

Belmont Anchorage discussed beginning on page 78. See highlighted text on page 78,79, 84 and 85.

Also search for "high water" and "anchor" to view anchorage discussion and high water issues.

1

LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER WATERWAY

SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

December 6, 2011

Ms. Felder, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order with the following members present:

Cheryl Felder

Channel Shipyard Company and Committee Chair

CAPT Peter Gautier

Captain of the Port of New Orleans

Diane Baum, Accusess Environmental, Inc.

Christian Bonura, Port of New Orleans

CAPT Mike Lorino, Associated Branch Pilots

CAPT Joy Manthey, Kirby Inland Marine

Sharon Balfour, Public

Ronald W. Branch Louisiana Maritime

John D. LeBlanc Chem Carriers Towing

James H. McDaniel, Jr. Kirby Inland Marine

George Duffy NSA Agencies, Inc.

Frank L. Pivik Valero Refinery

ORIGINAL

## P R O C E E D I N G S

COMMITTEE CHAIR:

Let's get started this morning.  
Welcome and welcome over to the Sector.  
This is Captain Pete Gautier's first  
LMRWSAC meeting and we're delighted to  
have him with us. If you haven't met  
him yet, you need to be sure to  
introduce yourself afterwards. I think  
he's going to be a great guy to work  
with and we're glad to have you here  
with us today for your first LMRWSAC  
meeting.

CAPT GAUTIER:

Thank you.

COMMITTEE CHAIR:

I also want to say Mr. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED], who has been the staff person  
who has handled all of the  
administrative issues for LMRWSAC is  
not with us today. He is going to be  
retiring next year and he's at one of  
his retirement, what do you call them,  
briefings or --

CAPT GAUTIER:

1 Preparation.

2 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

3 Preparation, right. So anyway,  
4 he's not here today, but I just want to  
5 publicly thank him so much for all the  
6 works he has done for the Committee the  
7 last few years. We've had issues  
8 trying to get our charter renewed and  
9 all that sort of stuff and he's just  
10 done a great job and he's been very  
11 great to work with. He is being  
12 replaced by Lieutenant [REDACTED].  
13 Mr. [REDACTED] is right here and I'm looking  
14 forward to working with him. Thank you  
15 so much for taking on this task and we  
16 will move forward.

17 I would like to remind everybody  
18 when you speak to please speak loudly  
19 and give your name so that our court  
20 reporter can get that for the record.

21 Let's go ahead and start then with  
22 intros. Captain Gautier.

23 CAPT GAUTIER:

24 Thank you very much. Well, good  
25 morning everyone. It's a pleasure for

1 me to be here at my first LMRWSAC  
2 meeting as the Captain of the Port and  
3 also as Designated Federal Officer for  
4 the LMRWSAC. I'd like to, just while I  
5 have time, give you a few updates on  
6 some things that might be of interest.  
7 The towing vessel briefing strategy: We  
8 have conducted 390 of these industry  
9 initiated exams on towing vessels.  
10 This is about 60 percent of the  
11 apportioned fleet in the Sector New  
12 Orleans area responsibility so that  
13 continues to be, I think, a very  
14 successful program that's preparing us  
15 to the eventuality of regulations in  
16 Subchapter M.

17 We have greatly appreciated the  
18 assistance of industry in implementing  
19 another regulation. This one is a  
20 final rule adjusting the weight  
21 standards for passenger vessels. These  
22 became required the first of December  
23 and I'm very pleased to announce that  
24 100 percent of the passenger vessel  
25 industry here in the Sector New Orleans

1 area responsibility have submitted  
2 plans that are required under this  
3 regulation and so we have full  
4 compliance. It's a good news story.

5 I've said it in other venues, and  
6 I'll just mention it again today that  
7 we are planning an Industry Day in  
8 strength. I understand that it has  
9 been quite a while since the Coast  
10 Guard has sponsored one in this area.  
11 This will be a Sector New Orleans  
12 Industry Day, not a District 8 Industry  
13 Day. We're still in the very early  
14 stages of planning this and we've  
15 spoken informally to several of you  
16 here in the room about that and I think  
17 that as time goes on, we'll harden up a  
18 schedule for this and we'll more  
19 formally talk to you all about ideas,  
20 thoughts about how to conduct this and  
21 about topics that we would want to  
22 discuss with you all.

23 But basically, this will be an  
24 opportunity for members of industry and  
25 members of the Coast Guard here at the

1 Sector to get to know one another even  
2 better to establish or re-establish or  
3 to bolster relationships at the staff  
4 level, at the worker level for  
5 individuals here at the Sector and then  
6 who they will be working with or who  
7 they work with on a daily basis in the  
8 port and on the river. So stay tuned  
9 for more information on that.

10 We are working on an updated memo  
11 that establishes requirements for pilot  
12 licensing on the lower Mississippi  
13 River. The last time this was done was  
14 in the 1990s and there have been a  
15 number of updates that you need to put  
16 into this memo. And what this is, is  
17 basically policy established by the  
18 Captain of the Port OCMI to the  
19 regional exam center now that they  
20 don't fall directly into my chain of  
21 command. This will be me establishing  
22 with them what requirements pilots will  
23 have to do in order to get their  
24 licenses here on the river and I have  
25 been circulating a draft of that to the

1 pilot organization. It is not  
2 substantially different than what it  
3 has been, but there will be some  
4 updates that I think will benefit all  
5 of us on the river. So stay tuned for  
6 that, as well.

7 I wanted to mention, too, that  
8 we've established or implemented a  
9 tracking system for certain dangerous  
10 cargos here on the river through the  
11 vessel traffic service upstairs. It  
12 came to my attention one morning when  
13 we placed a vessel with a certain  
14 dangerous cargo, fully laden vessel of  
15 hydrous ammonia, and general anchorage  
16 just down the river a little ways  
17 because of fog at Algiers Point. And I  
18 want to try to avoid those  
19 circumstances where we place those  
20 sorts of cargos in highly populated  
21 areas. I talked to the pilots about  
22 this, but I think what will help is  
23 what we've done at VTS which is through  
24 the notice of arrival process, vetting  
25 those vessels and then placing a tag on

1           them so that the VTS can track them  
2           through the entire river system rather  
3           than just in the areas where reporting  
4           is required. And I think that will  
5           just help us manage the risk a little  
6           bit better, especially as we're in fog  
7           season now and we have a much bigger  
8           likelihood that we'll be closing down  
9           the Point from time to time and we'll  
10          have to place vessels in anchorage.

11           Upcoming events: We've been  
12          assisting in the planning for the 200th  
13          anniversary in the commemoration of the  
14          War of 1812. That will be in April of  
15          this year. It should be a terrific  
16          event. The Navy is leading the  
17          planning with our Atlantic area  
18          command, but our local planning shop  
19          has been involved in that, as well.  
20          The Coast Guard Cutter Eagle will be  
21          calling on the Port of New Orleans, as  
22          well as a Navy flat-top carrier and  
23          destroyer and a frigate, as well a  
24          British corvette and a Canadian  
25          corvette, as well. And the Blue Angels



1 will be flying in Lake Pontchartrain.  
2 We have been working on planning for  
3 that, as well. It should be a great  
4 time.

5 I put this as a tickler for us all.  
6 For our next LMRWSAC meeting, I think  
7 we'll be looking for having a greater  
8 discussion on high water operations.

9 We're taking the lessons of the last  
10 high water and we're putting them into  
11 a plan. Now that we're through  
12 hurricane season, we're going to be  
13 focusing on this more as a Sector and I  
14 think we're just going to have a  
15 greater general discussion of that  
16 prior to our next high water season.

17 I see that the forecast is for  
18 heavy precipitation in the upper  
19 midwest this winter and so it looks  
20 like if that comes to fruition, that we  
21 will be having another high water event  
22 in the spring.

23 And so with that, Ms. Felder, I  
24 think I'll turn it back over to you.  
25 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

1 Are there any questions right now  
2 for Captain Gautier or can we hold off  
3 until when we open up discussion later?  
4 Is that okay with everybody?

5 COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

6 Agreement.

7 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

8 Very good. Let's go ahead before  
9 we move into the agenda and go around  
10 the room and introduce ourselves so  
11 that we all know who's here.

12 RON BRANCH:

13 Louisiana Maritime.

14 DOUG LEBLANC:

15 Chem Carriers Towing.

16 MIKE MILLER:

17 Associated Branch Pilots.

18 DIANE BAUM:

19 Accusess Environmental Inc.

20 SHARON BALFOUR:

21 Public.

22 CHRIS BONURA:

23 Port of New Orleans.

24 JOY MANTHEY:

25 Joy Manthey, Kirby Inland Marine.

1 TIM OSBORN:

2 NOAA Coast Survey.

3 JIM MCDANIEL:

4 Kirby Inland Marine.

5 ARNIE ROTHSTEIN:

6 Ingram Barge.

7 FRANK PIVIK:

8 Valero Refinery.

9 MARK WRIGHT:

10 AWO.

11 DARREN WRIGHT:

12 NOAA.

13 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

14 U.S. Coast Guard MSU Baton Rouge.

15 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

16 USACOE.

17 MICHAEL STARK:

18 NOAA.

19 KEVIN ALOMBRO:

20 CBP.

21 MIKE ROONEY:

22 NOBRA Plots.

23 TOM FORBES:

24 Chaffe McCall.

25 ROBERT TURNER:

1 SLFPAE.

2 WILLIAM STEGBAUER:

3 Southern Towing Company.

4 PATRICK ROBE:

5 NOAA.

6 [REDACTED]:

7 U.S. Coast Guard.

8 JIM MURPHY:

9 MARAD.

10 BRETT BOURGEOIS:

11 New Orleans Board of Trade.

12 CLAIR STEWART:

13 MTI.

14 SEAN DUFFY:

15 Louisiana Maritime Association.

16 Big River.

17 BEN CURRY:

18 KMTC.

19 LUIS PAIZ:

20 KMTC.

21 VIC LANDRY:

22 USACOE.

23 RICHARD EBERHARDT:

24 Waterways Journal.

25 COLIN CAMPBELL:

1 U.S. Coast Guard.

2 MARTIN LEGG:

3 Shell Trading.

4 JOHN FAY:

5 Port of New Orleans.

6 LYNN MUENCH:

7 AWO.

8 [REDACTED]:

9 U.S. Coast Guard.

10 CHRIS ACCARDO:

11 USACOE.

12 [REDACTED]:

13 U.S. Coast Guard.

14 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

15 Thank you all very much. Just a  
16 couple of other items that I wanted to  
17 bring up initially. Hopefully, all of  
18 the Committee members completed and  
19 returned the declaration regarding  
20 lobbying status. You've got to submit  
21 this declaration to certify a non-  
22 lobbying status to VHS. If you're  
23 going to serve on an advisory  
24 committee, Mr. [REDACTED] have you gotten  
25 them all? If not, what should they do?

1 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]:

2 I've placed blank ones inside the  
3 folders. If there's a blank one in it,  
4 that means we have not received one  
5 from you. I believe there's 13. So  
6 the ones with blanks mean that we  
7 haven't received one from you. There's  
8 about 12 out there that we still need  
9 to get.

10 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

11 I would ask everyone who has a  
12 blank there to please get that filled  
13 out and back to Mr. [REDACTED] so we can be  
14 legit here. We want to definitely do  
15 that. Also, we have received  
16 applications for all of the positions  
17 for the Committee and this list has  
18 been vetted, I understand, and will be  
19 send to the Department of Homeland  
20 Security and hopefully, within the next  
21 three to six months maybe --

22 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]:

23 We will be persistent.

24 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

25 Good. Excellent. Thank you very

1 much. In the meantime, the Committee is  
2 still valid under your old appointments  
3 and hopefully we'll get that  
4 reappointed. Along those lines, I  
5 understand also that our charter is up  
6 for renewal in March of next year. So  
7 I think that process is maybe underway,  
8 as well.

