it back to him following the joint hurricane team planning session on 13 May. We have another meeting scheduled with the Captain of the Port that afternoon to discuss what our -- at least our framework of recommendations may be for that alternate route.

CAPT GAUTIER:

We appreciate GICA taking the lead so that we don't have to address individual requests. But the Coast Guard knows that this is going to be a huge economic impact in terms of east/west transits to the east side of the Mississippi River through the canal.

And so we are certainly open and willing to -- given the increased risk when you go through Baptiste Collette and kind of cut the diagonal over to Mississippi Sound, recognizing that it's open water, we look forward to seeing some proposal, and that includes risk mitigating strategies so we can see if there's a solution.

MR. SAVOIE:

With that, and I'll go back to Ms. [REDACTED]. With the use of the electronic navigation to assist us now, because we didn't have those 15 years ago when we were talking about closures and stuff like that, and without having to go out and put buoys and -- would legally first give us a channel, and we'll have an electronic buoy?

CAPT GAUTIER:

Well, we're open to everything, and that includes putting temporary aids in, electronic aids in.

But we also acknowledge that there's an Army Corps role perhaps here in determining what a good sail line is or navigable path to the east with the ICW being down.

So, yeah, we'll look at it all.

MR. DUFFY:

George Duffy.

Baptiste Collette has some dredging issues also. And, I mean, Michelle is here, and we've talked about it, and that's a big issue to try and get through there.

So -- and there's no money, quote, in the budgets to take care of that, or a little bit.

MALE SPEAKER:

You know, that's another --

CAPT GAUTIER:

If the solution -- great point, George.

And if there's a solution, it needs to be a holistic one. And it goes beyond the Coast Guard saying -- you know, blessing something. It's kind of a -- you know, we need to look at weather windows and ASA navigation and --

MS. FELDER:

And licensing --

CAPT GAUTIER:

-- depth -- under keel depth and licensing and the certification of the barges that go through there and so on.

MR. DUFFY:

But for years we had tried, in both the shallow draft and deep draft, to keep open a channel through the MRGO for this potential purpose, and it was -- it never went anywhere.

MR. BONURA:

Captain, Chris Bonura from the Port of New Orleans.

Obviously, this is work that's very important and needs to be done. I'm just wondering if there's been any thought given to the before and after. Any time you have a closure of the lock, people are going to try and get as many vessels through as possible before and then afterwards.

We've always had issues with trying to relieve the queue and relieve it quickly, and I'm just wondering if there's been any discussions about that to date.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Not yet, but it's certainly a good thing to get on the radar screen. We got time, which is the good thing, and that's maybe one of the easier problems to tackle.

MR. LANDRY:

Yeah, Chris. I was hoping that a lot of the -- to minimize impacts to commerce, especially all the plants that need their feed stock, that perhaps everyone stocks up --

MR. BONURA:

Right.

MR. LANDRY:

-- in effect, maybe for a month in advance since we're going to be down for a month and a half, say.

So if everyone could plan ahead and have those reserves on hand, that should ease some of the pain.

MR. BONURA:

On the back end, this kind of repair is not really going to increase the velocity of moving through, is it?

MR. LANDRY:

Not at all. I mean, the lock itself will always still be a bottleneck just because of the size of the lock. It's half the size of a modern lock configuration, so it will still be a bottleneck.

It won't improve the efficiency of operation of the lock. It will still take you 30 to 45 minutes, or even longer during high water, to transit through the lock.

MR. BONURA:

But it will improve the reliability?

MR. LANDRY:

Reliability is the big thing we're looking for. We want to improve the reliability. Even though the lock itself has minimal downtimes now, we're looking -- we're going to have this lock probably another 30-plus years, so we want to make it as reliable as possible.

MS. FELDER:

I believe that this work they're doing, the closure, is basically in response to the request from industry when the MRGO was closed. We said, "All right, you've got to do something to try to give us a happier feeling about the industrial lock, and its breaking down," and things like that.

And so I believe that money was found to be able to build the new gates and do all this other maintenance repair as a response to that.

MR. LANDRY:

That's correct, Cherrie. We had that working group --

MS. FELDER:

Industry asked for this.

MR. LANDRY:

That's right. And we had, I felt like, a very productive working group with the Coast Guard, the Corps, the port, industry. And then all the parties came to the table, and we said, "All right, these are the things we'd like to do, we need approximately \$40 million to address these things," and we're starting to get increments of funds to address these things.

Beyond the gates, we'd like to do work on the guide walls, other critical infrastructure that can be done without impacting navigation.

MS. FELDER:

Anything else for Vic?

(No response.)

MS. FELDER:

All right. Thank you, Vic.

MR. LANDRY:

Thank you.

MS. FELDER:

Michelle, you are not on the agenda, but it would not be a LMRWSAC meeting without your giving an update on anything. I don't want --

MS. KORNICK:

Right.

MS. FELDER:

-- to put you on the spot, but anything you want to --

MS. KORNICK:

Sure.

MS. FELDER:

-- say, as far as the dredging season or anything like that?

MS. KORNICK:

Yeah.

MS. FELDER:

Great.

MS. KORNICK:

I'm Michelle Kornick, operations manager for Mississippi River Navigation for New Orleans, the Corps of Engineers.

For this fiscal year, FY '14, we did receive our final work-plan funding amount. It's \$95 million for this year. So that's great news. It's a big increase for us. And with the river we've been having, it should take care of us for this year.

The river stages in the Mississippi River, we have been well below the average for three months now. We just rose above the average, and we should be hitting 12.5. If we didn't already hit it today, we'll be hitting it in the next couple days.

And then we have a slow fall after that, and then we'll probably have, I would expect, another rise sometime before the end of May, before we get out of high water season.

We do have two dredges currently working in Southwest Pass, the cutterhead G.D. MORGAN, and a hopper dredge, BAYPORT, and we have another cutterhead dredge coming online sometime in May.

This will be the first year -- well, it's the second year that we've done two cutterhead dredges in Southwest Pass. The first year that we did it, it wasn't quite successful, but this year it should be successful.

We have two large dredges that should be able to handle Southwest Pass dredging, so we'll be doing two cutterhead dredges this year. That gives us the secondary advantage of beneficial use of that dredge material. All that material is 100 percent beneficial use when we use cutterhead dredges. So we'll see how it works out.

And then we'll dredge New Orleans Harbor sometime after the river falls for the final time this summer. We'll dredge New Orleans Harbor, and then we'll also dredge the crossing between New Orleans and Baton Rouge towards the late summer, probably starting in July, when the river falls for the final time.

Any questions?

MR. SAVOIE:

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Just one, real quick.

That second rise, do y'all see any impact in that; if we're looking at 12.5 today, the second rise you're talking about in the end of May?

MS. KORNICK:

Well, that's my assumption. You can't forecast the river more than ten days out and be accurate about it. So we don't have a forecast currently showing another rise.

I'm just assuming, based on the usual state of the river, that we should have at least another rise or a couple of rises before we get out of high water season.

But that's just me with my knowledge of the history of the river --

MR. SAVOIE:

Okay. Great. Thanks.

MS. KORNICK:
-- so there's no official forecast on it.

MR. SAVOIE:
Great.

MS. KORNICK:
Okay. Thanks.

MR. MCDANIEL:
Michelle --

MS. FELDER:
Wait.

MR. MCDANIEL:
-- Jay McDaniel here.

When do you have -- when are you scheduled to -- or do you know yet when you would have a dredge in the Baton Rouge Harbor?

MS. KORNICK:
Where at?

MS. FELDER:
The Baton Rouge area.

MR. MCDANIEL:
Baton Rouge Harbor area. Do you know anybody that --

MS. KORNICK:
Baton Rouge Harbor --

MR. MCDANIEL:
-- has a schedule?

MS. KORNICK:
Baton Rouge Harbor actually falls under a different operations manager. It's Mike Lowe. I can get you in touch with him to get an answer for Baton Rouge Harbor.

MR. MCDANIEL:
That would be good.

MS. KORNICK:
Baton Rouge Front, in the Mississippi River, that crossing, that would be probably towards the end of the fiscal year, so close -- like in September, possibly. We usually save Baton Rouge Front as one of the last ones we dredge before -- when we're doing all 12 crossing between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. It usually ends up being one of the last ones.

But Baton Rouge Harbor is going to be Mike Lowe.

MR. MCDANIEL:
Okay. Where I'm going with the question: Where -- when does it look like or -- nobody's having any issues yet -- but what is, for 2014, your outlook on Wilkerson Point area for dredging, if needed?

MS. KORNICK:
We can dredge it. We have funds to dredge it.

MR. MCDANIEL:
You will have later on in the year?

MS. KORNICK:
Yeah, we have four -- that's actually our swallow draft funding. So we have a separate pot of money for that, and we have about \$600,000 in that. That will get Wilkerson Point dredged.

And we normally -- again, we save Wilkerson Point until the end of this fiscal year and into next -- the start of next fiscal year, so it probably won't get dredged until October; the reason being is that the three dredges, the dustpan dredges that we use, are going to be busy on the deep-draft crossings --

MR. MCDANIEL:
Right.

MS. KORNICK:
-- which take a priority, because they'll have more shoaling and more issues there.

MR. MCDANIEL:
Okay.

MS. KORNICK:

And then when we're done with the deep-draft crossings, we'll send one of those three dustpan dredges to Wilkerson Point before they head upriver to go back to their base.

MR. MCDANIEL:

Okay.

MS. KORNICK:

So it will be the same as we do every year with dredges --

MR. MCDANIEL:

Yeah.

MS. KORNICK:

-- probably in October.

