



# The Marine Assistance Industry Journal

A Quarterly Newsletter - Volume 46- April 2022

## *Chairman's Address*



Whether I'm examining insurance coverages, or packing gear to head out to handle an overturned boat, I'm constantly asking myself the same question: "What am I missing?"

The same goes for what we do here. Every year, at our annual conference, we hand out a survey, asking what everyone enjoyed, as well as what everyone needs and wants to see from C-PORT. It's that feedback that informs future conferences and programs.

But not everyone attends conferences, so absent that feedback, I'm left wondering "What are we missing?"

I'm definitely not the smartest guy in the room. Hell, sometimes I wonder if I'm the smartest guy alone in the shower. My experience is limited to running a coastal business in New England.

I've never worked an inland lake, so I don't understand the challenges of falling outside federal oversight and solely within state and Army Corps regulations. I only visit California and Florida on vacation, so I'm not familiar with what those states, and a 12-month, non-stop schedule requires.

For that, we need our members to inform us. C-PORT represents over 170 companies of varying sizes, from every conceivable area in the country. Each has different needs, different challenges, and different viewpoints.

This association exists solely to represent your needs, help with those challenges, and listen to those viewpoints. So if there's something you don't see, or you think we're not addressing, please tell us. We want to know what we're missing.

Fair winds and following seas,

Phil LeBlanc  
C-PORT Chairman

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## **SAVE The DATE!**

**36th C-PORT Conference and Membership Meeting**

**January 16 - January 18, 2023**

**Hotel Monteleone**

**New Orleans, LA**

***TowBoatU.S. Conference immediately follows!***

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## *Rescue Marine hosted a C-PORT Boat Operators Search and Rescue (BOSAR) for Commercial Assistance*

class on April 5 - 7, 2022 in Marblehead, OH. The class was attended by six students, all credentialed mariners working in the commercial assistance towing and salvage industry.

The NASBLA (National Association of State Boating Law Administrators) Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) Program “establishes a U.S. Coast Guard recognized national standard for the training, qualification, credentialing and typing of marine law enforcement and emergency first responders”, as explained by NASBLA. With interest rising for training opportunities within the marine assistance industry, C-PORT worked with NASBLA to create the C-PORT BOSAR for Commercial Assistance training course. This course is open to assistance towing companies only and the students must be properly credentialed mariners to participate. The course content is identical to that offered by NASBLA providing students with the same standard of training and benefits.

The Ohio class was taught by two NASBLA certified instructors who are also C-PORT members, Phil LeBlanc and Terry Hill. With all students successfully completing the home study prerequisite, the students entered the classroom for in-person instruction and on the water training. NASBLA agreed to allow the C-PORT program to have a home study portion in lieu of two classroom days, making the C-PORT course three days hands on and offered at a substantial cost discount for C-PORT members.

One of the goals of the BOAT program is to create a standard for interoperability at all government levels. This includes incorporation of commercial assistance companies. Jake Dunfee, owner of Rescue Marine, reached out to his local station, U.S. Coast Guard Station Marblehead. The Station sent crew and vessels to participate and assist with the on the water exercises, focusing on SAR patterns.

The course was a great success with these 6 students receiving NASBLA certification and being added to the FEMA typing database. It's easy to host a C-PORT BOSAR for Commercial Assistance class in your area. Contact Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) or call 954-261-2012 for the details.



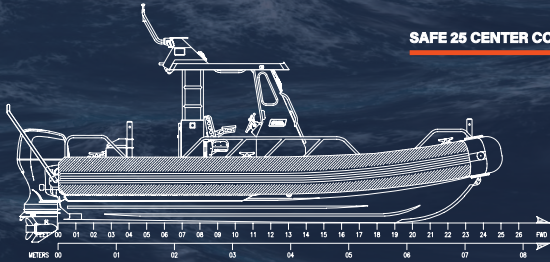




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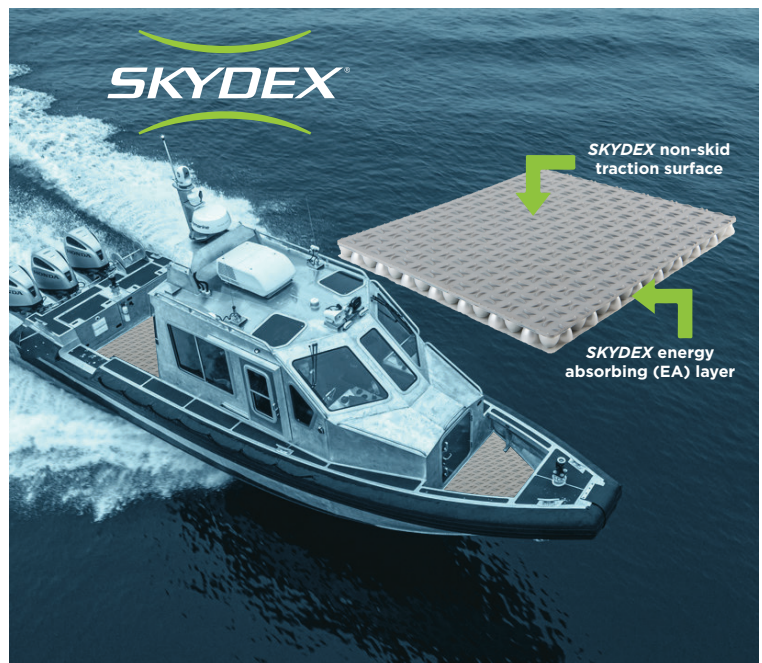


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**Federal Court Lifts Mask Mandate- USCG and Federal Agencies are reviewing the ruling.** By now you have probably heard that a federal court judge lifted the federal mask mandate on public transportation systems. Maritime transportation falls under these systems.