9 CAPTAIN [REDACTED]:

10 Yes, ma'am. I already sent it up  
11 to Ms. [REDACTED] over in DC. She's  
12 going over it now. She sent it back  
13 for review and so now it's in the  
14 process so we could have an answer in  
15 the next couple of months, as well.

16 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

17 Very good. Excellent. The next  
18 item on the agenda is approval of the  
19 March 24<sup>th</sup> minutes. I have made a few  
20 corrections mostly that are  
21 typographical in nature and that sort  
22 of thing. I have given those to Mr.  
23 [REDACTED]. Is there any discussion on  
24 these minutes or any other changes or  
25 corrections? If not, can I have a

1 motion to approve the minutes with the  
2 corrections that I've submitted,  
3 please?

4 MS. BALFOUR:

5 So moved:

6 MS. MANTHEY:

7 Second.

8 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

9 All in favor, aye?

10 COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

11 Aye.

12 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

13 Any oppose? Great. Moving to old  
14 business, Mr. Stewart, are you ready to  
15 give us our update on the Huey P. Long  
16 Bridge construction, which really seems  
17 to be -

18 CLAIR STEWART:

19 Big?

20 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

21 Well, big, but I mean, like almost  
22 over. It seems like "Wow."

23 CLAIR STEWART:

24 Well, we hope it is. Good morning.  
25 The Huey P. Long Bridge is just a bit



1 bigger these days. It's 65 feet wider  
2 and nearly 10,000 tons heavier. Today  
3 is the last scheduled blockage for MTI.  
4 We currently have a span 3 blockage to  
5 remove some painter's platforms and to  
6 install some new handrails. I just want  
7 to thank you for the last five years of  
8 making the Huey P. Long Bridge site a  
9 safe project for us. The wakes in the  
10 river make our work extremely dangerous  
11 and through the cooperation of the work  
12 we've had here in the last five years  
13 we've been very safe on the river so we  
14 want to thank you.

15 As Massman Construction Company,  
16 we've widened the concrete piers from  
17 2006 to 2008. We were told then that  
18 communication would be the key to our  
19 schedule. With our two-week notice  
20 emails and the cooperation of VTS Group  
21 and all of the marine industry, we  
22 closed the river numerous times and  
23 were able to maintain the schedule. So  
24 thank you.

25 As MTI, Massman, Traylor and IHI

1 Joint Venture, we widened each of the  
2 four massive spans weighing over 2,500  
3 tons each. In 2007, we presented our  
4 span-by-span approach, which was a  
5 phenomenal improvement for navigation  
6 over the obstructions that were caused  
7 by the contract method using false work  
8 in each of the spans and putting up  
9 piece-by-piece or stick built.

10 Through our span-by-span we were  
11 able to close the river only three  
12 times. In June of 2010, we closed the  
13 entire river for eight hours. In  
14 November of 2010, we closed it for 48  
15 hours to do the center span and, in  
16 April of 2011, we closed it for eight  
17 hours again. During the complicated  
18 process of tying the new widening truss  
19 to the existing truss, we were able to  
20 block just one of the two navigable  
21 spans allowing our crews to safely bolt  
22 these connections together.

23 Again, today marks our last major  
24 river blockage and we expect to  
25 complete our contract by February of

1 2012. During this time we may have  
2 some punch list issues that would  
3 require a long boom crane to go to the  
4 center of each of these spans. Our DOT  
5 inspectors are currently doing the  
6 punch list. We don't anticipate any,  
7 but I just kind of don't want to close  
8 the door to say entirely we'll never  
9 block it again. So if we do, it will  
10 be very minor in a short period of time  
11 and with our communication again we'll  
12 put out notice.

13 So finally, I'd like to introduce  
14 KMTC, which is Kiewitt, Massman &  
15 Traylor. They're doing the road  
16 approaches and doing the road concrete  
17 deck on the main span. Their contract  
18 is from 2008 to 2013.

19 So once again, I'd like to thank  
20 everybody for your continuous support  
21 and excellent communication with  
22 Massman at the Huey P. Long Bridge.

23 At this time, Luis Paiz and Ben  
24 Curry (phonetic). Thank you everybody.  
25 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

1 Thank you very much.

2 LUIS PAIZ:

3 Good morning. First of all, I want  
4 to take the opportunity to say thank  
5 you for the opportunity to introduce  
6 ourselves to all of you. My name is  
7 Luis Paiz. I work for Kiewitt, Massman  
8 & Traylor Construction. This is Ben  
9 Curry. He is going to be the Coast  
10 Guard coordinator for us in the near  
11 future. We're basically going to be  
12 the contractors responsible to build  
13 the next phase of the Huey P. Long  
14 Bridge, which is basically the roadway  
15 inside the truss. Basically now that  
16 MTI's work is winding down, we are  
17 going to start taking over for their  
18 responsibilities and start  
19 coordination with the Coast Guard. I  
20 know that MTI has done a hell of a job.  
21 They've done a fantastic job with  
22 communication and coordination and we  
23 intend to keep the same line of  
24 communication and make sure that  
25 everything is coordinated properly and

1 continue the good job that MTI has been  
2 doing so far.

3 So with that, what we're here for  
4 right now, we're going to give a brief  
5 presentation of our scope of work for  
6 the project and then the potential  
7 effects on marine traffic and basically  
8 address any questions that you could  
9 have.

10 BEN CURRY:

11 Like Luis said, this is a brief  
12 overview of our upcoming scope of work  
13 and the effects it will have on marine  
14 traffic.

15 I'll give you a brief overview for  
16 those who are not familiar with the  
17 bridge and the platforms that we  
18 currently have installed underneath the  
19 bridge and then a breakdown of our  
20 upcoming work and any anticipated  
21 restrictions we plan on having.

22 For those who are familiar, like  
23 Clair said, Massman originally came  
24 through and widened the piers and  
25 installed the W-frames. MTI came

1 through and installed the widening  
2 truss on the outside and then KMTC is  
3 coming through and doing the last phase  
4 of work where we're installing the new  
5 roadway and swapping traffic over to  
6 complete the project.

7 This is a brief overview of the  
8 main span. We've got fixed platforms.  
9 MTI came in and installed fixed  
10 platforms on spans 1, 3 and 4. Span 2,  
11 which is the main navigation span has a  
12 combination of fixed platforms and  
13 traveling platforms, which can be  
14 positioned anywhere on the span and are  
15 parked against the piers when not in  
16 use.

17 This is a section view through the  
18 main span. We've got the fixed KBC  
19 platforms here on the outside and MTI's  
20 rolling platform is down here in the  
21 middle since that can move anywhere on  
22 the span, it's normally parked against  
23 the piers when not in use.

24 This is our upcoming schedule.  
25 We'll be working on the bridge through

1 2013. The current phase of work that  
2 we have going on right now is the new  
3 outside lanes and retrofit work that's  
4 been ongoing since August and we're  
5 going to continue that work through the  
6 end of March. Starting in mid-April  
7 2012, we'll swap traffic over to the  
8 new lanes that we just created and then  
9 demolish the existing inside roadways  
10 so we can install the new roadway  
11 there. We anticipate that taking two  
12 to three months. Then that's finished  
13 in July. We'll construct the new lanes  
14 on the inside half of the bridge and  
15 that's a four-month duration we  
16 anticipate. And then about a year from  
17 now in January 2013, we will go  
18 through, once we have completed all our  
19 work, and remove all of the access  
20 platforms that we've installed  
21 underneath the bridge.

22 A little more details: The first  
23 phase of construction were currently  
24 building this outside set of lanes.  
25 We've got all the structural steel that

1 we need for the moment, and we're in  
2 the process of forming and pouring all  
3 of the decks. We're also doing some  
4 retrofit work on the existing bridge on  
5 the inside truss. This is a couple of  
6 quick pictures. This is the deck we  
7 poured back in November. This is on  
8 the upstream side of the bridge looking  
9 towards the eastbank of the older span  
10 1. We've got the new deck here and  
11 then the existing roadway back to here  
12 on the other side of this construction  
13 screening.

14 This is a view from one of the  
15 webcams that the State has provided.  
16 You can see the same thing. We've got  
17 the approaches that's coming across the  
18 bridge and the existing roadway there.  
19 Just so you can kind of see: We'll  
20 demolish this roadway in April and then  
21 build a new roadway there, as well.

22 The retrofit work that we're doing  
23 involves this particular member right  
24 here. This is over the main span here.  
25 We come through; we take that out. We



1 take that out and then bolt in a new  
2 angle there. It's fairly complicated  
3 work. Its access is very difficult  
4 through there.

5 We anticipate restrictions we plan  
6 on seeing for the first phase. The  
7 retrofit work -- we're doing the  
8 retrofit in the main span. We are  
9 going to have to have the travelers be  
10 active in that span. The entire  
11 duration of that work we anticipate at  
12 four to six weeks. We'll keep the same  
13 notification and vertical clearance.  
14 No complete channel closures; no  
15 blockages that we anticipate for this  
16 phase and we anticipate about 12 days.  
17 So we're going to request air draft  
18 restrictions in the center of the  
19 channel.

20 And then also, in late January 2012  
21 and early February 2012, we'll be  
22 pouring the decks over the main  
23 navigation channel and the alternate  
24 navigation channel. This shouldn't  
25 have any affect on traffic through

1 there. We just want to let everybody  
2 know what's going on. We'll have light  
3 plans up on the bridge, but that's  
4 about the only thing that will be  
5 affected there.

6 Phase II construction is the  
7 demolition of the existing roadway.  
8 This starts mid-April 2012. While  
9 traffic is swapped over to the new lane  
10 and we come through and demolish and  
11 take everything out.

12 A quick sketch of what we're doing:  
13 We're going to have an excavator placed  
14 on the existing roadway. We're going  
15 to saw cut all the slab sections, pick  
16 those out and truck those off the  
17 bridge and then we'll come through at  
18 night and lift the girder sections out  
19 off the new roadway with lane closures  
20 up there. We've got the excavator, a  
21 truck and we'll be trucking all the  
22 sections off the bridge. For this we  
23 are anticipating that we're going to  
24 have to have a few closures of the main  
25 and alternate navigation channels while

1 we're working above there. We intend  
2 to have containment underneath just so  
3 we don't drop anything on anybody it's  
4 probably best for everybody there.  
5 Duration schedules, we're still  
6 determining that and getting firm  
7 answers from our general subcontractor  
8 on what they're going to require and  
9 then we'll coordinate with the Coast  
10 Guard on what we're going to be  
11 allowed.

12 The third phase of construction  
13 starts in July. We'll be building the  
14 new inside lanes fairly similar to what  
15 we're doing right now. We'll place our  
16 Gantry crane back up there with all the  
17 stringers and again, no channel  
18 closures anticipated. We'll have the  
19 -- the travelers will be active for  
20 probably around four weeks total as  
21 we're working over the main span just  
22 so we have access and can stage  
23 materials and to prevent anything from  
24 falling in case we do drop something,  
25 which we don't anticipate.

1           The final phase of work is a year  
2           from now: All the access platforms do  
3           have to come down off the bridge. So  
4           there will probably be a few channel  
5           blockages as we're lowering these.  
6           We're going to lower them with winches  
7           off the deck. So we won't have cranes  
8           out there, but we will have, obviously,  
9           a barge or a tug to receive the  
10          platform once they're lowered.