MR. MCDANIEL:

Okay. Good enough. Thank you.

MS. FELDER:

Any other questions for Michelle?

(No response.)

MS. FELDER:

Thank you so much. Appreciate it.

Tim Osborn is going to give us some NOAA updates, please.

MR. OSBORN:

Do we need to be there?

MS. FELDER:

Pardon?

MR. OSBORN:

Do we need to be there?

MS. FELDER:

Not necessarily.

MR. OSBORN:

All right. We won't be there.

I think it was Captain [REDACTED] that, not long ago, was saying, "Do we need to have hurricane season this year?"

So I wanted to -- we talked it over, and we agreed -- since Paul's promotion's coming on, we've agreed to cancel the 2014 hurricane season.

Captain Lorino, Captain Crane, and Captain Hathorn agreed to give us a year off from any navigation incidents, period. And this will allow Bob Turner to take the Lake Borgne storm surge barrier and rent it out as a fishing pier and skeet range.

MR. COLON:

Sounds like a good plan.

MR. OSBORN:

Jimmy's already voted for it, so buy Paul -- buy Paul lunch when he gets to become captain.

Okay. So what I wanted to show you, this is actually a picture. This is a very important picture. It was taken actually not long ago just south of here.

One of the resources that we fly after every post-storm event is aerial imagery in coordination with FEMA and others.

As we found with Hurricane Isaac and other hurricanes with large cloud decks, aerial imagery shooting down is a lot of times really bothered by the cloud deck itself.

This year, and actually with Hurricane Sandy, we're actually going to be flying oblique -- geo-referenced oblique photography to get us below the cloud deck, shoot down the critical assets, like the terminals, refineries, and everything of that; and then we would actually take it off the plane and post it that same day through our public websites.

GICA's joint hurricane team, meeting on the 13th of May, will have more resources, and we'll send out e-mails about some of this.

But this is a response to the fact that you're really looking to get to imagery looking at post-storm response or damage, and obviously more conventional imagery acquisition was limited by a lot of these cloud issues. And we're basically going to be able to put it down on the deck, shoot it obliquely, and actually be able to give it to you that same day, geo-referenced.

Next.

E-Nav, let's just go straight to e-Nav. You probably -- the biggest secret out here is the fact that e-Nav is in practice today and with the 15,000 ship movements going on today.

We have all three pilot groups represented today, Raven, Raven, Rosepoint, all using electronic navigation with the navigational laptops today, all doing it very, very well.

This month we have officially retired lithographic printing of our NOAA charts, and we're still celebrating.

What this means is we've actually swapped. We -- our primary -- our primary resource in terms of charting is no longer RNCs as of this month. We have switched to ENC's as the primary resource for updating all of our charts for anything that needs to be placed on them, and then we update the RNC as the follow-on.

Now, it will go on electronically very, very quickly, but in terms of our principal resources, ENC is where it's gone.

Why? Because we can put so many more attributes, so many more notations. We can actually create the opportunity for you to select layers. I mean, if you've got a 47-foot draft ship, what do you care about 20-foot soundings? You can basically turn off all those layers and show that right up to the dock.

It also makes our updating -- and, in fact, someone was bringing up this updating of facilities, ports, and terminals, looking at revetments and everything much, much more quickly.

Next slide, please.

By the way, I'd like to thank Colin for organizing this. She really agonized over this whole thing.

This is an example of what e-Nav can do. These are heat maps showing AIS tracks that can be overlaid or put -- combined with our ENC's to show the sheer amount of traffic in the Gulf in and out of the ports.

Next.

And this is what happens -- and this is why e-Nav is so important. This is what happens if we don't have good chart resources or we don't have updating or quick response post-storms to all the things that are going out.

Someone just mentioned -- you mentioned high water with Hurricane Isaac and Katrina. That bottom left is exactly what happened with Katrina. That's the Bollinger drydock that went up and almost into the tank farm upriver from the terminal itself.

This is a barge that hit a platform that sank just after Hurricane Ike. That actually was an ATON -- was on the sunken platform. It got blown off. No one really noted, in fact, referenced or updated their charts, the fact that I have a sunken platform right here and that I need to put on the chart.

The ATON wasn't there or the P/ATON. The P/ATON was not there on the sunken platform, and that integrated barge ran right over it, sank, had a big spill, and we had to actually go out and track, use the AIS track and show exactly what -- where it hit it, and it actually drug parts of an old platform about a mile or two down the ways.

This is a great one on the upper right. This goes in the story of like hearing is believing. Hurricane Ike, a floating platform sank after Ike, could not find it. Where is it? We went out and actually looked for it, couldn't find it.

The darn thing sank, equilibrated, drifted in the water column 90 miles into a lightering area off of Galveston, Texas, and a single hull -- one of the last of the single-hull crude oil carriers coming into the lightering area hit the darn thing, and basically, it was a miracle that it ripped open the back section, which were basically the ballast tanks, rather than the crude oil tanks.

And this is what it looks like now in drydock. When it went to port, it will be repaired. You talk about wake-up calls, that was a wake-up call. So quick response is very important.

Next.

All right. E-Nav and ENC's and our forecasting, June 1 start of the hurricane season. Who has not been on a hurricane season briefing conference call in this room?

Okay. We've all done it, and we're all going to do it again.

What's improved? What's improved is the fact that we're stretching out our forecast times and projections of landfalls. The cone is getting narrower. National Hurricane Center is unifying with the local weather forecast offices this year a more common set of flooding maps, coastal inundation maps that will be used commonly in this area.

That should help improve the RNA in terms of resources and their information about the timing, the landfall, the likely wind speeds, and storm surge that's going to be occurring.

What happened with Hurricane Isaac? Hurricane Isaac, barely at Cat 1 for maybe eight hours. But what was it? It was slow moving. It was very, very slow moving. If you saw Tropical Storm Karen last year, it was all over the place. Why? Very weak tropical storm, bouncing all over the place, had the potential to still ramp to a hurricane.

So as you saw, we were basically trying to figure out where it's going, but the coordination calls during that time were very, very effective to keep everyone very much on point.

Next.

Storm tide, we're going to continue to impress, and we will use the time at GICA where we will actually introduce and reintroduce you to every weather forecast office along the northern gulf, from Mobile to Slidell, Slidell to Lake Charles, Houston, Galveston.

Every one of those weather forecast offices, we ask for you not only to know them, to actually be able to interact with them, even to get out of the chair sometimes and go visit them. They welcome the opportunity to visit, to show you the resources, and to show you the forecasting that they do and what is available out there.

Storm time. Storm time, someone just mentioned Hurricane Isaac. We had a 10-foot storm surge that came up the Mississippi River.

We were concerned, obviously -- and with the RNA, we're concerned obviously about coastal tides around us. Be aware that with the Isaac events we had a three-day storm event and a three-day storm -- coastal storm surge event.

Started out on the Mississippi Sound area, it came up with the river, it crossed into Barataria, hit Grand Isle, hit Fourchon, and then essentially presented a real problem for the Houma/Terrebonne area and the Houma nav.

So in a lot of ways we're going to have to really continue to coordinate closely about these surge events as they occur through a time series. It's not going to be one hit necessarily. It could actually be a continuous thing where navigation in the Mississippi sound also clears up, but Barataria, Fourchon, Houma continues to be a major problem, as well as Morgan City.

Next, please.

We have a network of our hardened stations around the coast. We're working with Bob to try to actually densify it. The National Weather Service Slidell office, you owe them lunch because they went out and actually hit headquarters hard just the last couple months, and they may -- may have funding for possibly two or three new hardened stations in this area as well.

Why? Because modeling is very, very important, as well as forecasting. If we don't have the real data in terms of the actual sensors out there corroborating what the model is forecasting, then we have major problems. We can have major discrepancies between what the forecast says and what we actually see.

This is Ike, this is Isaac, and this is one of the things I want to impress upon you. For a Cat 1, maybe for eight hours, 12-foot storm surge, Shell Beach, 10-foot up the river, 6-foot in Grand Isle; 14 feet, Braithwaite.

We didn't happen to have a water station there. We didn't have to. We just walked into the structures and actually measured in terms of how much.

In fact, John's office was one we actually -- we trespassed. We figured it was a public facility. But we put the tape measure there, and we have 14 feet. He's missing the bottom 3 feet of shingles on his roof, said the roofer did fine.

The shingles would have stayed if it wasn't for the waves that actually took the -- so I don't know if you can get wave damage to actually repair the roof, but he's not coming back anyway because he and the Port of Plaquemines are very, very smart people.

Next.

I'm going to skip this, and I'm going to go straight to e-Nav, essentially in terms of talking about the various things like that. It's very, very important -- in fact, the Coast Guard headquarters is not alone.

We are very excited about the fact that rather than -- as George is talking about, rather than -- and James just talked about -- having to build and put in place structures that can actually go down, ATONs can be blown away, they can be missing, they can be like that -- you can actually create synthetic ATONs overtop actual physical ones, and so if they go missing, you've still got them.

Problem: What do we do in terms of -- and the listening sessions on the 7th is very important for everyone, because as George raised the question, I can go to our chart section right now, and I can put an entire series of ATONs out there, and -- but what do we do in terms of notifying you that they're there? How long are they going to be there? Do we need to make the changes?

I mean, as Captain Marino says, "That ATON's in the wrong place, it needs to be moved up," or Captain Hathorn says, "It's nice that you got this bridge, but why don't we have this bridge?"

So the listening session we have today coming up to us on the 7th, I'd like to really encourage all of you to be there. To be able to essentially look -- we had a barge sinking just in November, just recently on the Mississippi River. To think about the fact that we -- or we have Bob with the Lake Borgne storm surge barrier that's going to be opening and closing the gates, possibly.

