MARITIME SECURITY INFORMATION BULLETIN (MSIB) 14-09

10 December 2014

Coast Guard Sector San Francisco
Department of Homeland Security

Severe Weather Preparations

A major winter storm is forecast for the San Francisco Bay this week. The storm is forecast to impact the entire Bay Area region, Monterey, and Lake Tahoe. Patchy fog, heavy rain, gale force winds (in excess of 34 knots) and increased wave action are expected Wednesday night, 10 December through Thursday, 11 December 2014, with weather abating and showers expected on Friday, 12 December, 2014. Preparations should be made to ensure the safety of our essential Marine Transportation System and the protection of our sensitive marine environment. The progression of the weather system can be monitored at the following website: **http://www.weather.gov/sanfrancisco**

This MSIB clarifies USCG Captain of the Port expectations and provides recommended actions in preparation for heavy weather conditions forecast for the San Francisco COTP Zone. Industry partners should review the applicable portions of the San Francisco, San Pablo and Suisun Bay Harbor Safety Plan, implement existing heavy-weather plans and shall take due diligence to prepare for potential storm impacts.

USCG Sector San Francisco will be conducting harbor patrols to ascertain pre-storm conditions and provide recommendations for preparatory actions. The COTP may require additional precautions to ensure the safety of the ports and waterways. The following requirements and recommendations are provided in advance of the heavy weather:

- Ports and waterfront facilities should remove and/or securing all debris and potential flying hazards.
- Secure hazardous materials and pollution hazards in a safe manner away from waterfront areas.
- Terminal operators should prepare to terminate all cargo operations not associated with storm preparations.
- Container stacking protocols should be implemented. Waterfront facilities that are unable to reduce container stacking heights to no more than four high (or no more than two high for hazardous materials) should devise a contingency plan with alternative container stacking protocols and submit these plans to the Captain of the Port.
- Heavy weather mooring arrangements shall be implemented for all oceangoing commercial vessels greater than 500 tons that are scheduled to remain in port. Proof of facility owner/operator approval shall be submitted to the Captain of the Port.
- All facilities shall continue operations in accordance with their approved Facility Security Plans and comply with the requirements of the Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA).

- Anticipate that drawbridges may be closed to vessel traffic due to high winds and safety concerns.
- Vessel loading/discharging operations are not authorized during gale force winds unless specifically cleared by the COTP. This includes container operations and bunkering and discharging operations in accordance with the San Francisco, San Pablo and Suisun Bay Harbor Safety Plan.
- Bulk liquid terminals should ensure that all transfer hoses and loading arms are drained, flanged, and secured. Valves on transfer piping leading to pier and waterfront areas should be secured in the closed position.
- All vessels at anchorage shall implement heavy weather communications procedures with VTS San Francisco in accordance with 33CFR110.224.
- Ferry operators are encouraged to evaluate their ability to operate in the pending conditions and take all necessary actions to ensure the safety of passengers and crews. Ferry vessel movements may be restricted if winds reach gale force strength.
- In accordance with the San Francisco, San Pablo and Suisun Bay Harbor Safety Plan, vessel operators shall notify the COTP via VTS San Francisco of intent to operate during storm conditions, and take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of transits.
- Marine construction and dredging operations should be suspended and secured in advance of gale force winds.
- Marine event organizers should postpone events until after the passage of the storm.

In anticipation of aggravated storm conditions, and to allow industry and port partners adequate time to prepare for this storm, the COTP encourages all preparations to be completed by the evening of 10 December 2014. At that time, ports and waterways facilities should anticipate cessation of waterfront activities during gale force winds.

Following the passage storm conditions ports and facilities should conduct damage assessments and report any damage to the COTP. In the event of significant damage, facilities may be prohibited from receiving cargo or passengers until authorized by the COTP. If necessary, the COTP will deploy Coast Guard Port Survey Teams to conduct final port assessments to determine that it is safe to allow operations based upon the following:

- Ports and waterways damage survey assessments
- Verification of MTSA activities
- Aids to Navigation assessments
- Status and condition of bridges

The Harbor Safety Plan is available online at
http://www.sfmx.org/support/hsc/webdocs/hscplans/HSC%20Plan%202014.pdf.

I urge all our port and industry partners, pilots, vessel agents and vessel masters to remain vigilant in their duties and report any storm related hazards to the Sector San Francisco Command Center at 415-399-7300 or contact our Vessel Traffic Service on VHF Channel 14.

G. G. STUMP
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Captain of the Port