11           Does anybody have any questions?

12          LUIZ PAIZ:

13           The only thing I want to clarify is  
14           that all the planning is going to be --  
15           we're going to coordinate with the  
16           Coast Guard and make sure that we  
17           minimize any impact to marine traffic.  
18           So we'll definitely keep that in mind  
19           and include the Coast Guard on any  
20           planning that requires their  
21           coordination. And as far as how we  
22           communicate to the rest of you and the  
23           Coast Guard, we're going to use exactly  
24           the same templates that MTI has been  
25           using. We're going to have the three-

1 week look ahead. So as far as changes,  
2 basically all you're going to see, for  
3 the most part, is a change in the title  
4 block from MTI to KMTC. But basically,  
5 everything else should remain the same  
6 just to be consistent and avoid any  
7 confusion.

8 RON BRANCH:

9 When you speak of removing the  
10 platform, does that include removing  
11 the rails that the platforms run off  
12 of?

13 LUIS PAIZ:

14 Yes.

15 RONALD BRANCH:

16 Those are definitely come off?

17 LUIS PAIZ:

18 Yes.

19 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

20 Any other questions?

21 SEAN DUFFY:

22 I just have one comment. This is  
23 Sean Duffy. With the air draft  
24 limitations that will be something we  
25 can talk about with the Coast Guard

1 group, but I saw one period of 12 days.  
2 Surely those won't be consecutive days  
3 and we'll have to have breaks in there.  
4 But that can be discussed in more  
5 detail outside.

6 BEN CURRY:

7 That was 12 days over that three-  
8 month period.

9 LUIS PAIZ:

10 Basically, I don't know of any  
11 changes, but we intend to use the same  
12 restrictions that MTI has been using  
13 and I think for air draft closures on  
14 Tuesday and Thursdays with a back-up on  
15 Saturday. So we will plan around those  
16 days that have been approved so far.

17 SEAN DUFFY:

18 Thank you.

19 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

20 Any other questions? Thank you  
21 gentlemen very much and I would like  
22 to, again, I know I do this every time,  
23 but just again reiterate what a success  
24 I think this construction project has  
25 been. I mean, from before, years

1 before, just the communication sitting  
2 down with industry, understanding what  
3 our needs are, it really has been a  
4 success story. I know that our  
5 brethren up the river in the Greenville  
6 area are not having quite the same  
7 success story and I think a lot of it  
8 has to do with lack of communication  
9 and pre-planning and that sort of  
10 thing. So again, I'd like to thank you  
11 and we'll look forward to working with  
12 you as you move into your phase of  
13 this.

14 LUIS PAIZ:

15 Thank you. We appreciate it.

16 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

17 Moving to the Corps of Engineers,  
18 Michelle. Would you like to give your  
19 report?

20 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

21 I'm Michelle Spraul, Operations  
22 Manager for the Mississippi River for  
23 the Corps of Engineers in New Orleans.  
24 Basically, I have the same message for  
25 you all that I had in fiscal year 2011.

1 For fiscal year 2012, we will be  
2 managing the Mississippi River  
3 navigation channel from Baton Rouge to  
4 the Gulf of Mexico with a similar plan  
5 that we did in FY 2011. That basically  
6 means that we do not have enough  
7 funding to maintain the channel all  
8 year round so you can expect probably  
9 the same type of restrictions that you  
10 had in FY 2011.

11 FY 12's President's budget is \$68  
12 million, but the House amount is \$66.6  
13 million. We're still operating under  
14 continuing resolution authority which  
15 means that we do not know exactly what  
16 our budget will be for the year.  
17 Hopefully, it will be somewhere in-  
18 between those two numbers.

19 Right now we have dredging  
20 scheduled in February for Southwest  
21 Pass and dredging is not scheduled  
22 until July for the crossing between  
23 Baton Rouge and New Orleans and also  
24 for New Orleans Harbor. The schedule  
25 will change based on river changes, but



1 that's what we're trying to stick with  
2 right now to insure that the funding  
3 lasts through the entire fiscal year,  
4 just as we did in 2011.

5 Some new news is that the weather  
6 service has some predictions out with  
7 Caro (phonetic) rising to 44 feet by  
8 December 8 and New Orleans hitting 13  
9 feet on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December. That  
10 means that we will probably see lots of  
11 additional shoaling in Southwest Pass.  
12 We normally would probably start  
13 dredging when we're getting over about  
14 10 feet at New Orleans. So if we're  
15 going up to 13 feet, then dredging  
16 probably will be necessary. However,  
17 we're going to try to hold off as long  
18 as we can because of the funding  
19 situation. So we'll continue to survey  
20 the channel, monitor conditions and  
21 decide what to do as we get closer to  
22 that 13 foot crest and see what kind of  
23 damage it does in the navigation  
24 channel as far as shoaling goes.  
25 Questions?

1 LYNN MUENCH:

2 Michelle, if you had to guess, what  
3 would be the full funding?

4 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

5 Usually it's the lesser of the two  
6 amounts.

7 LYNN MUENCH:

8 If you were going to do all the  
9 dredging you thought was necessary,  
10 what is the dollar -

11 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

12 I did some estimates last year and  
13 it probably would be about \$85 million  
14 just to do the dredging required, not  
15 to maintain any infrastructure we have  
16 such as the jetties and things like  
17 that, not dredging South Pass, none of  
18 that. Just to do the critical  
19 dredging, which is the crossings  
20 between Baton Rouge and New Orleans,  
21 New Orleans Harbor and Southwest Pass  
22 dredging, it would probably be around  
23 \$85 million a year and that would be  
24 for average river stages. So if you're  
25 getting up to higher river events

1 during the year, then that would  
2 increase the cost.

3 LYNN MUENCH:

4 And is the infrastructure at a  
5 breaking point? What's the dollar  
6 amount there?

7 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

8 South Pass is no longer navigable  
9 so that's pretty much pass the breaking  
10 point. South Pass would probably be  
11 between \$20 and \$30 million. South  
12 Pass jetties, I'm not there in -- well,  
13 we're not even getting out that far to  
14 evaluate them anymore, but they do need  
15 some repairs. That would be about \$10  
16 million. That's all in South Pass.  
17 The Southwest Pass jetties, they're  
18 still in pretty decent shape right now.  
19 So we just need to wait and see if we  
20 have any storms this year then they  
21 would need repairs. But to repair  
22 jetties, you're looking at at least \$10  
23 million for Southwest Pass jetties also  
24 if we would have to do that. But right  
25 now, those are in decent shape. So I'd

1 say you're past the breaking point  
2 right now would be South Pass dredging.

3 LYNN MUENCH:

4 If we had a year like -- for next  
5 year like we did last year, what's the  
6 number on that for dredging?

7 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

8 Well, we've increased it from \$85  
9 million and it's probably given that we  
10 would have to increase that anyway  
11 because we're starting this year with  
12 channel conditions that are not as good  
13 as we normally have since we weren't  
14 able to dredge as we would like to  
15 start the year. So we could probably  
16 say about \$110 -- \$110 is about the  
17 average that was spent over the past  
18 five years when we were able to get  
19 additional funding.

20 MIKE MILLER:

21 Michelle, any word on the wing dams  
22 that were damages during Tropical Storm  
23 Lee?

24 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

25 Yes, they're not going to get

1 repaired. That's the word on those.  
2 It was very expensive to repair those,  
3 those pile dikes. We're talking about  
4 the pile dikes in Southwest Pass. It  
5 was over \$1 million a piece to repair  
6 those and we were only able to do that  
7 because we had money from the American  
8 Recovery and Reinvestment Act. So  
9 unless we get some sort of emergency  
10 funding or a very large amount of  
11 additional funding in the future, we  
12 will not be able to repair those pile  
13 dikes.

14 MIKE MILLER:

15 Why do they fall apart so quickly?

16 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

17 The wave action. We did look at  
18 viewing -- on the very outer most pile  
19 dikes, all the way at the end, the ones  
20 effected with the most force from the  
21 Gulf, we did look at doing those as  
22 steel, instead of timber to try to take  
23 more action and last longer, but the  
24 estimate -- and we actually, I know  
25 navigation industry doesn't like having

1 steel out there in case it gets hit but  
2 we did, I think about two years ago, we  
3 actually did get you guys to sort of  
4 agree to that and we were looking at  
5 going ahead and doing that. However,  
6 the amount to repair steel as opposed  
7 to timber is about three times as much  
8 or more. So that's why we didn't go  
9 with the steel. So it's basically wave  
10 action on this timber pile is they just  
11 -- they can't hole up.

12 MIKE MILLER:

13 They're not as deep as they were  
14 previously because I don't ever  
15 remember anything that new being  
16 destroyed that quickly.

17 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

18 I was surprised myself. I  
19 understand. We repaired them -- they  
20 were repaired as they were originally.  
21 They were put back to the original and  
22 repaired or replaced -- actually,  
23 replaced in most cases.

24 MIKE MILLER:

25 Yeah, it was all new stuff.

1 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

2 Anything else?

3 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

4 Any other questions for Michelle?

5 Thank you, Michelle.

6 Sean Duffy is the Executive  
7 Director of the Big River Coalition and  
8 I've asked him to please give an update  
9 of the activities of that group. We're  
10 trying to approach this from a  
11 different standpoint to help the Corps  
12 find some money.

13 SEAN DUFFY:

14 Thanks, Cherie. The Big River  
15 Coalition is what's set up after the  
16 Corps went in through the white paper  
17 plan where they changed reprogramming  
18 that had been done for years was,  
19 however you word it, was basically  
20 taken off the table, maybe in an  
21 extreme situation reprogramming would  
22 be allowed, that was money being taken  
23 from another project to supplement  
24 dredging on the river. That also  
25 happened at the same time that in

1 Congress earmarks became a dirty word  
2 which great for our industry were the  
3 two ways that we kept the river dredged  
4 and maintained.

5 What Big River's really concerned  
6 about is funding and we've looked at,  
7 and as Michelle went through, you had  
8 an over double normal annual budget  
9 spent each of the last three years on  
10 dredging the river. So as we entered  
11 the high river season of last year, we  
12 had the benefit of a very well-  
13 maintained channel. We don't have that  
14 benefit. This is the first year where  
15 we're starting off the crossings as we  
16 were at low water where NOBRA pilots  
17 were having issues touching in places  
18 they never touched. Every time they'd  
19 look at maybe thinking about a  
20 restriction, we got a bump up in the  
21 river in the level so right now the  
22 crossings look good, but it switches us  
23 back to, as Michelle referenced,  
24 Southwest Pass and a real concern that  
25 we could have restrictions in Southwest



1 Pass before February, maybe sometime in  
2 January. Of course, nobody has a  
3 crystal ball, but we look at that  
4 because we had them last year, chances  
5 are we're going to have them again this  
6 year.

7 The resolutions that are viable  
8 are, as far as I'm concerned, the  
9 Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund solves  
10 the vast majority of navigation channel  
11 maintenance on deep draft channels  
12 across the country. One of the things  
13 Michelle was referencing was the wing  
14 dams or the Corps calls them lateral  
15 pile dikes. That's about \$100 million  
16 to replace them all and I don't think  
17 that's out of line. And one of the  
18 things that we have to remember is  
19 those structures help the channel scour  
20 out the channel. So those lateral pile  
21 dikes that aren't being repaired help  
22 reduce dredging costs. So we're losing  
23 structures that help reduce dredging  
24 costs while we're losing funding to  
25 help with dredging.