To have the ability through our virtual ATON programs, which expands out to the ENC's, essentially being able to update instantly, "Hey, guess what? Lake Borgne's closed; you can't go this way anymore."

We now have a notice out there without -- with the AIS or the ENC's or anything else -- we have no more. We have a sunken barge, and it's going to take more than a day or two. We're going to actually put the ATON across that site and then have navigation with the electronic navigation laptops, be able to go right around it, and continue commerce as needed, and that's a very important part.

The process, though, is overrunning the procedures of what do we do to all agree, where should they be, how long should -- where do we find data and notification about that ATON? What is it describing, is it on the abutments, is it on the terminals, is it on the center of channel, things like that.

And so with this listening session on the 7th, it's not just one session. It's going to be a long process, but it offers a tremendous amount of resources for us.

Last thing I'd like to bring up is our physical oceanographic real time system with our ENC's and with the National Weather Service. What that is doing -- and as what you've seen -- and, in fact, I don't know if you realize, but just a couple weeks ago we had a wicked front come through giving Lake Charles -- they had 43 knots steady on the outer bar off of Lake Charles.

Captain Lorino in Southwest Pass was seeing 30 and 40 sustained straight-line winds associated with this. This is why the port system is being used by the National Weather Service to issue these warnings.

And what the ENC's is doing is it's giving the National Weather Service another data layer to put into their forecast saying, "Hey, by the way, this is a high-priority channel, we're forecasting the weather and wind conditions across it, and we're actually going to be then folding in our storm surge flood forecasting across those channels as well," telling you what you can expect here where you're moving your deep-draft ships.

Lastly, I'd like to also congratulate, certainly, Captain Gautier. I'd like to thank the Coast Guard Sector New Orleans for their leadership in developing some of these resources, and certainly for lower MARSEC.

The listening session on the 7th is very, very important. Hope everyone can make it as well.

And I also would like to encourage that we all be there for May 13th. We're going to have National Weather Service there. We're going to have weather briefings. We should have a much, much more focused brief on what we can expect with the 2014 hurricane season.

And if you have any questions, please, just give me a call or send me an e-mail.

MALE SPEAKER:

Did you say May 13th?

MR. OSBORN:

13th is the joint hurricane team GICA meeting. E-Nav is May 7th. And I think that's very, very important. And you should talk to us on the 7th about Morgan City, because you're not a bunch of wimps. Morgan City is a tough place for navigation, and e-Nav can really be a big, big, big asset over there.

Any questions?

MR. DELOACH:

I have --

MR. OSBORN:

Let's get a good one first.

MALE SPEAKER:

On the hurricane predictions for the summertime, it seemed like a kind of moderate prediction. It seems like my experience, every time we get a harsh winter --

MR. OSBORN:

Right.

MALE SPEAKER:

-- or a freeze, we get whacked with something serious.

MR. OSBORN:

Yes.

MALE SPEAKER:

What's your spin on that?

MR. OSBORN:

My wife reads the Farmer's -- it's sad. She reads Farmer's Almanac. She reads it and says, "We got a hard summer coming. We got a hard winter coming."

It's like, you know, so where in the resource is the NOAA thing? Forget it. I got the Farmer's Almanac.

So, yes, it is likely we can expect -- but I want to go back to 1992. 1992 -- when you were all very young children at the time, I'm sure -- we had like five storms, like five storms. That was it. I mean, it was nothing. We had one, though -- one of the five came, and it took out Homestead, Florida, came over here and hit us, nailed us. That was Hurricane Andrew.

So in a lot of ways -- Colorado started their forecasting, you know, like 19 to 20 storms, and some severe blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, the whole bit. We have changing conditions.

And, in fact, actually, in a lot of ways, I think that we're going to have to be vigilant. We had a hard winter. We're getting -- I mean, jeeze, a couple weeks ago, we had straight-line winds come through with these fronts that I don't think there's any -- any argument at all that we're seeing more and more severe weather events.

Better -- better still, though, is we're on top of things. I mean, I got George Duffy over here sending me -- he's the weather watcher of the coast in Pensacola Beach, and we actually thank him for doing that because any of you guys -- how many people have been shy about -- like you see something out by Cuba, and it's like, "Well, I don't know, maybe I should ask, maybe that's a big deal."

Don't even -- just let us know, because why? Because unless you can take barge traffic and actually triple their speed of getting out of the way or unless you can take deep-draft ship traffic and make it move much faster, your interest and your inquiry to us as early as you want is really important.

Why? Because you've got to make those decisions. And that's the kind of thing that's very important for us. So yeah, we could have an active season, but frankly, we're telling you, forget the numbers. Just worry about that one. You've got to be ready for that one.

Humberto -- Humberto went from a -- we had the platforms -- High Island, Texas, tell us, "Hey we got something weird out here."

Seventeen hours later -- seventeen hours later, made landfall in High Island as a Category 1. Okay. Katrina went to a Cat 5 from a Cat 3 in 17, 18 hours, and then it ramped back. And Katrina wasn't worse. Wilma was actually even -- they had Wilma, Katrina, Rita -- was the most stunning year, because bar -- we measure by barometric pressure.

The pressure drops for Katrina were actually over -- topped out by Wilma, and Wilma actually -- no one remembers, because it went and hit Miami, but --

MS. FELDER:

Tim --

MR. OSBORN:

-- those three were tough.

MS. FELDER:

0120

-- I hate to cut you off --

MR. OSBORN:

No, it's all right.

That -- I don't have the answer to the question for him, do I?

MS. FELDER:

Well, I don't know.

MR. DELOACH:

I just wanted to point out a common problem in industry, see, with government and aligning your efforts, if you're going to cancel hurricane season, please do it in 2015 so that the Corps can do (inaudible).

My question -- look, you need to give a short answer, not a short question -- you said y'all were going to quit printing charts.

MR. OSBORN:

Yeah.

MR. DELOACH:

Have you got a document that says, "We're going to do this" --

MR. OSBORN:

Yeah.

0121

MR. DELOACH:

-- that they'll no longer be available --

MR. OSBORN:

Yes.

MR. DELOACH:

-- that we can get, because --

MR. OSBORN:

Yeah. We've been sending it out. I'll send it to you, what I -- and you have print-on-demand --

MR. DELOACH:

Good.

MR. OSBORN:

-- chart agents, so they can still give it to you. We're just not going to do it in Washington, DC, with the FAA.

So DOD agents are always there, and it's available, but we're actually principally moving the ENC's right now.

MS. FELDER:

Tim, thank you so much --

MALE SPEAKER:

I just -- Tim just briefly touched on it, but as a reminder, the Gulf Inland Waterways Joint Hurricane Preseason Planning Session is May 13th at the Port. And the Port, again, has been gracious enough to allow us to use their auditorium, 10:00 to 12:00. We'll go over the joint hurricane team protocol.

But keep in mind this is a gulf-wide effort. We'll have folks from Mobile, from Texas, from Florida and Alabama as well.

So although we'll have a lot of New Orleans issues probably to discuss, that might be better held over to a meeting like this or the Port Industry Day that -- on the following -- the 22nd.

But anyway, the joint hurricane team is the --

MS. FELDER:

And, Tim, thanks so much. I mean --

MR. OSBORN:

Not a worry.

MS. FELDER:

-- you guys really are --

MR. OSBORN:

Not a worry.

MS. FELDER:

-- a great partner, and it's so fabulous, the information you provide on all of our port coordination team calls and our hurricane calls and stuff coming in. It's really very helpful. Thank you so much.

Bob Turner is here from the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority East. Thank you.

MR. TURNER:

Thank you very much. Got that name right. Took up half my time to say it. I appreciate that.

Well, first of all, I'm going to thank Captain Gautier for allowing me to come here and talk today.

Can everybody hear me back there in the back because -- okay. Great.

I also want to thank Colin. I really appreciate the help in getting all of this set up and dealing with my delay in getting the information, but thanks again.

And I'd be remiss if I didn't thank Tim Osborn for canceling hurricane season.

So thanks a lot. We'll talk about that 2015 extension after the meeting.

When I found out that there was a possibility for me to be able to come before you today and talk, I kind of was wondering, well, what should I talk about? And so I figured since most of you know the flood authority is now responsible for the operations of these navigational flood gates, I thought it would be a good idea to kind of just give you an idea of how this is going to work, primarily in an emergency event, and also, just for the day-to-day operations and things.

And so first slide there, this is kind of a layout of the system on the Eastbank. You'll notice down at the bottom of the slide I've got the IHNC locks there designated, of course. So we're not operating those, nor do we want those. I mean, those can certainly stay with the Corps.

And any time you would like these others back, we'll be glad to give those to you, Vic.

But nonetheless, these are the locks right here at the IHNC. The primary gate that most people are going to be concerned about is over here, and it's the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway Sector Gate.

We also have the -- this is a barge bypass gate here. There's a small lift gate here that's primarily for commercial fisherman, and then Seabrook, which gives you access to Lake Pontchartrain. So generally speaking, that's a layout. And again, this is on the Eastbank alone.

So next slide.

In a hurricane or storm event we have procedures that we have to follow. Those procedures are fairly well laid out in a water control manual that is provided for us -- to us by the Corps of Engineers when they turned over those structures to us.

And so what you'll see here today that I'm presenting as far as how we are going to operate these gates is laid out in that manual, and we don't anticipate having to deviate that unless something really strange happens.

So typically, what will happen is the National Weather Service or the National Hurricane Center will start issuing advisories for a tropical cyclone in the Atlanta basin, and that triggers us to start getting our ducks in a row to take care of making a closure.

