

Charleston Area Harbor Safety Committee (HSC) Meeting Minutes

Thursday – January 29, 2026

Roll Call & Call to Orders: LTJG Nick Jones, USCG

Meeting was conducted via Zoom and in-person at 200 Ports Authority Drive, Mount Pleasant. LTJG Jones completed a roll call and transitioned to opening remarks.

Opening Comments:

Opening Remarks: Ms. Karen McDonland, Moran Towing, provided a welcome and brief opening remarks.

Committee Administration: N/A

New Business: N/A

Open Issues, Presentations, Proposals, Follow-Up:

- **Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency** – Amanda Knight
 - Presented on physical security assessment services offered by CISA. Discussed the increasing frequency of and severity of hazards and the importance of preparedness and risk management.
- **South Carolina Ports Authority** – Gene Coker
 - Discussed recent security breaches at the Port Authority Terminals. Presented a possible solution to the vessel shipping lines – submitted information prior to vessel arrival. Multiple shipping line representatives were amicable to the solution and will discuss a path forward with Mr. Coker. In addition, Mr. Coker addressed the need for mariners to wear proper PPE when transiting through the Port Authority Terminals.
- **Wounded Nature/Working Veterans** – Rudy Socha
 - Mr. Socha provided an update on derelict vessel removal operations, noting significant success on the vessel backlog through Charleston Harbor area, Georgetown, and Horry County.
- **Stevens Towing** – Benjamin “Bos” Smith
 - Mr. Smith highlighted a recent successful salvage operation on the jetties. He noted that many conditions were favorable to the evolution; however, incidents on the jetties remain an ongoing concern. Although NOAA added the jetties to the chart, it was recommended that some sort of lighting system be considered.

Announcements/General Comments:

- Ports and Waterway Safety Assessment scheduled for 11 and 12 Feb 2026.
- Bennis Reach Range rebuild complete.
- Buoy 49 relocation – initial comment period ends 3Feb26. A temporary relocation request will be submitted, followed by a 60 day comment period ending 3Apr26.

Closing:

LTJG Jones thanked everyone for attending and concluded the meeting. The next HSC meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 23rd, 2026.