1           So the solution again is back to  
2           the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund.  
3           Congressman Boustany has House Bill  
4           H.R. 104. We're up to 144 co-sponsors  
5           right now. The magic number is 215.  
6           That 144 includes some people who, like  
7           Congressman Mica, who is the chairman  
8           of T&I, Transportation and  
9           Infrastructure. Recently, he had a  
10          fundraiser in New Orleans. He said  
11          overwhelmingly that this is his Number  
12          1 goal is to get the Harbor Maintenance  
13          Trust Fund efforts pushed forward.  
14          It's set up now on the house side to go  
15          through in a transportation bill,  
16          service transportation bill, which is  
17          news to our industry. We never really  
18          had a maritime section within that.  
19          It's usually highways, roadways and  
20          rails, etc., other methods, obviously  
21          service transportation. It looks like  
22          when that bill goes forward that the  
23          only maritime component will be H.R.  
24          104, which is a very simple bill that  
25          says all monies from the Harbor

1 Maintenance Trust Fund go for their  
2 intended purposes.

3 On the Senate side, you have S.412,  
4 which is Senator Levin's bill. It's  
5 been supported by Louisiana's two  
6 senators from the get-go. It now has  
7 29 co-sponsors. There's some  
8 complications on the Senate side.  
9 Originally, we thought we'd have a  
10 Senate transportation bill that  
11 included it. If the House bill and  
12 Senate bill went forward it would make  
13 it easy to marry up.

14 There's some complications there.  
15 I hate to even say it. Some of the  
16 things being talked about are Corps  
17 reform. I'm not hear to talk about it.  
18 I don't know if I agree with it. I  
19 don't know enough about it to really  
20 comment on it, but I know that has kind  
21 of changed where S.412 is going. But  
22 hopefully, the House side will go  
23 forward and it'll force the Senate to  
24 come up with a plan. There is a lot of  
25 support on the Senate side. Big River

1 Coalition was contacted last night. I  
2 will be putting something out that will  
3 detail who the 144 House co-sponsors  
4 are and the message all the time is if  
5 you have any influence with somebody  
6 who has not signed on, please either  
7 help set up a meeting or try to reach  
8 out to them and get them on board.  
9 It's a very simple bill. I mean, it  
10 says basically what you did in Word in  
11 1986 was messed up. We want to try to  
12 fix that. These monies should go. The  
13 surplus is now over \$6 billion. That's  
14 \$6 billion that has been taken away  
15 from the intended purposes, harbor  
16 maintenance. The vast majority is  
17 again, dredging, but it also covers  
18 jetties, wing dams, stress placement  
19 areas and one of the things that's  
20 always been important in Louisiana is  
21 the federal cost share of benefits  
22 you'll use to dredge material. And  
23 through that connection, we've gotten  
24 some support from some of the  
25 environmental groups, especially as the

1 State is very aggressively looking at  
2 coastal restoration projects. So the  
3 issue I have is, according to the white  
4 paper, as Michelle said, February or  
5 March is when they're scheduled to have  
6 hoppers in Southwest Pass and we may  
7 need them before that and without them  
8 we may go back into draft restrictions.

9 The only other thing I have to  
10 mention is the Big River Coalition has  
11 Dr. Tim Ryan, he's the former  
12 Chancellor at N.O. and very well known  
13 for some of those economic studies in  
14 the past. He is doing a study that I  
15 believe will be released within the  
16 next several weeks, probably late into  
17 early January that details a lot of the  
18 economic impact and the concern. The  
19 delegation members are really waiting  
20 on that final report so that they can  
21 use that to push the Harbor Maintenance  
22 Trust Fund efforts forward. Again,  
23 it's a tax that's already being  
24 collected; it paid by importers. So  
25 hopefully, that moves forward. That's

1 the biggest really hope we have is that  
2 the trust fund is successful and the  
3 Coalition has support from here to  
4 Pittsburgh. It's been really neat  
5 what's happened with the Coalition.  
6 We've had a lot of supporters and the  
7 idea is if we ever are successful with  
8 the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund that  
9 we start to look at other issues,  
10 including some of the inland users  
11 since they have been very supportive on  
12 what we would consider deep draft  
13 issues.

14 Thank you.

15 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

16 Thank you very much, Sean. Does  
17 anyone have any questions for Sean?  
18 Lynn.

19 LYNN MUENCH:

20 Sean, I saw an email a couple of  
21 days ago that indicated that the  
22 Surface Transportation Bill in the  
23 House is potentially at a standstill.  
24 Have you heard anything about that or  
25 where we might go with that?

1 SEAN DUFFY:

2 I was told that everything is being  
3 stripped out but H.R. 104, which as you  
4 know, what happened yesterday may be  
5 different this morning within the  
6 beltway, but we'll stay on them too.  
7 But the drive and focus that we've  
8 heard was that when this went forward,  
9 that would be the one maritime sector.  
10 There were some other maritime issues  
11 that were originally in there that were  
12 causing complications and I hate to  
13 say, but my main focus is the Harbor  
14 Maintenance Trust Fund. If there's one  
15 bill, hopefully that will make it easy  
16 for our Congressmen to understand what  
17 they're supporting. It's a very simple  
18 8th grade English bill and hopefully  
19 they will follow that.

20 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

21 And it is certainly a non-partisan  
22 issue in my mind because this is not a  
23 local issue. It's an issue that  
24 affects the entire country. The  
25 movement of cargo up and down this

1 river is critical to the economy of the  
2 whole country. So when you talk about  
3 contacting, the Louisiana delegation  
4 gets this. They understand all that.  
5 But we have to reach out to some of the  
6 folks that sit on these important  
7 committees, like the T&I Committee, who  
8 may be from a state that has no water  
9 infrastructure or no navigation but  
10 it's important to reach out to them too  
11 because it will definitely impact their  
12 state. The Ag groups have been very  
13 supportive of all this. They've been  
14 onboard for quite a while because they  
15 understand the importance of being able  
16 to move their grain down to New Orleans  
17 for export and you can't do it if you  
18 can't get the ships in and out.

19 Sean, thank you for giving us that  
20 report this morning and I would  
21 encourage everyone to reach out and  
22 touch all your legislators and stay on  
23 top of this. Thank you.

24 Lieutenant Commander [REDACTED], would  
25 you like to come up and give us the



1 update on our Baton Rouge VTS  
2 operations?

3 LCDR [REDACTED]

4 Good morning, everyone.

5 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

6 Good morning.

7 LCDR [REDACTED]

8 What I want to talk about is after  
9 high water. After the high water  
10 season we just had, the historic high  
11 water period we had, the Baton Rouge  
12 subcommittee of the LMRWSAC met in July  
13 at the Port of Baton Rouge and there  
14 were some changes that were suggested  
15 and voted on and agreed to at that  
16 meeting. And I want to give a summary  
17 of the major changes from that meeting  
18 concerning the Baton Rouge annex to the  
19 Waterways Action Plan.

20 So I want to give you highlights of  
21 the changes to the Baton Rouge annex to  
22 the Waterways Action Plan. Most of it  
23 was directly because of the historic  
24 high water we had. Some of it was just  
25 over time. We figured out there were

1 better ways to do some things so we  
2 came together and made changes to the  
3 Waterways Action Plan.

4 Everybody knows that this historic  
5 high water period tested us in many  
6 different ways. And we couldn't have  
7 came through the way we did without  
8 great collaboration from all levels,  
9 federal, state, local and our maritime  
10 industry partners. Specifically, in  
11 the Baton Rouge area, dealing with  
12 Wilkerson Point, GICA and LOMRC, great  
13 collaboration the way we came up with  
14 solutions, working on all levels here,  
15 Sector VTS and the MSU.

16 So we got together in July, these  
17 are the representatives that were there  
18 at that meeting. You may see some  
19 names that are missing here, some major  
20 players, but afterwards we sent the  
21 minutes -- we sent the recommendations  
22 out to the entire maritime industry  
23 through basically the list from LOMRC  
24 and then from GICA. So even if you  
25 weren't at the meeting, didn't call in

1 through the conference number that was  
2 provided, you still had an opportunity  
3 to comment afterwards.

4 So changes approved by the  
5 subcommittee. Starting at the Port  
6 Allen lock. One of the things that the  
7 lockmaster, he was keeping data over  
8 time. The first advisory week for high  
9 water was at 28 feet and rising. He  
10 wanted to change because he saw a lot  
11 of accidents happening a little sooner.  
12 So we lowered it at the first advisory  
13 from 28 feet to 25 feet. The assist  
14 tug that was there to help guide people  
15 in to the lock did not require to have  
16 a headline on it, and still not  
17 required, but it is a recommendation  
18 that was approved.

19 Queue in status - We were trying to  
20 look at traffic on the river and now,  
21 basically the vessels will be allowed  
22 to queue in place. So instead of  
23 coming south to the I-10 bridge, once  
24 you make contact with the lock you'll  
25 be able to queue where you are. The

1 last mooring that you see there talks  
2 about GICA and 35 feet and rising when  
3 we would stand up normally then what  
4 would be Baton Rouge VTCC. We would  
5 now, since the VTCC is no longer in  
6 Baton Rouge, we would take a member  
7 from GICA and they would be put in the  
8 VTS Lower Mississippi River right here  
9 at Sector New Orleans and they would  
10 help the VTS with the traffic in and  
11 out of the Port Allen locks.

12 Now, I mentioned it already, the  
13 VTCC. That was there, Kirby had worked  
14 with in the past gave us a place to set  
15 up our VTCC in Baton Rouge. It was on  
16 the river. The historic high water  
17 forced us out of VTCC. The plan was to  
18 move the VTCC from Baton Rouge to VTS  
19 New Orleans that following year. But  
20 due to the historic high water, we  
21 accelerated that schedule because we  
22 were forced out of that location. So  
23 we were able to, among all the things  
24 that were going on in the historic high  
25 water, to come together to move the

1 VTCC from Baton Rouge to VTS New  
2 Orleans and we did it with minor  
3 disruption to the maritime  
4 transportation system.

5 If you have any questions, please  
6 you can ask during this or at the end.  
7 My brief is not going to take very  
8 long.

9 Wilkerson Point - We talked about  
10 now that the VTCC is no longer in Baton  
11 Rouge putting the LOMRC rep - LOMRC and  
12 GICA in the past, I'm sure you're  
13 aware, came together as a VTCC at the  
14 barge that was provided by Kirby and  
15 they helped guide the vessels, the tows  
16 around Wilkerson Point. So now that  
17 that was no longer there, they came up  
18 with an idea, because they were still  
19 having problems during this historic  
20 high water, of putting of putting now  
21 the LOMRC rep on the towing assist  
22 vessel. And that was important because  
23 they were there sort of an on-scene  
24 commander to help communicate, to guide  
25 and to provide information to the

1 towing assist vessel as that tow coming  
2 around, flanking around Wilkerson Point  
3 was in trouble.

4 So once that was done, things  
5 around Wilkerson Point got a whole lot  
6 better. So we figured that that was  
7 the best practice and we wanted to  
8 continue that. We talked about that  
9 happening at 38 feet, but we get  
10 together all the time based on what's  
11 happening at the waterways so it could  
12 happen sooner.

13 One of the things we saw 35 feet  
14 was is normally high water for us.  
15 This past historic high water, I  
16 couldn't wait to get back to 35 feet.  
17 So 35 feet was good. So we had to add  
18 a new trigger. Our waterways action  
19 point had to grow a little bit. So we  
20 added a new trigger at 43 feet that  
21 requires a second towing assist vessel  
22 at Wilkerson Point to help guide the  
23 tows around and also we lowered the  
24 maximum number to 20 - to 20 bars.