And the first gate that normally is going to close is going to be this bypass barge gate here, and I want to emphasize this is not the gate that's in the main Gulf Intracoastal Waterway Channel. This is the bypass gate, and we're going to close that about 96 hours in advance of a storm event, and you'll be hearing about this as time goes by.

So we'll be closing this thing. It's not going to have any major impact to navigation, but you will see the velocities in here probably increase somewhat, because you'll be reducing the cross-sectional area in the general vicinities.

And in order to close this bypass gate 96 hours out, you may see that the Sector gate is closed. Well, don't panic. It's only to give us access to the barge gate so that we can actually close it.

So typically what will happen is we'll temporarily close the Sector gate, cross it with our personnel and equipment, reopen it, and then it takes about eight hours to effect the proper closure of a barge gate.

At that time we would probably re-close the Sector gate, move everybody back across, and then reopen it to navigation, so -- and there's a possibility also that this Seabrook gate would have to close for a short time during the time that we would be swinging this barge gate into place.

And the reason for that is because, generally speaking, Lake Borgne levels are going to be much higher than Lake Pontchartrain levels, particularly early on. So the velocities through here can get to be pretty fast, and we have limits as to what the allowable velocities are to safely close that barge gate.

So again, it would be closed for perhaps an hour or two and then reopened.

Next slide.

Generally speaking, the next gate to close is going to be this lift gate here. That's primarily used, as I said before, by the fishermen and recreational activities, things like that. But nonetheless, that would probably close whenever we get the forecast that a surge is anticipated to reach 5 feet or greater in the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal area.

So once we find out that, hey, that's a possibility, we're going to start taking measures to close this -- that particular gate.

And again, once again, the Sector gate may be closed just temporarily for an hour or so to gain access to the lift gate, and then once we close the lift gate to get our people back across, we may close it again for about an hour or so.

Next slide.

And here's the big gate that everybody is worried about, in this room anyway. That's the GIWW Sector gate closure. And this one is a little bit tough because we have to kind of look out into the future and kind of anticipate what's going to be happening in the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal.

So believe me, the decision to close these gates is not made in a vacuum. We coordinate these activities with the maritime industry and the Coast Guard and the Corps of Engineers and NOAA through these Port Coordination Team conference calls.

But generally speaking, what we try to do is to forecast out when one of these trigger points are going to occur, and we try to do that at least 24 hours in advance. So the decision to close, generally speaking, is going to be made at least 24 hours in advance of the closure so that the Coast Guard can initiate the RNA.

And so, basically, what happens is whenever we have a forecasted surge 5 feet or greater in the IHNC, we spring into action, we initiate our plan, and then we -- the Sector gate will close after the surge reaches one and a half and when one of these three conditions are met.

So if the Coast Guard calls us and says, "Hey, everything is out of the RNA," we may close right at that point in time, or it could be that the onset of tropical storm force winds is imminent.

Okay. Well, we're going to want to close that structure at that time. And remember, once the tropical storm force winds occur, the bridges remain in the down position, so you no longer are able to go through the locks.

And the other thing is, is that the absolute limit on the surge elevation is 4 feet in here before a closure has to be made in order to make sure that we don't exceed the limits for the 100-year level of protection. So if one of these three things happen after the surge height reaches 1.5, we'll be closing that gate.

Next.

The last thing usually to close is going to be the Seabrook gate complex. Okay. That's the one that is over here. And again, same type thing there, whenever we have a 5-foot or greater anticipated surge in the IHNC, we begin our plan to close.

And we close it after the Sector gate is closed, because the water that's in here has to drain out into the lake. So we want to get this at least level to the water in here, as low as we possibly can, so we allow all that to flow out into the lake -- just going to be lower -- and then we close that gate.

But again, we also want to have it closed before we get to the strong tropical force winds so we can bring our people back and shelter them during the storm.

Next slide.

So as the storm's approaching, these are all the gates that are closed, all the ones that are designated there in red.

Next slide.

Once the storm has passed, then we go through an opening procedure. Generally speaking, the first one to open is going to be the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway sector gate. That's the one in the main channel.

And so as soon as the levels drop on the outside here to levels that are close to the water levels on the inside, we will open that gate and start draining this, the area inside the IHNC.

Next.

The next gate that opens will probably be the Sector gate. Okay. And what will generally happen is the water levels in here will equalize to the Lake Borgne levels, but the lake levels will probably still be up a little bit.

So sometimes this gate remains closed for perhaps as much as a day or so until after the Sector gate is open.

Next.

Then the Bayou Bienvenue lift gate would be the next to open, and finally -- next slide -- would be the bypass barge gate.

And so at this point -- next slide -- the entire system will then be opened again.

Next slide.

So as I said, we're not going to make any of these decisions in a vacuum. We have to do this in coordination with a lot of stakeholders, and so we'll be in constant contact with the National Weather Service, the NOAA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Coast Guard. We'll also be participating on the conference calls that we have in these events.

Also, you can contact us. You can see what's going on within our organization at this website here. And we have a special web page where we post the status of all of the navigational flood gates.

So if you go to this web page, you'll see the actual present status of those gates, and also any warnings that are associated with those gates, warnings of closures or status change at some point in the not-too-distance future.

You can also sign up for text alerts at this site right here. And the way that works is if you're signing up for a particular gate, say, for instance, the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway Sector gate, whenever we have to do something there, we'll post an alert. You'll get a text message and/or an e-mail message, depending upon how you would desire to get those alerts.

You can also in many cases get ahold of the Orleans Levee District Emergency Operations Center at this phone number right here or our office number here at -- we're located out there at the UNO campus.

And one thing or two I want to emphasize is that this is going to be a new thing for the Authority. Now, we participated with the Corps for the past few years in operating these structures and trying to make sure that everyone stays coordinated. We want to make sure that we continue to do that and continue with that coordination.

We also value everybody's input. So if something is happening or if you think that there are things that we can do to help do a better job of coordination, please feel free to give us a call. My e-mail address is RTurner@SLFPAE.com. You can reach me at that e-mail address or at this office number down here below. I'll be glad to sit down and talk to you and listen to what you have to say and maybe work something out.

MS. FELDER:

And I can attest to the fact that he really means that, because recently there was a situation where the streetlights, the deck lights on the Sector gate were turned off, and they really don't know that they were necessary.

And a number of the towboat pilots started calling their offices saying, "The lights are out; we can't see the structure before we get to it."

And they were very, very helpful and sat down and explained it to Bob, and they turned the lights back on.

So thank you very much.

MR. TURNER:

You're welcome. And we're going to use the skeet shooting to pay for that electricity.

So thanks a lot. I really appreciate the opportunity to come here and talk to you today.

MS. FELDER:

Thanks so much, Bob.

And, Bill, would you like to come up --

MR. FOGLE:

Sure, sure.

MS. FELDER:

-- and talk to us about the West Authority Complex?

MR. FOGLE:

West complex.

My name is Bill Fogle. I'm with the Flood Authority West, and I don't want to disappoint anybody in the room, but I'm not talking about the western closure complex.

MS. FELDER:

Oh, okay. Well --

MR. FOGLE:

That is operated and maintained by the Coastal Protection Restoration. So they have full control of that. Now it's been turned -- of course, turned it over, but it's in our area of operation, so we have a piece of that.

MS. FELDER:

Very good.

MR. FOGLE:

But what I'm going to talk about today is what does the Flood Authority West do, okay, and how does it impact the navigation community.

It really doesn't totally impact the navigation community or -- navigation community. What we have is one sector gate. It's called Bayou Segnette. So that's Bayou Segnette.

We close that at 2 feet, depending on what the weather forecasts are, but it's primarily used for commercial fishermen and pleasure crafts.

We work directly with the Flood Authority East, so it's an entire system. We're separated by the Mississippi River, but we work together as a community from the Flood Authority side with the Coastal Protection Restoration.

So communications, how do we communicate? Well, we communicate through multiple number of means; through e-mails, through the coordination team. We really enjoy working with the coordination team and getting to know the folks on that team. So we -- that's an avenue of approach in which we'll put out information for the navigation community.

During routine efforts like the high rivers that we're currently in right now, we surveillance the Mississippi River levee. We've got 33 miles of that for us to surveillance. And what we do there is we travel down there, we monitor within that 180 feet of our levee.

If we identify something because it looked right, we have range finders. We use the marine ship tracks. We identify the ship. We do the coordination. We do the lowest level possible to make the advisories.

And then we'll communicate that to the Coast Guard, and we have a public relations doing emergency. We have public relations boats on our staff. We put out regular press releases. So folks are very well informed of what is transpiring on the Westbank.

But from the navigation side, we're working closely with the Corps, we're here to support them.

And we can't thank Captain Gautier enough for all the support that you have provided (inaudible).

Also, Lieutenant (inaudible) for her persistence, and I know we got [REDACTED] for all that he put into it, and then we're looking forward to working with Jamie Gatz, followed by your friend (inaudible).

So I'll let Commander [REDACTED] take charge, unless anybody has anything for me.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Bill, question: Who operates the Lapalco main? Is that --

MR. FOGLE:

Lapalco main --

CAPT GAUTIER:

-- (inaudible) as well?

MR. FOGLE:

No. That is the Corps of Engineers.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Still Corps?

MR. FOGLE:

Yeah, still the Corps.

CAPT GAUTIER:

But the West Closure is CPRA proper?

MR. FOGLE:

Yes, that is correct. They turned that over. We've got the notice of construction complete, and they are in that process right now working through some (inaudible).

MR. STARK:

Jim Stark with GICA. Hi, Bill.

