

Correspondence dated February 14, 2002

From: Coast Guard Activities New York

To: New York City Department of Transportation Staten Island Division

Subject: Recommendations resulting from accident investigation on Staten Island Ferry American Legion on August 26, 2001.

Four (4) pages total including this cover

U.S. Department
of Transportation

United States
Coast Guard



Officer in Charge,
Marine Inspection
United States Coast Guard
Activities New York

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16705
Activity #75189
February 14, 2002

New York City Department of Transportation
Staten Island Division
Attn: Mr. John R. Mauldin, Port Captain
St. George Ferry Terminal Bldg.
Staten Island, NY 10301

Gentlemen:

On August 26th, 2001 the Staten Island passenger ferry American Legion, O. N. 298830 was involved in a Reportable Marine Casualty that rose to the level of a Serious Marine Incident as a result of injuries suffered by one of the passengers. In accordance with 46 USC 6301, the U. S. Coast Guard initiated a Marine Casualty investigation into the circumstances surrounding this event to determine cause and identify measures that might prevent recurrence of a similar casualty.

Observation of ferry activities has shown that passengers tend to congregate en masse on the forward weather deck as they wait to disembark the vessel. For a multitude of reasons, ranging from complacency to inattentiveness, many passengers are unaware the momentum a 277 foot, 2109 gross ton vessel can generate as it makes headway. As a result, some passengers find themselves ill prepared for sudden vessel movements or hard landings. Given the unconcerned and unappreciative nature of many of your passengers, the task of keeping the public educated about the potential dangers to their safety must certainly be frustrating for members of your crew. However discouraging though, this important effort to educate the public must continue. To that end, and following a review of the August 26th incident, as well as several similar casualty cases on other Staten Island ferry vessels, the following recommendations are forwarded for your consideration:

1. Extend public address announcement coverage to the fore and aft weather deck through the installation of marine grade speakers in these locations. Currently, public addresses made by the crew cannot be heard in these high traffic areas.
2. Revise signage to follow guidelines outlined in ASTM F 1166-95a, Section 27. Labels should be visible, legible and of an appropriate color, contrasting to the applicable backgrounds. Additionally, labels should state the hazard, state how to avoid the hazard and state the consequences of ignoring the warning. An example comparing existing signage with sample verbiage applying the ASTM standards is enclosed for your review.
3. Update the public address announcement to incorporate the standards of ASTM, using wording similar to the signage verbiage. Specifically, state the hazard, state how to avoid the hazard and state the consequences of ignoring the warning.

Should you wish to discuss these recommendations in greater detail or their relevance to the August 26th American Legion Serious Marine Incident please contact LT Mark A. Bottiglieri of my staff at the above number.

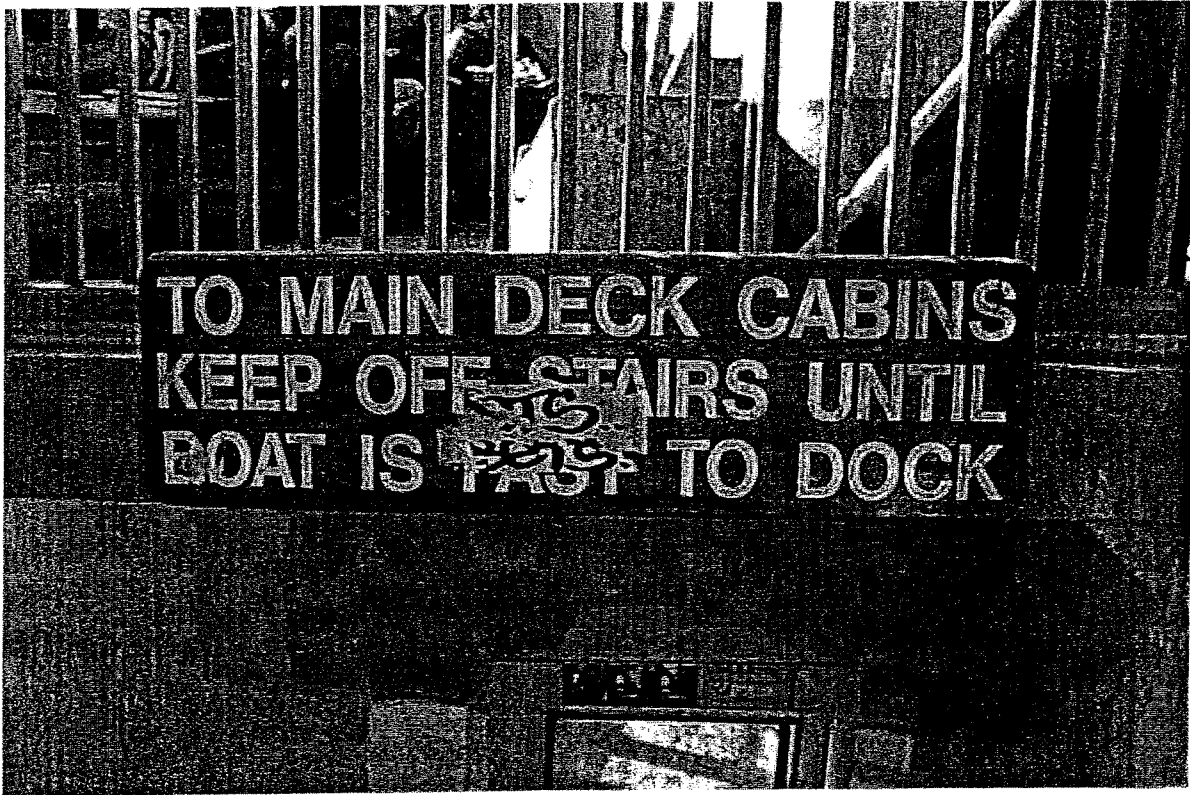
Sincerely,



G. F. SHATINSKY
Commander, U.S. Coast Guard
Senior Investigating Officer
By direction

Encl: (1) Photo illustrating current and suggested sign verbiage

Copy: CG ACTNY Deep Draft Branch Chief



(Existing Signage)

Caution

Severe Tripping Hazard Possible

Stay Off Stairs While Vessel is
Docking/Undocking

Serious Injury Can Occur

(Suggested Signage)