25 At 43 feet we also changed the no

1 passing zone from mile marker 232 to  
2 237. Additional changes that we made  
3 was that we added a low water action  
4 plan. The framework is there. And we  
5 also changed the format of the  
6 Waterways Action Plan so it's by  
7 trigger. So that you know by that  
8 trigger it talked about what it is for  
9 the 81 mile point, Wilkerson Point,  
10 Port Allen locks and everything else.  
11 It just made it a little more user-  
12 friendly and I think it made it easier  
13 that we wouldn't miss anything that was  
14 supposed to happen at that specific  
15 trigger.

16 We also, and what was important  
17 that's not mentioned here, we captured  
18 the verbiage that's required to happen  
19 between the towing assist vessel and  
20 the tow coming around Wilkerson Point  
21 in the Waterways Action Plan. That was  
22 developed by LOMRC and we wanted to  
23 make sure that information, sort of a  
24 Job A checklist, was in the Waterways  
25 Action Plan so that wasn't lost.

1 That summarizes that 3½ hour  
2 meeting in about 5. So I know you all  
3 appreciate that. I see Ms. Lynn Muench  
4 has a question so I'm going to go to my  
5 seat now. Go ahead, Ms. Lynn.

6 LYNN MUENCH:

7 First is a comment and then a  
8 question. The changing of the format  
9 could be a problem because that was  
10 initially put together to let all the  
11 annexes were the same so that people  
12 could easily move from one Sector to  
13 another. That was one of the main  
14 purposes for putting it together that  
15 way, so it's been changed for this  
16 Sector we need to circle back with the  
17 entire 8<sup>th</sup> District and part of the 9<sup>th</sup>  
18 District that's in there and figure out  
19 what we want or how we want to do it.  
20 This could add a huge level of  
21 confusion.

22 LCDR [REDACTED]

23 Have you seen it?

24 LYNN MUENCH:

25 No, and that was my second part.



1 It wasn't sent to RIETF and that was  
2 specifically -- that was an outcome of  
3 a vote meeting with RIETF industry, the  
4 admiral, and the general that RIETF was  
5 going to see this and vet it before it  
6 got put into place.

7 LCDR [REDACTED]

8 So it wasn't sent to RIETF as a  
9 body, but not even the members of RIETF  
10 were copied -

11 LYNN MUENCH:

12 As far as I know, no one has seen  
13 it.

14 LCDR [REDACTED]

15 No one from RIETF. So this is the  
16 first time you saw any of this  
17 information?

18 LYNN MUENCH:

19 Correct.

20 LCDR [REDACTED]

21 Well, we will make sure we get that  
22 to RIETF and we'll work with the  
23 District to talk about the format of  
24 that plan and see if that's something  
25 that they like or if we want to make

1 sure that it's standard -- to keep it  
2 standard so that there are no -- to  
3 facilitate the process so we don't have  
4 just one annex that's different from  
5 the other one. So we'll work with  
6 Sector. I'm sure -- we made a note in  
7 the back and we'll make sure we get  
8 that to RIETF or if I get that to you,  
9 then I'm sure you'll get it to RIETF.

10 And here it is for us. It wasn't  
11 that we weren't trying to, but it seems  
12 like when I was talking to LOMRC  
13 sometimes I was talking to RIETF. So  
14 we'll make sure that it's there and  
15 that everybody's communicating because  
16 we want everybody on the same page so  
17 we're as efficient and effective as  
18 possible.

19 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

20 I know Jay, Arnie -- you guys are a  
21 part of that process. Anything you'd  
22 like to add to the discussion?

23 JAMES MCDANIEL:

24 I was in the meeting that the  
25 Commander is discussing and I feel

1 confident that Mr. Crowley (phonetic)  
2 was aware of this.

3 LCDR [REDACTED]

4 He said that he felt that Mr.  
5 Crowley was aware.

6 JAMES MCDANIEL:

7 He possibly was in the meeting.

8 LCDR [REDACTED]

9 He possibly was in there --  
10 possibly was in the meeting. I was  
11 repeating it.

12 JAMES MCDANIEL:

13 I know CAPT David was.

14 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

15 He must not have sent the work  
16 back.

17 JAMES MCDANIEL:

18 It's no big deal -

19 LCDR [REDACTED]

20 We're going to get that information  
21 to them. But as you know, any of the  
22 changes that happened during this  
23 historic high water period, definitely  
24 I know RIETF was included and that's  
25 nothing different than what you see

1 here.

2 CAPT GAUTIER:

3 We'll just make sure and close the  
4 loop.

5 LCDR [REDACTED]

6 Yes, we will, Captain.

7 CAPT GAUTIER:

8 It's a simple thing to do.

9 LCDR [REDACTED]

10 Simple thing to do.

11 LYNN MUENCH:

12 Commander, I don't think it's a  
13 problem either.

14 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

15 Close the loop.

16 LCDR [REDACTED]

17 We're going to close the loop.  
18 It's closing right now.

19 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

20 And we're getting ready for what  
21 sounds like a little more high water  
22 coming down this way. Thank you very  
23 much. I appreciate that.

24 The next item on the agenda is Tim  
25 Osborn with NOAA.

1 TIM OSBORN:

2 I want to introduce Darren Wright  
3 with the Ports Program. I wanted to  
4 turn this over in just a minute to  
5 Darren, but I wanted to also mention as  
6 Captain Gautier was talking about with  
7 the LMRWSAC meeting.

8 There are two ways to look at this  
9 group. One way is that you are the  
10 biggest group of doomsday pessimists  
11 you ever met in your life. Captain  
12 Gautier mentions about the snow fall up  
13 north. People would say skiing.  
14 You're instantly saying, "Oh, hell,  
15 it's high water all over again next  
16 year." When we talk about tropical  
17 storms and the next thing you know,  
18 Mike and them are saying, "There goes  
19 the wing walls." And then we talk  
20 about the hurricane season and June 1  
21 and people will be thinking about  
22 summer vacations and we're already into  
23 our pre-hurricane disaster meetings of  
24 how we're all going to work together.  
25 But in another way, I'd like to also

1 point out before I turn it over to  
2 Darren, having gone through the  
3 hurricane seasons like you have, and  
4 having enjoyed a wonderful trip to New  
5 York as Hurricane Irene was going up  
6 there and facing the splendor of being  
7 surrounded by eight million irritated  
8 New Yorkers without electricity, I got  
9 up there and realized the fact that  
10 it's quite the contrary. This group is  
11 very aware, and in fact, the most  
12 aware, the most coordinated of any  
13 group I've ever seen. I got to the  
14 New York/New Jersey area and this thing  
15 is a powerhouse up there. They've  
16 never been through a hurricane. So  
17 they're pretty much borderline, do we  
18 panic or do we try to just sit still  
19 and actually get through this together?  
20 We still have the missed throughs  
21 (phonetic) that we've ever had in the  
22 New York, New York/New Jersey area and  
23 how many missed throughs have we done  
24 down here?

25 Sector realized they had a National

1 Weather Service office in New York  
2 City. Who are those people and how can  
3 we talk to them? Phone, conference  
4 call, webinar, navigation conference  
5 calls? They also realized that when it  
6 came to re-establishing port operations  
7 one of the key elements in trying to  
8 engage was the pilots which was a  
9 tremendous asset in terms of bringing  
10 them in and, in fact, actually was the  
11 pilot boat New York which was the first  
12 ship out on the water after the  
13 hurricane going out to the sea buoy to  
14 check on ATONS, check on channel  
15 depths, check on general channel  
16 conditions. I had the wonderful  
17 experience of being with Captain Malman  
18 (phonetic) throughout the entire  
19 experience who is basically betting  
20 five bucks on the side I'd throw up  
21 first instead of him.

22 I want to also mention -- so  
23 basically I want to extend our thanks.  
24 And this is to talk about the  
25 additional resources we're going to be

1 bringing today. As I turn it to  
2 Darren, I want to also talk about  
3 resources is everything. Resources and  
4 the knowledge base and how we  
5 coordinate is going to be very, very  
6 key.

7 On the National Weather Service  
8 side, the Slidell office -- you all now  
9 have been introduced fully to the River  
10 Forecast Center with the National  
11 Weather Service and they stand ready to  
12 help 24 hours a day. Michelle just  
13 read the latest river forecast. That  
14 estimate comes out every week, every  
15 two weeks in terms of updates. They  
16 are integral to the navigation cause if  
17 we have a high water event next year,  
18 and they, I think, really are to be  
19 thanked for their efforts every day in  
20 terms of not only the briefings for the  
21 Mississippi, but as the Atchafalaya  
22 became a very big concern, as well.

23 They are adding three new incident  
24 meteorologists to their office and this  
25 is for D-8 and Sector New Orleans. So



1 in the event of an incident, a  
2 grounding, a collision, a high river,  
3 whatever it is, they will actually  
4 dispatch an incident meteorologist to a  
5 command center to a VTS to actually not  
6 only staff that, but also provide a  
7 briefing in person, as well. Ken  
8 Graham and I will come and talk more  
9 about that and how they can be easily  
10 requested, deployed and brought to  
11 Sector, brought to District to  
12 essentially actually be an actual  
13 person in the office to provide real  
14 time weather observation, forecasting,  
15 be it high water, be it a tropical  
16 storm.

17 The hurricane season is over -- 19  
18 tropical storms, tied for third, all-  
19 time. It didn't hit the Gulf except  
20 for the fact that we did have one  
21 tropical storm, Lee. And it stayed,  
22 and it stayed, and it stayed, and we  
23 want to point out the fact that long,  
24 slow tropical systems, it doesn't have  
25 to be a big hurricane, can do major

1 damage. I don't think there's anything  
2 you need to do more than just look at  
3 what happen to those wing walls from  
4 about three to four days of constant  
5 sea pounding with the wave action that  
6 occurred. If you go across the coast,  
7 Fourchon got shut down for two, two and  
8 a half days. We shut down navigation  
9 in getting in and out of ports all the  
10 way from Mobile, all the way to Lake  
11 Charles for a tropical storm. A  
12 tropical storm that was a nothing  
13 tropical storm. But it was very big in  
14 terms of geographic extent and it was  
15 very slow in closing the loop and  
16 getting out of here and moving up to  
17 the northeast.

18 One of the other things, too, I'd  
19 like to also bring up in terms of this  
20 and in terms of our thanks is the  
21 navigation and the port coordination  
22 team calls. I want to really thank you.  
23 I think we've taken this to a new  
24 level. I think it's a national trend  
25 in terms of coordination with so many

1 people on the phone, able to talk so  
2 quickly and coordinate our actions and  
3 make it a plan and keep tracking. With  
4 the high water and with the hurricanes,  
5 having gone to New York and actually  
6 seen other regions of the country and  
7 how they haven't even come close to the  
8 coordination, the LMRWSAC, Sector, the  
9 District sees here in dealing with the  
10 kind of events that we've seen is very,  
11 very key.

12 In terms of the resources now, I'd  
13 like to turn this over to Darren in  
14 terms of some of the additional  
15 resources that we're coming on and also  
16 in terms of our support that we're  
17 going to be seeing long term for some  
18 of these resources. I want to thank  
19 him for coming down from Washington,  
20 D.C. for this, as well.