Just real quickly, then who at CPRA will be our main point of contact for all of that coordination that we employed with --

MR. FOGLE:

Point of contact will be John --

MR. STARK:

-- Bob and --

MR. FOGLE:

-- John Monzon -- John Monzon.

MR. STARK:

Okay. John. Okay. Got it.

MR. FOGLE:

And I'll be glad to provide that detail to you, that information, that contact information.

MS. FELDER:

Thank you so much.

Commander [REDACTED]

CDR [REDACTED]:

Thank you, Cherrie.

MS. FELDER:

We have moved on to new business.

CDR [REDACTED]:

New business.

MS. FELDER:

New business.

CDR [REDACTED]:

I think I know just about everyone here in the room. In case you don't, I'm Commander [REDACTED]. I'm the Chief of Prevention here at Coast Guard Sector New Orleans.

Let me give you a brief overview of some of the pending LNG projects that we're looking at right now for the Lower Mississippi River.

Currently, we have three projects that are pending, one by Cambridge Energy, the second by Louisiana LNG, and the third with Shell Geismar.

I think it's safe to say that with ever increasing environmental standards, people looking, and LNG as a clean source of fuel for the future, this is probably just the tip of the iceberg. Right now these are the three that we're currently monitoring here at Coast Guard Sector New Orleans.

Before I get into a general overview of each of the permits, let me get -- I just want to briefly discuss with you the Coast Guard doctrine and policy regarding the review and assessment of proposed LNG facilities.

We have a Navigation Vessel Inspection Circular, 01-11, which is very detailed, which is intended to provide national level guidance and some level of consistency regarding how the Coast Guard and industry will look at and review proposed LNG projects throughout the United States, with the ultimate goal of obviously assisting the Captain of the Port in coordinating any type of maritime, security, and safety assessments.

The way that the procedure works is that the permittee initially will submit what's known as a letter of intent. Simply, it's -- basically gives an overview to the Captain of the Port of the who, what, where, when, why, and how regarding the proposed facility.

With that LOI will also come what's known as a preliminary -- keyword here being "preliminary" -- Waterway Suitability Assessment. Document's usually about ten pages long, provides a brief discussion with an outline of the risk factors that the permittee is intending to analyze and the methodology to be used during the permitting process.

Both the LOI, the letter of intent, and the PWSA are provided very early on in the process with the prefilng process with the firm. Most of these LNG facilities are for export, so the primary permittee at the federal level is going to be the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

So those are -- these are submitted very early on in the process.

The PWSA will include such things as port characterization, characterization of the facility, and the LNG tanker route to be used, risk management strategies, and any potential resources needed to ensure maritime safety and security.

After the LOI and PWSA are provided, the permittee will provide a full-blown Waterway Suitability Assessment or a Follow-On Waterway Suitability Assessment.

This WSA is a very detailed overview and analysis of the issues that were identified in the PWSA, and once the Captain of the Port receives this is document, it's at this point that we really engage very closely with our maritime stakeholders to assist in the review of how this proposed LNG facility and the LNG tanker traffic associated with it will impact maritime safety and security.

At the end of the day, what we're looking at is that the Captain of the Port will be issuing what's known as an LOR, letter of recommendation to FERC regarding whether the Captain of the Port believes the facility should or should not come into operation on the proposed waterway; again, just kind of a general overview.

All right. The first permit that I'd like to discuss with you is Cambridge Energy. Those of you that attended the March Port Safety Council meeting had an opportunity to meet Mr. Sherman Bryant. Mr. Bryant gave a high-level overview of what Cambridge is proposing for down in the lower region of the Mississippi River, just north of Venice, on Mile Marker 12, above Head of Passes on the left descending bank.

The permit's pretty aggressive. You're looking at -- Cambridge is looking at about a 400-acre complex, and what they're looking at are two FLSOs, floating liquefaction storage and offloading vessels.

These vessels will tie into existing LNG pipelines and will be used to transload LNG from the FLSOs to other LNG tankers that will be coming to and from the facility.

Cambridge is indicating to us that once they're up and fully operational, they're looking at three to four LNG tankers per week.

Coast Guard received the initial LOI -- or the LOI, I should say -- about a year ago on the 5th of March, on -- 2013. We received a PWSA from them in August. We did a very detailed review of that

PWSA. We provided Cambridge a four-page letter back with very detailed comments regarding some of the Captain of the Port's concerns.

Although we have the LOI and PWSA, I would say that we're still in the very early stages of this particular project.

The project's going to -- as currently forecast, is looking at some pretty significant updates and modifications to existing levee systems, obviously to wildlife marsh areas. So there's a number of permitting issues involved with this above and beyond just through FERC, as well as the Army Corps permit.

So again, I think this is something that we're very early on in the planning phases for this Cambridge Energy project. But again, Mile Marker 12 above Head of Passes left descending bank.

Next slide.

The next project I'd like to discuss is Louisiana LNG. I was contacted -- or the Coast Guard was contacted by Louisiana LNG late in 2013, back in December, giving us a heads-up that we should expect to see a letter of intent with a PWSA from them sometime in the spring time frame.

Initial discussions with Louisiana LNG is that we're looking at a facility on the left descending bank at Mile Marker 44.

It's going to be a smaller facility, somewhere between -- I think -- between 150 and 200 acres with a more traditional dock-type structure, with a liquefaction facility onshore loading tank ships.

The initial discussions indicated that they were looking at about one LNG tanker per month. Like I said, the LOI and PWSA are -- have not been submitted yet.

We have representatives in back from Louisiana LNG, Captain Burgess and Mr. Lindsay --

MR. BURGESS:

He had to go talk to investors. He's in the parking lot --

CDR [REDACTED]:

Okay.

MR. BURGESS:

-- but we're available afterwards.

CDR [REDACTED]:

Sounds good.

What I've done is I've asked them to go ahead and give us a presentation at the July Port Safety Council meeting to sensitize the local maritime community to what they're coordinating is -- will be entailing, to heighten your awareness.

Real quick, just to put it into perspective for you, where these two particular facilities are located, obviously the southern one just north of the jump north of Venice is going to be the proposed site for Cambridge; and then the little icon, orange icon in the north is the proposed --

MALE SPEAKER:

It's Mile 46, [REDACTED].

CDR [REDACTED]:

Is it 46?

And obviously they've been talking very closely with Captain (inaudible).

The last LNG permit that we're looking at right now is Shell Geismar. This is a little bit different project. It looks -- it's an LNG for-fuel operation, looking at moving barge loads of fuel from Shell down to Port Fourchon, primarily to service the OSV industry in the Gulf.

The issue is going -- next slide -- is that we just found out that this particular project is going to be on hold and that our office in Baton Rouge indicated that Shell has pulled their LOI, and they're re-assessing this particular project. So this one right now is in somewhat of a (inaudible).

The beauty here is that obviously LNG is not the first, and so we won't be the last hazardous gas cargo that we have coming through this area, unlike some parts of the country where an LNG tanker or other types of cargo like this would be paradigm, not only for the local community, but also for the local maritime community.

So I guess at this point what I'd say is that we will keep the industry obviously fully apprized through the permitting process.

As we end up getting the WSAs, we'll be working closely with the Captain of the Port and the maritime industry through our established Port Safety Council Area Maritime Security Committee to put together work groups as needed to go ahead and assess the proposed operations so that the captain of the port can generate a letter of recommendation back and forth.

With that, I'll open up the floor to any questions.

MR. BURGESS:

I can give a little bit of update on the Louisiana LNG Energy project.

Last week, Friday, we received our funding commitments. We should have a press release going out either this afternoon or tomorrow from Chart Industries who will be building the liquefaction modules.

I think they've built the coal boxes in New Iberia, Louisiana. Our equity partner is ArcLight Capital. ArcLight Capital is in Plaquemines Parish throughout Louisiana. They own the High Point Energy system for gas transmission.

We expect to submit our LOI by the end of June at the same time that we submit our prefilling to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

We will be at the July Port Security Council meeting for a presentation. We will be glad to do that.

We're speaking with customers now, and we believe, talking to our potential customers, that -- we're trying to identify what parcel size they are looking for to move their volumes, and we think it will be in a parcel size that will be typical of an AFRAMAX tanker drawing about 38 feet of water, and we might have two, possibly three, ships a month.

We are a significantly smaller LNG terminal than what you're reading about, and our neighbors to the south. We're much smaller in output and in capital expenditure, and we do plan to provide a low cost and emissions compliant fuel for south Louisiana for vessel operators, for rail transport, and for other uses to displace diesel fuel and the omissions and particulate matter that come out of diesel.

And I'm available afterwards for any comments. Again, our CEO, Jim Lindsay, is out in the truck talking to investors, and we are -- actually, we're starting to get people paid. So we've got Lanier & Associates designing our dock. We're paying our liquefaction people. So we're addressing the project, and it's moving along nicely, I think.

MS. FELDER:

Right.

MR. BURGESS:

Again, any questions are welcome, and my contact details are on the sign-in sheet, and you are very welcome to contact us at any time.

MS. FELDER:

Thank you so much. Thank you very much.

Captain Shifflin, are you going to talk to us about VTS? You're on the agenda.

CAPT SHIFFLIN:

I think I (inaudible).

MS. FELDER:

There you go.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

I'm back.

MS. FELDER:

Good.

LCDR [REDACTED]:

All right. Two items, one that's been touched upon a lot here is that I will be relieving [REDACTED] in the waterways management position.

My relief, [REDACTED], will be here in August, and I have cards with the updated cellphone. If you already have [REDACTED]'s phone number in your phone, that's the same one I'll be assuming. It's a little bit of a shell game in the Coast Guard, but I'm here.

