



The Marine Assistance Industry Journal

Volume III; July 2010

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS:



“Drill Baby Drill”, not the most popular quote these days, especially for those living and working on the Gulf Coast. We have all seen the news reports and by now have developed personal opinions on the spill and the results, both immediate and long term. I would like to acknowledge those directly affected and remember the 11 men that paid the ultimate price. Moving forward there is much work to be done cleaning up the oil and monitoring its movements across the Gulf. I am proud of the response that our industry has made to assist with the cleanup. Many of our members have committed boats, equipment, time and money to the cleanup effort at the height of our busy season. The operators from the Florida Keys chapter have been operating 24/7 patrols off of Key West to proactively monitor for any oil making its way south, threatening the Keys and ultimately the whole East Coast of the US. It is great to see many of our operators working in concert for the greater good; I applaud your efforts and keep up the good work.

C-PORT has been focusing on many of our ongoing tasks over the past month. We have successfully helped to initiate the House and Senate Bills providing for an extension to the EPA discharge permitting process, effectively extending the exemption until 2013. The EPA report on incidental discharges of commercial vessels less than 79' was over 700 pages and will take some time to digest and develop a reasonable permitting process. We will continue to work hard to prevent this from impacting your business.

There has also been a focus on our members in Orange County, CA. For those unfamiliar with the issue, consider how your business would be affected if you had to compete not only with another commercial assistance company but a gun toting Harbor Patrol funded by one of the largest budgets in the country. It is a very difficult situation directly affecting the local operators and no clear solution or course of action. The California towers have come together through C-PORT, and the strength of their cooperative numbers along with the efforts of C-PORT will succeed in correcting the policies that are so greatly affecting our providers.

C-PORT has also been working on the research and assessment of states non-emergency towing policies thru NASBLA. We have a seat on the committee to collect these policies from any states that may have them in place and to dissect the information in the interest of determining best practices and potential development of a model policy that will be available to law enforcement agencies to use in their local areas. This has been a very educational experience and the overwhelming message is that our industry has proven itself in the eyes of most states and a favorable non-emergency towing policy is regarded as good business.

C-PORT was invited to the USCG Change of Command in Washington DC on May 25, 2010. Admiral Thad Allen stepped into his position as head of the *Deepwater Horizon* disaster and Admiral Robert J. Papp took over command of the USCG. If you recall, Admiral Allen attended our C-PORT Conference in DC this year and has been continuously supportive of our industry. We spoke with the new Commandant, Admiral Papp, and he also has a very favorable opinion of our industry and will continue to support our cooperation with the USCG from the top seat.

In closing I would like to wish you all a prosperous and safe summer season. Rest assured C-PORT is working diligently to increase your opportunities and to allow you to focus on what is best for your business.

Best,

Chris Shaffner
Chairman