What does it mean for the assistance towing and salvage industry? The U.S. Coast Guard issued a Marine Safety Bulletin (MSIB) that states it will not enforce mask requirements as the federal review of the court's order continues. The MSIB reminds everyone that the CDC continues to recommend that people wear masks when indoors in public places. You may read the bulletin by following this link: [MSIB Mask Requirement Suspended](#).

**USCG issued a Policy Letter Update: Subchapter M enforcement** posture for certificate of inspection phase-in requirements on April 12, 2022. As sometimes happens, our members may receive letters from their CG Sector or Station regarding Subchapter M compliance. C-PORT continues to work with the Coast Guard to ensure our vessels are not grouped with traditional towing vessels. Subchapter M is clear that a vessel engaged in assistance towing, towing recreational vessels for salvage, or transporting or assisting the navigation of recreational vessels between and within marinas in a limited geographic area, are excluded at this time. Please contact Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) or call 954-261-2012 if you have questions.

**USCG issued an advance notice of proposed rulemaking** that will be used to revise its CFR chart and navigational equipment carriage requirements to implement statutory electronic-chart-use provisions. Additional information is being sought. C-PORT is acting to respond to CG in this rulemaking process to insure no unintended consequences befall the assistance towing industry. Some of the information needed includes how widely electronic charts currently are used, which types of vessels are using them, and where the vessels operate. C-PORT encourages its members to reach out with any questions or comments to Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) or call 954-261-2012.

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***C-PORT is seeking nominations for the AFRAS C-PORT Lifesaving Award.*** This award represents the decade long relationship between C-PORT and AFRAS. The Association for Rescue at Sea (AFRAS) was formed in 1976 to foster traditional maritime search and rescue values through suitable recognition of deserving personnel, and to facilitate cooperation in search and rescue. In 2010, AFRAS expressed a desire to annually recognize a deserving member of C-PORT (Conference of Professional Operators for Response Towing) that has shown exceptional skill and determination to save lives during a rescue incident in the maritime environment. The Award is conferred on an individual or group of individuals who perform exceptional acts in attempting to save life. Instances where the rescuer places their own life at risk are given highest consideration. C-PORT is honored to be part of the AFRAS tradition.

Each year, C-PORT accepts nominations for this award, where they are vetted and then submitted to AFRAS for review and selection, if deemed appropriate. Nominations are to include a full description of the circumstances and events giving rise to the nomination and include such factors as: Location of the incident; Prevailing weather conditions; Skill displayed; Determination to conduct the rescue operation; Exceptional courage demonstrated; Degree of risk involved.

Nominations for the 2022 award are being accepted now for incidents that occurred between September 30, 2021 and September 30, 2022. All nominations must be received at C-PORT no later than October 5, 2022. Email Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) with your award nominations. Awards are presented at the C-PORT Conference and Membership Meeting during the Awards Gala Banquet.

***Is there someone in the marine assistance towing and salvage industry who has acted above and beyond*** in service to the boating community? C-PORT Honors is a program developed to recognize that individual. Past C-PORT Honors recipients include Paul Amaral, Channel Watch Marine, for his selfless actions in response to the dive boat CONCEPTION, Hunter Roop who saved the life of Jon Gridley, former C-PORT board member, after a shallow dive left Jon lifeless, and Terry Hill, Potomac Marine, for his unrelenting service to C-PORT and its mission.

Nominations for C-PORT Honors are being accepted now through September 30, 2022. Submit a description of their service and the reason for their nomination to C-PORT in care of Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) for consideration.

***New Risk Management Core course option available online at C-PORT!*** In cooperation with the US Coast Guard Office of Boat Forces, C-PORT presented the latest operational risk management core course at its conference this past January. This course is now available for purchase at the C-PORT website.

The core course provides the foundation of operational risk management principles. This course focuses on the human factors that are involved with risk management. The course includes an industry case study that reviews the principles of operational risk management and provides an opportunity for lessons learned application in marine assistance towing and salvage industry operations.

Special pricing for Operational Risk Management-The Human Factors is available for C-PORT members along with additional certificate options for members' captains and crew. Visit the [C-PORT](https://www.c-port.org) website for more details.

**C-PORT announces a new benefit for its members.** C-PORT was founded in 1986 by a group of industry pioneers. The marine assistance towing and salvage industry as we know it, did not exist prior to the late 1980's when Congress conducted a privatization of federal services review. Among its numerous missions of safety, security, defense, and law enforcement, the U.S. Coast Guard was assisting recreational boaters with non-emergency services. Congress privatized that service, creating a new industry dedicated to assisting boaters.