The second part I want to talk about is vessel traffic services. The Coast Guard has a desire to civilianize all of the vessel traffic services throughout the nation.

Recently, headquarters has come up with a new staffing model, and in that new staffing model there is a proposal that VTS Lower Mississippi River may receive additional billets to staff another controller position.

In anticipation of this, I'm seeking advice and recommendations from LMRWSAC on how we want to test and effectively employ this watch station to assist with the maritime safety, security, and mobility on the Lower Mississippi River. I --

CAPT GAUTIER:

So basically, what this means is the Coast Guard -- we already have a civilianized VTC here at sector -- with the exception of Jamie's Billet, but the Coast Guard is examining and is going towards civilianization of the ones that -- other places around the country that have active-duty members as actual watch standers.

So that aspect won't impact us too much, but there has been discussion about the potential for six new buildings here, six new individuals.

This is still not a final decision, but we wanted to pave the way with LMRWSAC seeing -- recognizing the history of LMRWSAC and the importance of determining VTS watch stations and regulatory requirements to put this in, as perhaps an agenda item for future meetings, and get some discussion going on what additional areas of the river or how we might better or best employ these new bodies should they come.

MS. FELDER:

Is there a time frame?

CAPT GAUTIER:

No, there is not.

MS. FELDER:

Due date?

MR. DELOACH:

How will that impact the high water action plan when we have to put the controls in in Baton Rouge and we have been having to send people to New Orleans from industry to man the VTS shore --

CAPT GAUTIER:

Good question. That will remain the same, unchanged.

What we do in high water and other large events like river closures is we'll staff an additional station in an emergency condition by paying overtime, basically, to have like a surge capability coming in.

MR. DELOACH:

So we'll still have to supply people from industry to assist?

CAPT GAUTIER:

We would still welcome you supplying that so that we would have better -- good real-time decisions made around Wilkerson.

MS. FELDER:

Any other comments now?

I totally agree that I think this needs to be an item for the next agenda and maybe folks come back with some thoughts on how to move forward, unless you need some input before we would have another meeting.

MR. MORTON:

Is there funding for this Coast Guard authorization (inaudible)?

CAPT GAUTIER:

The funding would come with these individuals. It's a zero sum game. Some VTCs around the country would be losing --

MR. MORTON:

Oh, all right.

MS. FELDER:

Joy?

MS. MANTHEY:

What do you foresee the needs of what the 66 billets would do? I mean --

CAPT GAUTIER:

It's just six.

MS. FELDER:

Six.

CAPT GAUTIER:

I'm sorry. Six billets.

MS. MANTHEY:

Sorry.

CAPT GAUTIER:

That's what we're asking you-all for. I think there are areas of higher risk. I've gotten some thoughts from just individuals discussing things with me. There's areas in the river where, given our limited manpower and current VTC, we do not pay much attention to, quite frankly, even though the entire Lower Mississippi River is covered under VTS rules.

So we'd like to hear from you, what you think.

MR. COLON:

I have a question. Why -- when was it decided -- why do we turn the light off at Algiers? Is that a budget, a money -- financial decision, or why is it not on at all times? I mean, we've had examples of things happening with the light off --

CAPT GAUTIER:

Lights, and then one-way vessel traffic.

MR. COLON:

Vessel traffic, yes.

Why do we shut it off at 8, 9 foot, and going down --

CAPT GAUTIER:

Sure.

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MR. COLON:

-- especially in an area where --

CAPT GAUTIER:

Jamie or George, you want to --

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Yeah, I'll take a swing at it. George, you can backstop me on this.

So in the Code of Federal Regulation, that kind of dictates how we run, operate. Under 161 it tells us how to operate Algiers Point, and in there it says at high water, at 8 foot on the rise, captain of port may turn on the light.

Captain of port also has the authority to run high water measures with the light at other times he seems -- he deems to be fit, but that's when they dictate in the CFR to turn it on, so only during high waters really, unless the captain deems it necessary otherwise, so --

MR. COLON:

Is it a liability issue or --

CAPT GAUTIER:

Are you looking for one-way vessel traffic --

MR. COLON:

No, no. I'm wondering, why don't we keep VTS involved all year?

LCDR [REDACTED]:

Right. Well, from our perspective, the vessel -- the study that was done back in '97 -- and our direction, our goal here is to provide a safer navigational area without being too overbearing on vessel traffic.

And our concerns would be that if we controlled traffic around the point and made it one way year round, it has proven to be safe for the most part, and I'd say probably 99 percent of the traffic passes through safely, if not more. I think it might just be more of an imposition on the mariner that's unnecessary.

CAPT GAUTIER:

George, do you want to add anything?

MR. PETRAS:

Captain Colon, that's a great question, and it's obviously something that we can look into. It's been a while since we've done a PAWSA, which is a Ports and Waterways Safety Analysis. I mean, those things can be discussed.

But, I mean, I look at documents from 1920 where the port said, "Hey, look, ships are getting bigger, there's more of them coming, and we need to do something."

And when that document started, obviously, the lights, and everyone focused on, "Hey, let's do it during high waters."

And so what we've done is continued that process that was initiated back in 1920, and it's now codified, as Jamie said, in the federal -- in the CFR under the federal regulations for VTSs.

And I would have to say that 1920 document was revisited back in the '90s, around 1997, year 2000. We looked at it as a community and did an analysis, and they said, "Hey, the group that was engaged in that said it was only necessary during high water."

If that's something that needs to be revisited, we do have the tools available to do that, and we'll figure out whether it's a year-round or just a high-water initiative.

But at that time, when it was revisited in 1997/2000 era, it was determined that the most appropriate time would be during -- to keep it the way it has always been, and that's during the high water, 8 foot on the Carrollton gauge.

And effectively, that's what -- somebody mentioned one-way traffic. That's essentially what we are doing, managing the 1.5-mile point around Algiers Point, that 1.5-mile distance, about a half mile or a little bit more on each side, making sure that the vessels do not meet, overtake, or cross without first getting the permission from the VTS and then making those arrangements with the other vessels that they would be encountering in that area, so ...

LCDR [REDACTED]

If I could just add, it's important to note for those that aren't informed about that, there's a watch station up in the VTC that constantly monitors that area with mandatory check-in points.

So they're always watching that area for instances where they may need to offer recommendations, measures, et cetera, et cetera.

So we don't want to give you the impression that it's only during high water that someone's watching that point.

MR. PETRAS:

Does that answer your question, Captain Colon?

MR. COLON:

Yeah, right, which, going to what Sully's saying, they're there all the time anyway.

MR. PETRAS:

Right.

MR. COLON:

Why not use them? And that's my question, is --

MR. HATHORN:

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You wouldn't want one-way traffic all the time, would you?

MR. COLON:

No, no, we wouldn't. But there's instances, like where I'm getting to is back to the VHF.

There's been instances when you get to that point, and it's not totally -- it's maybe too late, that now a vessel's coming down GNO, and when should we depend on VTC to say something or not say something or -- you see where I'm getting to?

It's VTC, are they responsible when that light is off to say, "Look, you have a vessel coming down on the GNO, you might want to hold up a little while" --

CAPT GAUTIER:

And maybe that's more off-line training and discussion about VTS procedures, because we --

MR. DUFFY:

Yeah, that may be a modification of some internal procedures that -- some special circumstances that you may have identified that are necessary or need to be addressed.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Because the majority of the time they're monitoring --

MR. COLON:

Right, right.

CAPT GAUTIER:

-- but then when a higher-risk situation is --

MR. COLON:

Developing.

CAPT GAUTIER:

-- is appearing, then they will get actively involved and direct, if necessary, in order to avoid collision.

MR. MORTON:

So I note the demand for your people at VTS is -- a lot of it is driven by the water levels here, and you've got a higher demand on higher river.

But is there any potential for giving them a screen that watches the Baton Rouge Harbor on a full-time basis, so that even when we do have to impose the WAP, it would be more seamless.

It's not having to stand something up new, because -- and I don't know about the guys at Wilkerson Point, but as a Port Allen lock user, I'd welcome the ability to call VTS and check to see what's coming up and down out there in front of me.

CAPT GAUTIER:

That's a possibility. And even in the absence of a watch station, we would really benefit from some sensors like we're getting at 81 Mile Point up around Wilkerson Point as well.

MR. MORTON:

And also, I had suggested something for GICA a couple years ago in regard to looking at a system somewhat like air traffic control where you're managing the number of vessels that are coming down into the harbor for standby for the locks, and it would take a lot of coordination with Corps and the Coast Guard together.

And one of the reasons they said it wasn't really feasible, because of manpower -- but where you can identify vessels that are going to leave the fleets going to a lock, and you can tell them when to leave or not leave to get to the lock so they're not having to float around in a harbor for a day. You know, they can stay tied up in a fleet up at Alan's place for a day instead of spending it floating around out there in the industrial lock.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Sure.

MR. SAVOIE:

In follow-up on that, because I was going to bring that up in -- I guess, in old business -- that's -- it's almost a problem now. The last few days or last few weeks, we've had some extensive lock delay, and I'll tell you straight out, I was holding tows in Marrero to keep them from going and getting into congestion down at Industrial.

And when our boats would call and check with the lock to see, "What's our lock" -- he would tell them, "Hey, I know what you're doing, I know where you are."

Well, we're safe, and we're out of the way, that should be permitted, and it seemed like it irritated the lock master a little bit.

MR. MORTON:

Right.

MR. SAVOIE:

So I think, probably, we should address that.

MR. DELOACH:

So we can use your six billets up quickly.

