

GNOPSC: LMR HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE

WATERWAYS & NAVIGATION SUBCOMMITTEE WORKING GROUP BRIEF

Introduction: Many thanks to those who participated in the working groups, led the meetings, and summarized our reports.

Summary: The Waterway & Navigation Subcommittee formed three working groups last October to cover three specific projects:

- I. Review of Federal AtoNs from Baton Rouge to Head of Passes.
- II. Review of anchorages from Head of Passes to Baton Rouge
- III. Develop navigational safety recommendations for CPRA's MBSD Project

Synopsis:

I. AtoN Review: Working group reviewed all AtoNs from MM232 at Baton Rouge down to the Sea Bouy.

Review Process: The River was divided into three regions according to deep draft Pilot Association.

- NOBRA Pilots Association reviewing MM232 through MM95;
- Crescent Pilots from MM95 down to MM0 at Head of Passes;
- Associated (Bar) Pilots from MM0 to the Sea Bouy.

Working Group: Along with brown water representatives and the Pilot's Associations, attendance at the meetings included US Coast Guard, NOAA, and MNSA.

Recommendation: Following the review, the WG's recommendation included:

- Discontinuation of 8 day-beacons, 6 lights, and 3 traffic control lights;
- Relocation of 2 day-beacons.

II. Anchorage Review: Working Group assessed federal anchorages outlined in 33 CFR 110.195 - from Baton Rouge, LA to South and Southwest Pass.

Review Process: Split the review into 3 areas of assessment, based upon Pilot zones.

- Associated Branch (Bar) Pilots' zone (MM 0 to Sea Buoy) on 12DEC22.
- Crescent River Pilots' Zone (MM 0 to MM 95 AHP) on 02FEB23.
- NOBRA Pilots Zone (MM 95 to MM 232 AHP) on 02MAY23.

Working Group: Each pilot association, Coastal and Marine Operators (CAMO), and brown-water representatives.

Recommendations: Include general and specific concerns and recommendations from each Pilot zone. Including:

- Associated Bar Pilot’s concern with shoaling (specifically at Pilottown Anchorage);
- Crescent’s general concerns with timing and communication of dredging projects affecting anchorage usability;
- Request to expand Emergency Anchorage;
- MBSD project will change the lay-out of the Willis Point anchorage;
- Possible re-write of regs on General & Quarantine anchorages removing language barring haz-cargoes;
- NOBRA’s General concerns with barge fleeting areas expanding into anchorages, along with increased traffic throughout the area; and
- NOBRA’s Request to expand seven anchorages from Kenner Bend to Lower Baton Rouge:
 - Kenner Bend Anchorage
 - Ama Anchorage
 - LaPlace Anchorage
 - Upper Grandview Reach Anchorage
 - Belmont Anchorage
 - Sunshine Anchorage – recommend also listing as Burnside Anchorage
 - Lower Baton Rouge Anchorage – recommend also listing as Miel Anchorage

III. Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion (MBSD) Navigational Safety – Construction and Operational Phase.

Purpose: Provide navigational safety recommendations to CPRA on safe/prudent navigation safety guidelines during the construction phase operations phase of the project

Working Group: Met January 31, 2023 with representatives from the Crescent and Federal Pilots members of brown-water / shallow-draft industry, CPRA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and other mariners who utilize the Lower Mississippi River.

Recommendations: Numerous navigational points made concerning both construction and operational phase of project – fully outlined in report to be submitted to the USACE through the USCG. Here is a brief summary:

- Construction Phase:
 - Contractor and construction vessel contacts to be provided to USCG and USACE
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- Communications plan including weekly updates submitted to USCG for MSIB publication to mariners.
- Maintain safe speed through zone during key installations.
- Construction barge fleeting to maintain GNOBFA best practices.
- Construction vessels to continuously transmit accurate AIS data.
- Maintain Hurricane Plan following Sector NOLA guidelines in place.
- Operational Phase:
 - CPRA MBSD operational contacts made available;
 - Visual Aid to Mariners indicating when structure is operating along with warning signage (stay clear, no anchoring).;
 - Provision of visual and audible warnings, including warning claxon and red or yellow lights.
 - Installation of real time flow sensor with information made avail to mariners.
 - Warning and operational information data should be provided to NOAA for publication in area charts.

IV. Closing:

Reports on the above three Working Group projects were developed following the meetings and emailed to committee members for voting on July 12, 2023. Votes were tallied 21 days later, with all three reports receiving a majority of “yes” vote.