21 DARREN WRIGHT:

22 Thank you, Tim. My name is Darren  
23 Wright. I'm the PORTS Program Manager  
24 for NOAA. When I say "PORTS" it means  
25 Physical Oceanographic Real-Time

1 System. For those of you are not that  
2 familiar with that system. It's a  
3 network of tide gages, current meters,  
4 meteorological sensors. We have an air  
5 gas sensor that measures the distance  
6 between the bottom of the bridge and  
7 the surface of the water. We actually  
8 have two of the sensors on the Crescent  
9 City and the Huey P. Long Bridges.

10 We also have a couple of new  
11 sensors. We have a visibility or a fog  
12 sensor. We don't have one of those in  
13 the lower Mississippi River ports, but  
14 that is available. And we've also  
15 worked with the Corps of Engineers in  
16 incorporating their wave data. They  
17 have a wave buoy program where we're  
18 able to pull in the wave data and  
19 display it through the PORTS system.

20 I think the last time I was here I  
21 mentioned that we were planning on  
22 installing a new water level gage in  
23 Pilottown and I'm here to tell you that  
24 that sensor has been installed and is  
25 now operational. It's located at the

1 pilot station in Pilottown. I want to  
2 thank the Coast Guard and the pilots  
3 for their collaboration in helping us  
4 get that system installed.

5 I also have another bit of good  
6 news to announce. You hear all this  
7 news about funding being cut and not  
8 having enough funding for this and for  
9 that. I'm here to announce that  
10 working with the port and working with  
11 the pilots, we've identified some  
12 sustained funding for this PORTS system  
13 for many years in the future. So let's  
14 thank those guys for helping us resolve  
15 that issue. And on that note, we'd  
16 like to call some folks up and show  
17 them our appreciation.

18 TIM OSBORN:

19 Captain Gibbs, A.J., come on up,  
20 please. One of the first things that  
21 we did in terms of talking about the  
22 pilot conversation was the fact of how  
23 logistically we're going to actually  
24 get here. I'd like to have Darren  
25 present this to Captain Gibbs. Captain

1 Gibbs and the Crescent Pilots with the  
2 other pilot association members were  
3 very instrumental, not only in the  
4 overall port system, but also in  
5 helping us install the new installation  
6 here. Real Time Weather and Real Time  
7 Water levels here in the Mississippi  
8 River all managed here at his Pilottown  
9 station. The conditions down there in  
10 terms of the need for real time  
11 observations like this have been  
12 greatly enhanced. And Captain Gibbs, I  
13 want to really thank you very much for  
14 the opportunity for bringing our guys  
15 down, hosting them at the camp -- they  
16 loved the food. But also, more  
17 importantly, to make this installation  
18 go so quickly and so smoothly and we  
19 really offer this letter of thanks in  
20 appreciation for all those efforts.

21 CAPTAIN GIBBS:

22 Thank you.

23 TIM OSBORN:

24 Also, Mike is here in lieu of  
25 Lorino, a much better looking pilot, by

1 the way. Mike if you'd come on up,  
2 please.

3 In one of the resources you've been  
4 seeing Tropical Storm Lee and other  
5 things like that, you've always been  
6 seeing about the letter, conditions,  
7 the water levels, the winds and  
8 barometric pressures at Southwest Pass.  
9 That is actually at the bar pilot  
10 station at Southwest Pass. It's been  
11 there for many, many years. I want to  
12 also, in terms of this coordination  
13 with Captain Gautier, I want to mention  
14 one thing about this.

15 Tropical Storm Lee comes in; we're  
16 having a navigation calls. Sea state  
17 and wave height and direction and wind  
18 is a critical thing in terms of  
19 mooring, getting on and off those ships  
20 safely. And literally, the art of the  
21 pilots, all the pilots on the river and  
22 with Southwest Pass being so critical,  
23 the art was to essentially bore that  
24 last ship at the last possible  
25 threshold that would allow a safe

1 boarding or disembark and then shut it  
2 down safely, keep the Pass safe, keep  
3 the pilots safe, but at the same time  
4 try to get out there as soon as those  
5 conditions were and we were late night,  
6 the night before the tropical storm  
7 finally cleared, we're on the phone  
8 with the pilots. The pilots took all  
9 the information from the weather  
10 service. The weather service is using  
11 Southwest bar pilot station observation  
12 and the next morning about 9:00 the  
13 pilots were able to safely get onto the  
14 two cruise ships that were out there,  
15 Triumph and Norwegian Spirit and bring  
16 them in safely. And the next 24 hours,  
17 between the bar pilots and the Crescent  
18 pilots and NOBRA and everything, 72  
19 ships got moved. So basically get  
20 everything back on track. And I got  
21 there literally that evening after they  
22 had started boarding and everything.  
23 Patrick Fink (phonetic) here in Mobile  
24 sent me an email that night saying,  
25 "Good news. The Mobile bar pilots are



1 going to start moving ships tomorrow.  
2 Isn't that exciting?" Of which one of  
3 Mike's counterparts said they should  
4 have called us. We could have gotten  
5 them there quicker.

6 But Mike, on behalf of us and our  
7 thanks from you to the Association of  
8 Branch Pilots, we want to thank you for  
9 hosting the station as long as it has.  
10 It's been a critical resource being  
11 augmented now as a new one at  
12 Pilottown. And also, we want to thank  
13 you for the help that you've provided  
14 and the support you gave to us with  
15 this tropical storm and also with all  
16 of the hurricanes and incidents we face  
17 in the future and we really look  
18 forward to the future cooperation and  
19 partnership, as well. Thank you very  
20 much.

21 MIKE MILLER:

22 Thank you.

23 TIM OSBORN:

24 Chris -- The Port of New Orleans,  
25 15 years ago, 20 years ago, a port had

1 one interest. I got a road, I've got a  
2 dock, I've got a warehouse, I'm done.  
3 All I need to do is get that darn ship  
4 to the dock and then that's all I care  
5 about is the fact that I can take it  
6 across that dock and I can put it in  
7 the warehouse and I can ship it out of  
8 here. That 20 years has seen dramatic  
9 changes from the fact that the Port of  
10 New Orleans, for instance, as a leading  
11 port along the Gulf Coast and the world  
12 market knows how important navigation  
13 is. I've got to get that ship. I've  
14 got to get those ships. I've got to  
15 get the navigation into my priority to  
16 make this as important as anything I do  
17 dockside. And in that venue, and that  
18 vein, Chris, we want to present this  
19 letter of thanks for the innovation,  
20 for the sponsorship for the PORTS  
21 system in partnership with NOAA, and  
22 also, in the support that you  
23 personally and also Gary LaGrange and  
24 all the port administration has given  
25 to us in pursing how to make this a

1 long live, growing resource that's  
2 going to support all of the Mississippi  
3 River industry and navigation ports  
4 essentially keep serving this country,  
5 and Chris, thank you very much.

6 CHRIS BONURA:

7 Thank you. I just want to say a  
8 quick word about the funding situation.  
9 You mentioned that the long-term  
10 funding source for which it is going to  
11 be billed through the bar pilots to the  
12 ships but we have a situation with the  
13 interim funding which has pretty much  
14 has been resolved. We're just sewing  
15 up the final details on it. But it  
16 involved going to the five ports on the  
17 lower Mississippi River, the Louisiana  
18 Maritime Association and the Pilots  
19 Association and asking them to help us  
20 get through until we have enough money  
21 through the long-term funding plan to  
22 fund the system, which is vitally  
23 important for navigation.

24 We kind of put out the call to all  
25 those organizations and I was very

1 pleased with the responses that we got.  
2 We have one more association to follow  
3 up with, but in general, everybody came  
4 forward very quickly. Met with their  
5 boards and made decisions on it. So  
6 we're very happy with, and very  
7 thankful for those organizations  
8 stepping up and helping to make this  
9 program a reality.

10 TIM OSBORN:

11 Thank you very much. And lastly,  
12 Cherie, if you'll allow, I'll steal the  
13 Captain away from you. Captain  
14 Gautier. Actually, I will say one  
15 thing. The fact that we did have  
16 navigation calls up in New York with  
17 Hurricane Irene. They yell a lot more.  
18 They just yell a lot more. I was  
19 asking one of the captains, "Is this  
20 normal?" "Oh, yeah. We yell just to  
21 say good morning." Captain Gautier,  
22 your organization Sector was very  
23 instrumental in helping us in terms of  
24 getting all the clearances and permits  
25 for the new Pilottown station. The

1 professionalism that you have within  
2 your staff has just been tremendous.  
3 And we really would like to offer this  
4 letter of thanks and appreciation for  
5 the new station, and also for the  
6 partnership with Sector that has really  
7 been a key to really serving this  
8 entire area. Thank you very much.

9 CAPT GAUTIER:

10 And on behalf of the team, we have  
11 a great waterways management team as  
12 Tim just said of John Arenstam, [REDACTED]  
13 [REDACTED], [REDACTED], our relatively  
14 new VTS director and [REDACTED]  
15 (phonetic) and everybody else. Thank  
16 you.

17 TIM OSBORN:

18 The Captain mentioned op (phonetic)  
19 sale coming up shortly and we look to  
20 working out some custom chart products  
21 that we can create if we get enough  
22 planning time ahead of time. So we  
23 look forward to working with Jackie and  
24 Marcie and all those guys. I would  
25 like to wish you all a great holiday

1 season and Cherie, as always, thank you  
2 very much.

3 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

4 Absolutely. Thank you so much for  
5 being here. It's good to have you with  
6 us, Darren.

7 And I would also like to thank  
8 Chris and the port for their  
9 sponsorship of the PORTS and for their  
10 leadership in putting this funding  
11 together. We really, really appreciate  
12 it. We all know how important it is to  
13 the port. So thank you very much.

14 Do we have any other old business  
15 before we move into the new business?  
16 We'll move onto new business.

17 Captain Arenstam, I believe you've  
18 got a couple of anchorage proposals to  
19 discuss with us.

20 CAPT ARENSTAM:

21 As you probably have heard, and  
22 hopefully most of you have seen at some  
23 point in time long before this, but one  
24 of the things we want to get out of  
25 LMRWSAC as the federal advisory

1 committee is some good positive  
2 recommendation from the industry that  
3 can recommend it to the Coast Guard and  
4 we can take action on those.

5 A quick and easy and wonderful one  
6 opportunities for that are the proposed  
7 anchorages that we have here coming up  
8 that were put out in November and the  
9 comment period is closed. So, we have  
10 the public meeting. We can have the  
11 discussion to provide the  
12 recommendation and we can take the  
13 advice from LMRWSAC as the approval and  
14 move forward on some of these ones.

15 So I wanted to take a little bit of  
16 your time to talk about what the two  
17 anchorages are and there are two of  
18 them -- Belmont Anchorage in the  
19 vicinity of mile marker 153. For those  
20 who haven't read it, it's about 1.1  
21 miles on the left descending bank, it's  
22 about 700 feet off the bank and one of  
23 the proposals was to move it off the  
24 revetment and to push it off so it's  
25 only about 400 feet wide. Some of the

1 concerns that NOBRA has asked us to  
2 limit it to 25 feet for the draft.

3 It's not going to go all the way up  
4 to the revetment because there is some  
5 concern. Over there again on the  
6 revetment, I believe it was proposed to  
7 be pushed off 200 feet. So it's a 400  
8 foot wide anchorage.

9 Some of the issues and concerns:  
10 They want to make sure that it isn't  
11 going to impact the barge fleet which  
12 is just at the end of the anchorage.

13 It's not in the anchorage, but it's  
14 close enough to where it may cause an  
15 issue. I just want to know from the  
16 fleet industry whether this fleet there  
17 may or may not cause any issues. We  
18 don't think it will, but we want to  
19 make sure from the operators in the  
20 fleet.