CAPT GAUTIER:

You're presuming -- you mentioned it earlier, about scheduling no hurricane season in conjunction with the Army Corps project. That's a multi-agency issue we're talking about.

MR. PETRAS:

Captain, if I might, George Petras again.

At the Waterway Action Plan meeting, I did discuss that the captain did submit a memo up to the headquarters identifying the fact that we did need six additional billets, and we also needed some part-time employees during high water in that Baton Rouge area.

And that memo was partially addressed with the addition, or the proposed addition, planned addition, of those six billets, but we have not -- I don't think we have given up on those part-time positions during the high -- or seasonal positions during the high water -- extreme high water that we'll have in Baton Rouge to stand up a Baton Rouge VTC.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Vic, did you want to comment on the last couple of comments in terms of lock cueing and something to do with that?

MR. LANDRY:

You know, we're always -- Vic Landry, Corps of Engineers.

We're always open to new suggestions and a better way to do things. We always want to operate more

efficiently, and I think during high water periods we've expanded, I guess, the limits of where you can get on lock turn, and we've tried to make it more safe so that you can hold up in fleets.

I think we went to 8 miles, and we want to make it more efficient. Some people play games. They want to get on lock turn early, and they'll take advantage, I find sometimes, and it gets frustrating for the guys at the lock --

MR. DUFFY:

Look over there. I'm --

MR. LANDRY:

But sometimes it just turns out that some people try to game the system. It's like, look, we want to do things efficiently and safely. That's our number one goal, and we -- I've discussed with many of you, how can we do it, and we've implemented certain things, especially during high water periods.

We want to keep tows off the levees. We don't want them nosing into the toe of the levee during high water periods. So we want to protect the protection system as well as make it safe for the mariners.

So I think some of these things have worked, and like I said, we're always open to new creative ideas.

So, look, if you guys have anything especially unique, I've talked to Z. Dave about doing this up at Port Allen. Like I said, I've got two lock operators, and actually, my boss is telling me we're going to be reducing to one lock operator in the future at certain times, because we're in such a manpower shortage, and the Corps is reducing our numbers.

So instead of our standard two lock operators at most locks, a lot of times we'll have one guy, which I don't like, but it's just the nature of the government right now.

So to take on additional duties like you said, at this point it's just -- it wouldn't be safe, in my opinion, to put that on my lock operators.

MR. SAVOIE:

But does it matter to the lock operator if a boat's on lock turn if he's within 8 miles where he is? As long as -- if he's staying in touch with your operator, that his turn's coming in six hours, and then he moves down to be in position to go through the lock so that he doesn't hold up anybody, why would that matter to the lock operator?

MR. LANDRY:

See, I have no issues if it's done correctly and efficiently. And some of these guys get on lock turn, and then we'll call them up, and they're not there at -- they're a ghost tow somewhere.

Or it's happened when Algiers was down last year, and we had 80, 85 on turn at Harvey, and we decided, all right, we're going to go into operation at Algiers, and we're going to work the lock turn basically in order, and we'll prioritize it, no one will get a special priority, and we start calling tows in, and some of the people were nowhere to be found.

MR. LORINO:

And they get dropped.

MR. LANDRY:

And they did. But a lot of people, they stay on turn, and, "Hey, we're still on turn, you're number's one, two, three," and some people were gaming the system, and it's -- and that's -- like I know everybody has priorities, and everybody's got to make money, and I totally sympathize with industry with that.

I think what we're doing right now is the best we can with what we've got, but if anyone has some great creative solution, I'm all ears.

MR. DELOACH:

We can make that work in Baton Rouge, and we have some rules. Of course, we're a smaller system up there, admittedly, but we make it work, and we do have some rules. If you're a ghost tow, you get skipped. You go to the next guy, and you go back to the end of the line, so --

MR. LANDRY:

Right.

MR. SAVOIE:

Yeah, I'd agree with that, even in New Orleans. If the guy's not ready, shame on him; but if they're there and they're holding up in a fleet, don't make the guy get within that 8 miles or get within the -- I can see you, because we all know the AIS. They know exactly where --

MR. LANDRY:

Oh, yeah, we're watching on AIS. And, I mean, the thing is, I guess, within the -- the limit is so that we can get the vessel through the lock in a timely fashion.

And as far as Z. Dave, at Port Allen, if -- he's talking --

MR. SAVOIE:

As usual.

Hey, Z., he's trying to answer your question over here.

MR. DELOACH:

Frankie distracted me.

MR. LANDRY:

But, Z., if you and Brad Blanchard -- I mean, I know you guys talk frequently, and you guys are good partners.

So if you guys have some great creative solutions, hey, we're always open to implement new things.

And Brad's -- he's never a guy to just put his head in the sand and say, "It's the way it's always been, and I don't want to listen."

So if you have some great ideas, I'm all ears. You and I and Brad can go sit in his office up at Port Allen and -- now, are you talking purely at high water or --

MR. DELOACH:

No, no, no -- but yeah, basically at high water. And it's because of Brad Blanchard that we do make that work in Baton Rouge.

MR. LANDRY:

Sure.

MR. DELOACH:

And we discuss it on a regular -- almost a daily basis sometimes, about what's happening out there in the harbor in high water.

But it works. We let the boats stay in the fleet, and within a certain time frame before locking, depending on how many boats are on turn, we'll give them a heads-up and say, "It's time for you to come in on the lock."

So the boats actually have to monitor it and stay in touch with the lock.

MS. FELDER:

I know a few years ago, high water issues, Jim worked very closely with you, Vic, I think to do something very similar in Industrial, and I think Algiers.

MR. LANDRY:

Yeah, we'll -- during periods of high water, we'll allow tows to come break tow in the forebay --

MS. FELDER:

Right.

MR. LANDRY:

-- which we typically don't allow. We want to get people out of the river where they're at danger. So we want to definitely mitigate risk at all costs.

MR. DELOACH:

If you got a good VTS system down there, they can communicate with those vessels about when they should leave, because six hours in the river at high river is like in Reserve to Industrial. Can be down there.

MS. FELDER:

Any other --

MR. SAVOIE:

Right past the little 8-mile marker.

MR. DELOACH:

Yes.

MR. SAVOIE:

Hey --

MS. FELDER:

Any other comments about this? I think we should continue this discussion for sure.

(No response.)

MS. FELDER:

Is there any other new business?

MR. HATHORN:

I've got one item. Steve Hathorn, NOBRA pilots.

We have a problem area in the Baton Rouge Harbor around, say, it's Mile 225, between Arlington range lights and what I call Old Dravo (phonetic). I guess it's -- what is it now, Z., Stone Fuel?

MR. DELOACH:

Stone fuel.

MR. HATHORN:

Tows always do -- back in there and do barge work, take on fuel, whatever. It's probably one of the only places left up there for them to do tow work, and it's very close to the channel.

When you're coming through there with a loaded ship, it takes all the rudder just to keep it from going over there and hitting. High river, like now, is not a problem, but when the river's low to average, I think one day it's going -- an accident's going to be right there when a ship takes a run on you, runs over, and hits a tugboat.

I don't know what can be done about it, but it seems like it's something that -- it needs to be addressed, or maybe the towing industry doesn't even realize it's a problem.

But, I mean, they stick -- they're angled in. The stern of the boat is out in the channel. Even if it's a 20-barge tow, it's still almost in the channel, if it's laying flat, or it's very close to it.

I don't know what the answer is, but --

MS. FELDER:

Is this a recent problem that --

MR. HATHORN:

No, it's all -- I think it's gotten worse in recent years. The ships are bigger now.

MS. FELDER:

Yeah.

MR. HATHORN:

Drafts going -- Baton Rouge is busy again, and a lot of draft up there, so --

CAPT GAUTIER:

Steve, is it limited to specific companies or is it just any --

MR. HATHORN:

I'm not aware of any specific company that does work there. I don't know. Z. might know or --

MR. DELOACH:

It's the only place left to back in or do tow work --

MR. HATHORN:

Yeah.

MR. DELOACH:

-- between the I-10 bridge and Red Eye Range, because you got fleets everywhere else --

MR. HATHORN:

Everywhere else.

MR. DELOACH:

-- in the river. It's the only open space left.

MALE SPEAKER:

Steve, I think the first step is to get on the next LOMRC call. I'll let you know when it is, and we can bring it up, because maybe the towing industry doesn't know about it, so --

MR. HATHORN:

They might not be aware of --

MALE SPEAKER:

So we'll start out by trying to raise awareness and bring it up on the LOMRC call, and maybe that will fix the problem. If not, we can get LOMRC together, and we can discuss what we can do to prevent it from happening.

MR. HATHORN:

I agree with you, Z., though. It's the only place up here for them to do tow work. It's going to be hard to --

MR. DELOACH:

And it's the same area where I was talking about earlier, where on the other side, your ship's out there at the (inaudible) --

MR. HATHORN:

Yeah.

MR. DELOACH:

-- of the barge lanes.

MALE SPEAKER:

Yeah, that whole area is getting very congested, up in the Baton Rouge area now with Louis Dreyfus and all these new facilities coming on line. It's -- that whole area in the Baton Rouge Harbor is getting very congested.

MR. DELOACH:

It's Alan's fleet that's causing --

MR. HATHORN:

It's just going to get worse.

MR. SAVOIE:

It's not Alan's fleet. Alan just happened to be there.

MR. HATHORN:

But I just wanted the towing industry to know about it, be aware of it --

MS. FELDER:

I think --

MR. HATHORN:

-- maybe get it out to your people, and --

MS. FELDER:

Right. And I think --

MR. HATHORN:

-- I think we can go from there.