Many of these industry founders have retired or sold their companies to new entrepreneurs. The influx of new ownership these past few years provided C-PORT an opportunity to serve these new members and its long standing members by establishing a mentor program.

The C-PORT Mentor Program creates a place for new and newer members to share in the knowledge and experience of the association's veterans. The sessions are virtual, held monthly, and are limited topics to keep the call to under an hour including time for Q&A and discussion. C-PORT has held two of these calls since the program's inception with positive feedback and active attendance at both. The next call will be on May 10 at 2:00 PM. If you are not currently receiving emails regarding this program and want to be included, contact Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) or call 954-261-2012.



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The C-PORT program is designed for organizations dedicated to marine assistance and towing. The program offers an extensive portfolio of quality insurance products and services to address a wide range of marine exposures. We have one of the most comprehensive coverage packages in pricing in the industry. The program is administered by Starkweather & Shepley Insurance Brokerage, Inc., and underwritten by Travelers, one of the leading marine insurance providers in the United States. This partnership provides C-PORT clients with access to one of the few marine carriers that is dedicated to this industry.

Utilizing the partnership with the Marine Claims Department allows S&S to provide more to you, whether it is keeping track of your claim from start to finish, providing you with ongoing advice at key junctures and immediate answers, as well as ensuring an adjuster contacts you promptly. In this way, you return to business as usual, and as soon as possible.

The program provides access to competitive rates, a simplified application process, and customized coverage. Our team dedicates ourselves to listening to your needs and researching the best options for your particular risk. S&S's approach focuses on what you need so that you stay protected.

When you choose the C-PORT program, you can trust you are working with insurance specialists who understand your specific watercraft needs. What distinguishes us are the specialized options we provide based on your marine risk and the premium credits that may be applied simultaneously.

Starkweather and Shepley Insurance Brokerage, Inc., partnered with Travelers, offers products and services backed by financial strength and longevity in the insurance industry. Travelers is rated A+ by A.M. Best (the Insurance Industry's Financial Rating Agency) and built on strength and integrity. They have a seasoned Marine Underwriting Team with a stable Underwriting Philosophy.

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For more information, contact:

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***Risk Management Training Courses*** are available on the C-PORT website, <https://cport.us>. The program centers on these concepts:

- Risk: “possibility of loss or injury”
- Risk Management: “The identification, analysis, assessment, control, and avoidance, minimization, or elimination of unacceptable risks.

C-PORT is committed to encouraging its member’s growth and development through education and is dedicated to providing good business practices throughout its membership. With the increase in accidents and economic pressures facing our industry, many companies have lost sight of the importance of training and proper risk management skills. Our mission is to provide our members with programs that will enable their growth and development into the future, while minimizing the impact of looming USCG regulation in response to Congressional directive and safety records.

Contact Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) or 954-261-2012 with any questions regarding this program. Captain and crew special pricing is available.

***Marine Assistance Company Operations Guideline***, exclusively for C-PORT company members. These guidelines promote safe operations and provide regulatory guidance. C-PORT company members may obtain access to this document at the C-PORT website, <https://cport.us> or contact Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) or 954-261-2012.

***Insurance Program for Marine Assistance Companies*** - Administered by Starkweather & Shepley Insurance Brokerage, Inc. - Designed for organizations dedicated to marine assistance and towing. This Program offers an extensive portfolio of quality insurance products and services to address a wide range of marine exposures. -800-788-8225; [lwagner@starshep.com](http://lwagner@starshep.com).

***ACAPT- Accredited for Commercial Assistance and Professional Towing***- The ACAPT program provides best practices guidance for the marine assistance towing and salvage industry. Participants are highlighted as having taken the initiative to meet or exceed their own company qualifications against industry best practice criteria and government regulations. Visit the C-PORT website at <https://cport.us> or contact Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) or 954-261-2012 with any questions regarding this program.

***BOSAR for Commercial Assistance***- Created through the support of NASBLA’s BOAT program and the USCG Office of Boat Forces, is designed for the marine assistance operator, providing reinforcement of knowledge gained by virtue of their captain’s license and experience. It also enhances their ability to work as a true partner with local agencies and the US Coast Guard. This course is open to any marine assistance company who wants to host the training. Instructors and course materials are provided by C-PORT. Contact Tina Cardone at [tcardone@cport.us](mailto:tcardone@cport.us) or 954-261-2012 if you have an interest in hosting a class.




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C-PORT was founded in 1986 to act as a liaison between the marine assistance industry and public agencies and organizations involved with boating safety, marine assistance, marine salvage and other marine-related operations. Its mission is to represent, promote, protect, and defend its member companies through communication, relationship development, and education. Our members are dedicated to providing prompt, professional and timely assistance to all boaters and to actively partner and cooperate with local law enforcement and U.S. Coast Guard. They are professionals, dedicated to the growth and development of their respective businesses and committed to furthering the advancement of our waterways and the boating community. For more information, contact C-PORT at (954) 261-2012 or visit <https://cport.us>.

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*C-PORT is a 501(c)(6) organization.*