21 Does anybody have any comments on  
22 the fleet in this area?

23 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

24 I'm trying to see which fleet that  
25 is.



1 CAPT GAUTIER:

2 That's AP.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

4 We've already discussed with AP  
5 with Matt Lagarde. Actually, he was  
6 pretty integral in coming up with this  
7 plan. And it basically comes from the  
8 foot of his fleet, which he is fine  
9 with. Again, we've had at least three  
10 or four meetings -

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

12 His fleet actually ends at the very  
13 upper end of it. So I mean, it would  
14 not be a problem.

15 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

16 I do understand that I have letters  
17 -- copies of letters from MNSA. They  
18 have reviewed this very carefully and  
19 have recommended, you know, go over the  
20 changes so their opinion is, I think,  
21 very critical to the process.

22 CAPT ARENSTAM:

23 Yes, and we have gotten letters,  
24 comments on those. But we just wanted  
25 to make sure that there isn't something

1 that somebody forgot to talk about and  
2 that somebody who didn't forget to  
3 comment about or thought of after the  
4 letters were written and sent.

5 Michelle?

6 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

7 I mentioned this to somebody and  
8 I'm not sure if they passed it on, but  
9 there is a permit application out there  
10 right now for Marathon to do some work  
11 on there to create a ship dock and  
12 that's at mile 153.5. And it's out on  
13 public notice right now. It started  
14 public notice on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November  
15 and it's a 30 day notice.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

17 (Inaudible)

18 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

19 It does say renewal, but I don't  
20 think the ship dock is there right now.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

22 (Inaudible)

23 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

24 If you look at the drawings, it  
25 comes out pretty far.

1 CAPT ARENSTAM:

2 But Michelle's right. If it is  
3 permitted to be built there, then they  
4 can build it there. And then they can  
5 take the -- whatever the available  
6 water depth and they have authorization  
7 to take it in there and it's not going  
8 to cause issues with having an  
9 anchorage which isn't there.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

11 Right now we have the Ama  
12 (phonetic) anchorage. We have the  
13 bulkhead facility we work pretty much  
14 hand-in-hand with them. When they  
15 bring a ship in we try not to anchor  
16 when they bring it there.

17 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

18 So let me understand it. If this  
19 Marathon guy, his building would be  
20 within the anchorage?

21 CAPT ARENSTAM:

22 Inside the anchorage. Shoreward of  
23 the anchorage.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

25 It would be toward the upper end.

1 CAPT ARENSTAM:

2 One of the things we'll have to  
3 look at is working that in there so  
4 that cooperation will exist. Because  
5 it exists in two other anchorages where  
6 facilities are on the inside of the  
7 anchorages. So that's kind of built in  
8 or understood through the system. But  
9 if that facility gets permitted to be  
10 built eventually or they decide their  
11 business model allows it to be built,  
12 if it's sticking all the way or halfway  
13 out to the anchorage we're going to  
14 have to look at how far it comes off  
15 the shore.

16 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

17 So that I can be clear, the origin  
18 for the request for the anchorage, does  
19 that come from the Coast Guard or -

20 CAPT ARENSTAM:

21 We have to put the public notice  
22 out because we create it. But we  
23 didn't decide we wanted it. I'm not  
24 sure of the origin -

25 LCDR KOHN:

1           The request comes through the Coast  
2 Guard. So we have the authority to  
3 establish anchorage -

4 CAPTAIN ARENSTEM:

5           I believe it came from the pilots'  
6 request.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

8           The request came from us. We put  
9 it in because of the increase in the  
10 facilities that are going to be going  
11 in upriver (inaudible)

12 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

13           I understand.

14 CAPT ARENSTAM:

15           So that's one issue we will insure  
16 that we look at before we issue the  
17 final ruling on the -

18 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

19           Whenever the Corps is dredging at  
20 Bellmont Crossing we will probably  
21 require that the anchorage be cleared  
22 just like we do (inaudible)

23 CAPT ARENSTAM:

24           And again, we're going to have to  
25 monitor it because it's not a Corps

1 dredge to a certain depth again and we  
2 just want to make sure that when  
3 dredging is occurring in the river for  
4 the crossings it's not likely to  
5 increase or decrease the available  
6 water depths at this anchorage or do  
7 you know?

8 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

9 I talked to (inaudible) and he does  
10 sometime put the discharge line in part  
11 of that area, but since we're disposing  
12 the material at the water surface it's  
13 supposed to get carried down river.

14 So, all we can do is just monitor -

15 CAPT ARENSTAM:

16 So as long we can whatever work to  
17 maybe relocate maybe where it's  
18 going -

19 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

20 Yes.

21 CAPT ARENSTAM:

22 If this anchorage comes in and it  
23 starts to look like it's getting too  
24 shallow.

25 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

1           And I did look at surveys from 2004  
2           and compared to the 2001 survey of the  
3           area and for this anchorage at Belmont,  
4           it looks like it's similar depth. So  
5           since 2004 it looks like it's been  
6           maintaining on its own, pretty  
7           similarities.

8           CAPT ARENSTAM:

9           Well, good. Because unlike one of  
10          the other ones, it's slowly getting  
11          shallower.

12          Bayou Goula: Bayou Goula is the  
13          next one at mile 179. We didn't  
14          receive nearly as many comments on  
15          Bayou Goula.

16          COMMITTEE CHAIR:

17          What mile, 179?

18          CAPT ARENSTAM:

19          197, sorry. This one is proposed  
20          to be for a 30 foot draft.

21          UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

22          I don't think that's correct. The  
23          lower position, we feel like we can  
24          anchor a loaded ship above there or we  
25          would like the ability to anchor a

1 loaded ship in the very bottom  
2 position.

3 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

4 Look at this one and first of all,  
5 comparing 2004 to 2011 you do have  
6 about 10 feet of shoaling that has  
7 occurred over that time span in that  
8 anchorage. You know, it's disbursed  
9 throughout. Now the 2011 data that we  
10 recently took to minus 20 and minus 30  
11 elevation in this area. You do have  
12 additional water you can add back in  
13 whatever gauge minus (inaudible) but  
14 when you look at elevation to make sure  
15 you're good all times of the year,  
16 you're looking at minus 20 to minus 30.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

18 We just didn't want to be limited  
19 to 30 feet. I mean, whatever you say.  
20 You have 40 feet on the lower part -

21 CAPT ARENSTAM:

22 Do you know how far?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

24 Quarter mile from the lower -

25 CAPT ARENSTAM:



1           And I take it there's no other  
2           recommendation for limiting what types,  
3           what issues, what weather conditions,  
4           who has authority to grant it, all  
5           those other ones are basically open  
6           anchorage.

7           MICHELLE SPRAUL:

8           You do have some revetment there,  
9           too.

10          CAPT ARENSTAM:

11          Yes. I think that's on both of  
12          them and I think the other commonality  
13          between both of them is we've really  
14          got to make sure there's no pipeline  
15          crossings. And hopefully on these  
16          anchorage you're not going to need  
17          somebody to tell you where the top end  
18          and the bottom end is -

19          We want to make sure we have all  
20          the issues out there so we know when  
21          we're going through these we don't have  
22          those other issues that we need to -

23          UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

24          This one for us has been used as an  
25          emergency anchorage spot. We can come

1 down and go around (inaudible).

2 CAPT ARENSTAM:

3 As an unofficial anchorage, you've  
4 been using these for years anyway.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

6 For emergency. I mean between  
7 Burnside and Baton Rouge is over 60  
8 miles and we've got two anchorage spots  
9 within the entire 60 miles. This would  
10 still require (inaudible).

11 CAPT ARENSTAM:

12 Any other questions, issues?

13 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

14 Same thing with dredging here. We  
15 will have to have the anchorage clear  
16 here.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

18 And that's pretty regular with  
19 them. We do that at White Castle.

20 CAPT ARENSTAM:

21 My question is I'm not sure if we  
22 really want to -- we probably don't  
23 need to put that into the regs. But  
24 it's just one of those, there's no  
25 local agreement.

1 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

2 Yes, we had an incident years ago  
3 and so ever since then we put notice  
4 out (inaudible).

5 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

6 Guys, we can't hear you. You have  
7 to standup and speak louder for the  
8 record.

9 CAPT ARENSTAM:

10 Any other topics on these two  
11 proposed anchorages?

12 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

13 What are the next steps?

14 CAPT ARENSTAM:

15 We're going to consolidate all the  
16 information. If you'd like to have  
17 LMRWSAC group on this and then make an  
18 official recommendation, we can. But  
19 we can take the comments that we've  
20 received here, incorporate it into our  
21 plan, make sure everybody has the  
22 updated ideas that we're thinking about  
23 doing and the new ones and publish up  
24 the regs.

25 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

1 I don't think we have a quorum to  
2 vote actually today. But I would just  
3 like a consensus of the committee  
4 members that are here whether you  
5 support moving forward with these two  
6 anchorages or not. Does anyone have a  
7 strong opposition to them once they  
8 iron out some of these issues that have  
9 been brought up today? Does anybody  
10 have issues over it?

11 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

12 For the pilots, how do you insure  
13 that ships are not anchoring close  
14 enough to the revetment?

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

16 They know they can't anchor on the  
17 revetment, so generally we'll stay one  
18 cable off of the bank which when the  
19 vessel with the radar you put the scope  
20 on .1, which is 600 feet and when they  
21 come in they'll set the VRM, Variable  
22 Rain Marker, on .1, which would put the  
23 outboard anchor 600 feet off of the  
24 edge of the water and then they will  
25 swing in and bring the other ship in

1 and settle 300 or 400 feet off of the  
2 bank.

3 CAPT ARENSTAM:

4 One of the things we can do is if  
5 you know exactly where the revetment  
6 is, we can draw the inside line and the  
7 anchorage.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

9 Anytime?

10 CAPT ARENSTAM:

11 Draw on the chart due to our great  
12 hydrographic authority guys here can  
13 help out with drawing in the right  
14 spot. It's not going to change how  
15 they're going to anchor, but at least  
16 they will have that.

17 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

18 Yes, I would love to do it that  
19 way.

20 CAPT ARENSTAM:

21 Perfect.

22 MICHELLE SPRAUL:

23 I will work with Marcie and get  
24 Marcie in touch with our guys that have  
25 some (inaudible).

1 CAPT ARENSTAM:

2 Because the GIS information now we  
3 know the top and the bottom end and we  
4 can draw the outside one and if you  
5 know the line on the inside we can --  
6 just makes the regs a little bit  
7 longer, but we can take the sheet pile  
8 and pass it to NOAA it will be easy to  
9 show up on the chart.

10 TIM OSBORN:

11 Once Michelle and John are  
12 obviously comfortable how it's all laid  
13 out with you, you can give to us and  
14 we'll put it into an electronic chart  
15 layers and we'll come back basically  
16 with an official chart.

17 CAPT ARENSTAM:

18 But how you actually do it is going  
19 to be exactly the way you do it now,  
20 but just the way we have to write it up  
21 in the regs will be a little bit  
22 different than any of the others.

23 TIM OSBORN

24 What we'll just make sure and do is  
25 when we get the wording of the

1 regulations finalized we will give it  
2 to you and then you can send it out to  
3 the members.

4 CAPT ARENSTAM:

5 And I'm going to ask NOAA to give  
6 us a print-out, pre-arranged picture of  
7 what it would look like so everybody  
8 understands that this reg will look  
9 like this on your chart.

10 TIM OSBORN:

11 And we'll have all the ATONS there.

12 CAPT ARENSTAM:

13 Any other comments?

14 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

15 When you've got that together you  
16 can just send it to me and I'll vet it  
17 real quickly and then we can get  
18 together a letter of recommendation or  
19 whatever you require.

20 CAPT ARENSTAM:

21 Perfect. We'll be in touch. Thank  
22 you.

23 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

24 Thank you, John. I appreciate it.  
25 Next item on the agenda is Chris

1 Accardo to talk about the regulated  
2 navigation areas.

3 CHRIS ACCARDO:

4 Thank you, Cherie. Again, my name  
5 is Chris Accardo. I'm Chief of  
6 Operations with the New Orleans  
7 District Corps of Engineers.

8 I wanted a few minutes on the  
9 agenda today to talk to you a little  
10 bit about the regulated navigation  
11 area. Everybody's aware that during  
12 storms we have IHNC area that's being  
13 regulated. We have the area, Algiers  
14 and Harvey Canal that are being  
15 regulated. And I know that presents  
16 terrific challenges for you guys. But  
17 at the same time, we're spending \$14  
18 billion trying to build this hurricane  
19 system in the New Orleans area, the  
20 last thing we could have is a barge or  
21 something come rolling through one of  
22 the flood walls that are built and  
23 causing all kind of flooding for the  
24 city. So we're in the process right  
25 now, a lot of that construction is



1 still going on. We have the west  
2 closure complex and the surge barrier  
3 that is protecting those areas and I  
4 know there's a lot of belief that once  
5 those systems are complete, the surge  
6 barrier and the west closure complex,  
7 then the whole RNA goes away. I'm here  
8 to tell that that's probably not going  
9 to happen. I know the RNA is a Coast  
10 Guard initiative, but they work closely  
11 with us and we're trying to make sure  
12 that we can certify the levee system  
13 once it's built.

14 Now the latest word is FEMA  
15 establishes rates based on whether a  
16 levee system is certified. We will  
17 certify the levee system after all the  
18 construction is complete. One of the  
19 things that is giving us a lot of  
20 anxiety and a lot of -- the levee  
21 districts are concerned about is the  
22 idea of impact from vessels. We cannot  
23 certify the levee system if we don't  
24 have some plan in place on how to  
25 resist vessel impact. Now the system

1 is not designed to handle a stray barge  
2 or any kind of vessel during a storm.  
3 So since it's not designed to do that,  
4 the only other avenue we have to  
5 certify the system would be an RNA.  
6 Now we have it in place. We had it in  
7 place the last few years and we can  
8 continue to have it in place and  
9 continue to work with the Coast Guard,  
10 but the message I'm here to deliver  
11 today is I don't think the Corps of  
12 Engineers is going to support the RNA  
13 going away any time soon even with the  
14 west closure and a certain area coming  
15 on board.

16 Now I'm going to hush here and I'll  
17 take any questions that you all might  
18 have on this but we intend to work with  
19 you guys. If you all have any changes  
20 that you want to make on the RNA, we  
21 ask that you coordinate it with us so  
22 that we know what you are proposing.

23 CAPT GAUTIER:

24 I'm glad you raised that, Chris. I  
25 just have a couple of spots to patch

1 here for the advisory committee.

2 The current RNA is in an interim  
3 final rule status. So at some point  
4 the Coast Guard is going to have to  
5 finalize that and in doing so, I think  
6 there are perhaps modifications that we  
7 can consider based on the final design  
8 criteria that Chris is mentioning.

9 Currently, in order to maintain  
10 vessel and barges, etc. in the system,  
11 you have to get a waiver from the Coast  
12 Guard that has to be renewed annually.  
13 Perhaps there is room there to adjust  
14 the regulations to provide clear  
15 criteria that if you meet that then you  
16 can remain in the system rather than  
17 having to get the Coast Guard to give  
18 you permission individually something  
19 that might be able to be reviewed prior  
20 to storm landfall.

21 So what I would like to do is ask  
22 the advisory committee to be involved  
23 in that process from going to interim  
24 final rule to the final rule. And so  
25 we'll get together. We have been

1 working with Chris and his staff on  
2 doing this and this is something that  
3 we can then just get advice and counsel  
4 from the advisory committee to finalize  
5 it.

6 SEAN DUFFY:

7 Just one comment. Something we've  
8 talked about in the past as you know  
9 very well is the number of draw bridges  
10 and locks issues that happen back there  
11 could need to be accounted for too.  
12 Depending on the approach, shallow  
13 draft vessels could possibly go out,  
14 but if you have a deep draft vessel  
15 back there their only avenue is  
16 through the lock and through those draw  
17 bridges and with the number of closures  
18 and incidents that have happen, it's  
19 something that needs to be accounted  
20 for and RNA is you might have a  
21 situation where particularly a ship  
22 can't go out. So looking at the fact  
23 that we have all those structures that  
24 need to be addressed would be important  
25 too.

1 CHRIS ACCARDO:

2 We are aware of this. Good point.  
3 We work with the Corps with the bridges  
4 and IHNC lock. We're well aware of  
5 this. And I tell you what, for  
6 Tropical Storm Lee it worked out very  
7 well. Everybody was aware of RNA;  
8 everybody was aware of our limitations  
9 with the surge barrier and the west  
10 closure and we really didn't have a  
11 problem with Tropical Storm Lee. So I  
12 just think getting this message out,  
13 the navigation industry, it seems very  
14 willing to cooperate. And that's all  
15 I'm trying to do is make sure that we  
16 keep this message on the front burner.

17 Bob, you've got a question?

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

19 (inaudible) and the good thing, I  
20 mean, this is a (inaudible). This is a  
21 safety issue for the people who live in  
22 the City of New Orleans. You can't do  
23 something to keep vessels from bumping  
24 in to not only locks, but flood walls,  
25 and so I just can't imagine that the

1 RNA would go away. As a matter of  
2 fact, our board is starting to work  
3 with the Coast Guard to tighten that  
4 thing up and it doesn't go quite far  
5 enough to protect the system. I would  
6 suggest that you start a working group  
7 to deal with this issue and  
8 participating in that to get this thing  
9 in place before the next hurricane  
10 season.

11 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

12 Mark?

13 MARK WRIGHT:

14 Hi, Mark Wright, NWO. I would echo  
15 the call for some sort of working group  
16 to discuss this. I'm fairly confident  
17 our industry feels that it should not  
18 be tighten any further. We think it's  
19 worked well, but we do think given a  
20 permanent proposal there should be some  
21 good conversations about it, much like  
22 we had a couple of years ago. So, I  
23 would echo that call. We should have a  
24 good conversation about it and make  
25 sure we get all the information out and

1 have a good conversation about it.

2 CHRIS ACCARDO:

3 I would like to reinforce what Bob  
4 said. If we can get this in place  
5 before hurricane season, the upcoming  
6 hurricane season, that would be a big  
7 advantage. If you do put together a  
8 working group, I think that should be  
9 the target date to get this thing  
10 established.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

12 If we could just set up in order to  
13 meet some of the other requirements  
14 that the federal government has when  
15 dealing with regulations and how to  
16 change the regulations. And it has to  
17 be a public meeting. It has to have  
18 that -- and so one of the issues I  
19 think that we can do is have a ad hoc  
20 subcommittee of LMRWSAC to get together  
21 with everybody that wants to be  
22 together, but have it officially as a  
23 subcommittee of LMRWSAC to present out  
24 to LMRWSAC who then can advise the  
25 Coast Guard on the changes to the RNA

1 and we can meet the public's meeting  
2 requirements without a lot of extreme  
3 extra burden being placed on everybody  
4 involved.

5 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

6 I think that's a good idea.

7 CAPT GAUTIER:

8 I agree completely. This is  
9 exactly what the Coast Guard is looking  
10 for from this Advisory Committee. So  
11 perhaps what we can do is talk off-line  
12 about plan of action so we can meet the  
13 required dates in order to get the  
14 bureaucratic process of rule making and  
15 give it sufficient time to work.

16 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

17 Absolutely. Great. We'll make  
18 sure that we reach out to all  
19 stakeholders to make sure they're  
20 included in this work group. Thanks,  
21 Chris.

22 That is the last item under new  
23 business. Does anyone have any other  
24 new business they'd like to present to  
25 the group?



1 COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

2 No comment.

3 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

4 We will also look at some dates to  
5 come up for the next LMRWSAC meeting,  
6 the regular meeting. We usually look  
7 at the Captain's schedule and the  
8 Admiral's schedule. He was not able to  
9 be with us today, but hopefully will be  
10 able to make the next meeting so we  
11 always check his schedule to see what  
12 that is and then we get word out.

13 Hopefully, we'll also have before  
14 the next meeting perhaps, our  
15 appointments if DHS moves in a timely  
16 manner that would be good. Other than  
17 that we will keep you posted and we  
18 will put together this ad hoc committee  
19 and start working on the RNA agenda, as  
20 well.

21 That's all I have. I'd like to  
22 thank everyone for coming today. I  
23 appreciate all of your efforts to be  
24 here and the great conversation and  
25 discussion today. Thank you very much

1 and everyone have a great holiday.

2 CAPT GAUTIER:

3 There was one thing I wanted to  
4 mention before everybody leaves. Not  
5 to say that we're all doom and gloom,  
6 we did have an outstanding passenger  
7 vessel contingency plan tabletop  
8 exercise last week. This is a plan  
9 that is managed by the ferry system  
10 here to account for the fact that  
11 they've been grandfathered into not  
12 having some of the higher end life  
13 saving appliances on board. They do  
14 have to have a mass casualty plan here  
15 in the ferry system just in case  
16 something happens and there needs to be  
17 a mass rescue on the river. So we  
18 exercised that plan last week with  
19 participation of the Crescent City  
20 Connection ferries, Creole Queen, the  
21 Natchez and the New Orleans Steamboat  
22 Company, New Orleans Paddlewheel  
23 Company, New Orleans Harbor Police, New  
24 Orleans Emergency Management, ADT River  
25 Operations, E.N. Bisso, Bisso Towboat,

1 Belle Chasse Marine and Transportation  
2 and the Sector. It was a terrific  
3 exercise and I think we feel more  
4 comfortable than perhaps where we came  
5 out of in last year's exercise. What  
6 we want to do in our next step, just so  
7 you all know, is doing a field exercise  
8 using actual vessels. So stay tuned  
9 for that, as well.

10 Thanks so much for everyone who  
11 submitted their applications. Cherie,  
12 I assure you we will be nags and keep  
13 the process moving forward because this  
14 is the first meeting I've attended and  
15 this is a very valuable body that we'd  
16 like to keep it going.

17 COMMITTEE CHAIR:

18 Thank you so much for your support.  
19 Merry Christmas. Happy Holidays and  
20 we'll see you in the New Year.

21 \* \* \* \* \*

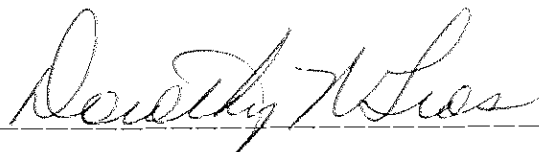
22 (Whereupon, the meeting was concluded at 10:51  
23 a.m.)

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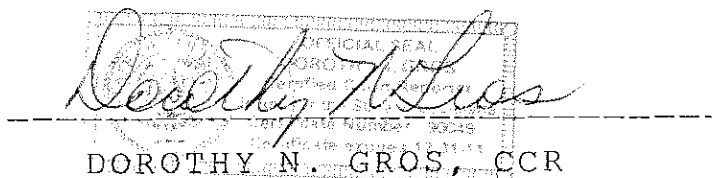


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