MS. FELDER:

-- taking that (inaudible) is the very first step. And if not, bring it back to us and (inaudible).

MALE SPEAKER:

And I'll do that.

MS. FELDER:

Great. Thank you.

All right. Old business, George Petras.

MR. PETRAS:

Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

Real quick, George Petras from the Vessel Traffic Service. I was asked to make a few comments with regards to the widening project on the Huey P. Long Bridge.

I think when we started out with that process there were three factors that were going to be critical to its success. One is our ability to collaborate. Collaboration was a huge part of the project.

What I mean by that is it was about eight years ago today at a meeting very similar to this that Clair came to and said, "Hey, we're about to widen the bridge," and I think that was a total shock to the folks in here.

But we were able to get ahead of it with his presentation and say, "Look, the proposal that you have is not going to be satisfactory for us, both from a commercial standpoint, the economic standpoint, the impact on the closures."

So we were able to essentially coordinate or plan with another team, which is the other essential factor there, is we got the key stakeholders and players at the table, and we talked about how do we go about minimizing the impact to the waterway during this widening project, which was going to last seven years. I think it ended up being about a seven-year project.

If you remember, at that presentation, they said that we would be impacted by several hundred closures, and each closure would last six hours. We got together. We said, "There's no way. You need to find a different way."

And it was so far in advance that the engineers actually looked at the proposal, and they changed the way they were going to construct the bridge. They said, "We're going to abandon the way we proposed it, which is the classic way of building or reconstructing a bridge, and we're going to initiate something that has never been tried before."

And for that, that company, MTI, was nominated -- in 2014 they were one of five finalists in the American Civil Engineering awards banquet this -- I think this past March. They were recognized as one of the outstanding projects for innovation.

But essentially what they did, they said, "We're not going to construct the bridge in place, we're going to do it downriver, and we're going to bring those segments up and make those lifts."

So we minimized those hundred different lifts into one big lift, and we were able to do that in four series. So we only shut the waterway down four times, as opposed to the 150 they proposed for six hours.

The second piece, again, is the collaboration. We made sure we had the right stakeholders at the table. We talked about the planning. From those meetings we actually came up with what we called a two-week look-ahead; and that two-week look-ahead was what projects, what closures, what impact to the waterway are we going to have immediately, and what are you planning for in the next two weeks.

And that led to the third piece, and that was using the VTS's communication, the vessel traffic service's communications capability, the network that they have developed, and communicated those plans out to the folks.

So I think those three keys -- those factors were key to the success of the project, and I think we did a fairly decent job of making sure that the waterway was minimally impacted.

So as it stands now, we closed the project officially. In June we did our last lift -- or actually drop -- where we actually lowered the obstructions that we had, and it wasn't until November that we had -- the State finally signed off on the surveys, and they came up with the surveys for the Huey P. Long Bridge and officially closed it in December.

So as it stands now, for planning purposes, what I call voyage passage planning -- so if you're on a ship in Europe and you're headed to Baton Rouge, you can use the 152 feet minus the Carrollton gauge for your passage planning.

But on a real-time basis, if you're in the river and you're about to go under the waterway, you go back to Tim Osborn's group in that physical oceanographic real-time surveillance system and go to that website, and you'll see the real-time hype that you have, the real-time air gap.

So for -- from a tactical standpoint, when you're in the waterway and you're about to go under the bridge, real-time information is through ports, but for passage planning, the 152 minus the Carrollton gauge is what you can use.

That's about it. Any questions or concerns?

MS. FELDER:

No. But I would just like to comment that I was in that meeting seven, eight years ago, whatever it was, and it's, to me, a huge success story of how working together really works.

And I just really thank you-all so very much for coming to all of our LMRWSAC meetings, going to Port Safety Council meetings. You probably -- always came with great video and that kind of thing, and just really, really appreciate it. So thank you very much.

MR. STEWART:

Clair Stewart for Massman Construction.

I appreciate everybody's help in here. We wouldn't have been successful at giving the product that we have there now without the two-week and everybody's help. So thank you, and it's a beautiful bridge. So we --

MS. FELDER:

It is a beautiful bridge.

MR. STEWART:

-- enjoyed doing it.

MALE SPEAKER:

And they got beat out by the east closure complex for the outstanding engineering project.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Tough competition.

MS. FELDER:

Yeah.

MALE SPEAKER:

Yeah. We were on that too.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Well, to recognize the importance and your hard working in working with the navigation community, Clair, Ben, and Justin, I'd like to invite you up here, up front for more formal recognition from the Coast Guard on behalf of LMRWSAC. I'll go around and meet you. So this is for Clair.

MR. STEWART:

Yes.

CAPT GAUTIER:

And, Ben, it's been a long time.

So I'd like to read --

(Applause.)

MS. FELDER:

Hold that thought.

CAPT GAUTIER:

It actually comes with a citation. So the Coast Guard is presenting the certificate of merit to Clair Stewart, Ben Curry, and Justin Lane -- who isn't here today -- for the services as set forth in the following:

The Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard takes great pleasure in presenting the Coast Guard certificate of merit for their exceptional dedication, exemplary leadership, and professionalism while serving as the field engineers for the Huey Long Bridge widening project from April 2006 to June 2009.

The high-profile \$1.2 billion, seven-year-long, four-phase project that created a safer travel route for motorists, a more efficient hurricane evacuation route, an enhanced connectivity for commuters between the east and west banks of Jefferson Parish was completed without a single waterway incident and minimal impact to waterborne commerce.

Teamwork and collaboration were the hallmark of this project as their outreach efforts ensured intermodal transportation system stakeholders were involved in every phase of the project's planning.

Their presentations to waterway stakeholders initiated efforts to abandon traditional section-by-section construction techniques and adopt an innovative first-of-its-kind, span-by-span erection method.

Widely regarded as a complete success, the outreach and communication process developed during this project will have long-lasting positive impacts on future waterways initiatives.

Their dedication to the safety of this port and its people is most heartily committed and is in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Coast Guard.

Thanks, gentlemen.

Now we can clap.

(Applause.)

MS. FELDER:

Thank y'all very much.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Thanks very much.

MS. FELDER:

So what's your next project?

MR. STEWART:

We've both transferred on. I'm actually upriver in New Corp (phonetic). So I heard that name mentioned with traffic and such. We've just finished that port and built them a new facility on the river.

MS. FELDER:

Cool.

MR. STEWART:

And we're actually downriver at Convent Marine expanding their port, so --

MS. FELDER:

Good.

MR. STEWART:

-- we're looking for work on the river and enjoy working there.

MS. FELDER:

You certainly got the experience with the river.

MR. CURRY:

(Inaudible) industry in New York on the new Tappan Zee Bridge.

MS. FELDER:

Oh, wow.

MR. CURRY:

Yeah, we're --

MS. FELDER:

That's a huge project.

MR. CURRY:

And so we can do the (inaudible) people up there.

MS. FELDER:

Right. Thank you again.

MR. STEWART:

Massman and Traylor both -- Ben's with Traylor, I'm with Massman -- we've been here for three years. We -- I remember seeing photos, like some of the older 1920 photos you had of the IHNC here, but the GNO --

MS. FELDER:

Yeah.

MR. STEWART:

-- and the Huey, and even Luling, I believe we had some portion of, both companies independently at different times. And we've been around this area for a while, and we appreciate it and share this with everybody in the company.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Thank you.

MS. FELDER:

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MS. FELDER:

We are almost at the end of our meeting. Are there any other comments from either committee or any of our friends sitting out there in the audience? Does anybody have anything else they want to offer, comment on?

If not, we've got several action items here. We're going to -- George is going to check up the old interference report from the '70s, and if necessary, we'll put together another group to review that and see what we can come up with as far as the interference problems at Algiers Point.

Z. Dave is going to call the Waterways Journal and let them know about the E-ATON.

MR. DELOACH:

E-mailed them already.

MS. FELDER:

All right. Good. That's done. I can scratch that off. It's all good.

I want to remind everybody about the May 7th meeting, 9:00 at the port for the navigation listening session.

Encourage everybody to participate in that.

GICA is going to take the lead on the planning for the IHC closure, but I encourage committee members who want to participate in that to get ahold of Jim Stark and be involved.

Colin, is it possible to get copies of some of the slide presentations? I've had a couple of folks ask that we can maybe e-mail those minutes.

LTJG [REDACTED]:

(Inaudible.)

MS. FELDER:

Okay. Good. We can do that.

We're going to continue to think about the VTS billets and move forward with that, so get some feedback.

That's about it on my list here. So thank you again for coming. I thought it was a great meeting, time well spent.

And I would like to, again, congratulate Captain Gautier, and I look forward to seeing you in Washington. We will miss you. And thank you so much for your leadership here, and we really, really appreciate it. Thank you.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Thank you.

MS. FELDER:

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. FELDER:

That's it. Amen.

(Whereupon, the deposition was concluded.)

* * *

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

This certification is valid only for a transcript accompanied by my original signature and original required seal on this page.

I, Gretchen Hall, Certified Court Reporter in and for the State of Louisiana, as the officer before whom this testimony was taken, do hereby certify that this testimony was reported by me in the stenotype reporting method, was prepared and transcribed by me or under my personal direction and supervision, and is a true and correct transcript to the best of my ability and understanding; that the transcript has been prepared in compliance with transcript format guidelines required by statute or by rules of the board, that I have acted in compliance with the prohibition on contractual relationships, as defined by Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure Article 1434 and in rules and advisory opinions of the board; that I am not related to counsel or the parties herein, nor am I otherwise interested in the outcome of this matter.

GRETCHEN HALL, CCR, RPR
CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER