



The Marine Assistance Industry Journal

A Quarterly Newsletter

Volume XXXI- February 2018

The 31st C-PORT Conference and Membership Meeting was held on January 15- January 17, 2018 at the Wyndham Grand at Harbourside, Jupiter, FL.

The conference kicked off with a Welcome Reception on Monday night. Attendees and their guests enjoyed visiting colleagues and friends along the beautiful Inter-coastal Waterway.

Tuesday morning began early with "Fitness with Terry" at 6:00 AM. We welcomed our exhibitors with a continental breakfast before our speakers took the stage. Our U.S. Coast Guard partners, CAPT Christina Davidson, Chief, Office of Search and Rescue, CAPT Christopher Keane, Chief, Office of Shore Forces, USCG, and Mr. Jeffrey Wheeler, Deputy Chief, Office of Boat Forces briefed the audience on Hurricane response and FEMA approved boat and mariner typing.

After a brief break, Mr. Steve Huttman, immediate-past chairman, TSAC (Towing Safety Advisory Committee), took the microphone and discussed the importance of record keeping, and doing so in a verifiable, reliable way. Our featured exhibitors, West Marine Pro and Navico-Simrad, spent a few minutes explaining the newest innovations available to our operators before the lunch break.

Wednesday morning started with another "Fitness with Terry" session before a continental breakfast was served in our exhibitor area. Mr. Adam Phillips, Starkweather & Shepley, gave an interactive insurance claims presentation encouraging the attendees to evaluate how much insurance coverage they need. He was followed by Mr. Andrew Craven, Esq. and Mr. Marcus Mahfood, Esq, The Chartwell Law Offices. Our admiralty attorney speakers took the group through the different insurances available, including Jones Act exposure. Captain Kent Dresser, Confident Captain/Ocean Pros, competed the morning with the latest risk management training module for marine assistance companies. The course was aptly titled, "How to Make a Bad Decision" and will be available online at www.cport.us for those who were not able to attend his session.

Held on January 16 was the 31st C-PORT Membership Meeting. Along with committee reports and industry issue discussions, the membership elected its 2018 C-PORT Board of Directors and the 2018 C-PORT Executive Board was named. "It was a year of change," commented Tina Cardone, executive director. Two board positions were vacant, one position was appointed and needed membership ratification, and one person was seeking re-election. Elected to the board were:

John Donaldson, Sentinel Marine Services/Sea Tow Sebastian
Anthony Noury, Hawser LLC/Sea Tow Charleston
Richard Paul, Marine Towing & Salvage of SWFL/TowBoatU.S. Cape Coral
Harold "Smitty" Smith, Miller's Towing & Salvage/TowBoatU.S. Sandy Hook

"We have an wealth of knowledge and history leading our association", remarked Cardone. "Our board is poised to address the issues facing the marine assistance towing and salvage industry."

Announced was the 2018 C-PORT Executive Committee: Chairman, John Ward, Aquanaut Towing & Salvage/Sea Tow Pensacola-Destin; Vice-chairman, Phil LeBlanc, Safe Sea/TowBoatU.S. Narragansett Bay; Treasurer, Jon Gridley, Lake Tow Inc./Sea Tow Clarks Hill Lake; Secretary, Dale Plummer, Baltimore Marine Recovery/TowBoatU.S. Baltimore-Annapolis.

The 2018 C-PORT board of directors is: Robert Butler, Big Bay Marine/TowBoatU.S. San Diego; Phil Delano, Yachting Specialties/TowBoatU.S. San Francisco Bay and Delta; John Donaldson, Sentinel Marine Services/Sea Tow Sebastian; Terry Hill, Potomac Marine Inc./TowBoatU.S. Potomac; Anthony Noury, Hawser LLC/Sea Tow Charleston; Richard Paul, Marine Towing & Salvage of SWFL/TowBoatU.S. Cape Coral; Harold "Smitty" Smith, Miller's Towing & Salvage/TowBoatU.S. Sandy Hook.

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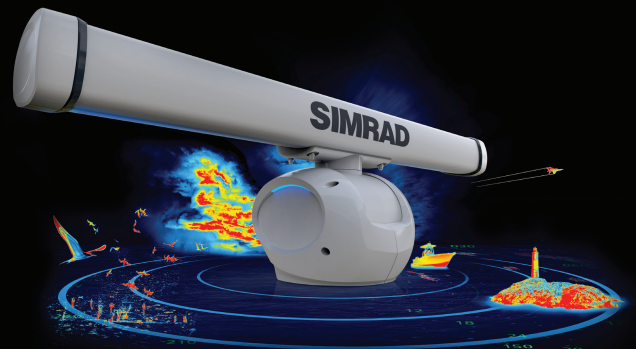
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The 31st C-PORT Conference Awards-

Also presented during the luncheon was the C-PORT Advocacy Award. The C-PORT Advocacy Award is presented to a C-PORT member for their service to the association and to the marine assistance industry through advocacy and leadership. This award is presented to the C-PORT member who demonstrates political involvement by actively working towards and advancing C-PORT's causes with their government representatives. John Ward, C-PORT chairman, presented the award to Greg Dreischmeyer, Cat Tow Inc./TowBoatU.S. Catalina, and Joe Frohnhoefer, Sea Tow International, for their individual efforts in furthering the association's mission.



Greg Dreischmeyer received the award for his persistence in advocating for California members. He brought the concerns of the industry to his representative and through his determination, C-PORT's request that the antiquated Harbors and Navigation Code be repealed moved to a California state legislative legal review. (Accepting for Dreischmeyer was Phil Delano, owner Yachting Specialties/TowBoatU.S. San Francisco & Delta.)

Joe Frohnhoefer received the award for his persistence in advocating for federal preemption in the handling of 911 dispatch calls. Through his determination, language to "further minimize the possibility of maritime 911 calls being improperly routed" was included in the House version of the CG Authorization Act.

Captain Christina Davidson, Chief, Office of Search and Rescue, USCG, presented the C-PORT Distinguished Service and Meritorious Service Awards to those in attendance.

Receiving C-PORT Distinguished Services Awards:
(Pictured below are James Freeman, Captain Christina Davidson, Cody Catapano, and Nathan Lins)



Captains Cody Catapano, Zachary Willis, and Raven Bolster, Sea Tow Crystal Coast, for their actions on November 4, 2016 in rescuing three persons from a sailing vessel hard aground and sunk on Cape Lookout Shoals in breaking surf. They did not hesitate to put their vessels and themselves in harms way to reach the survivors.

Captain Nathan Lins, TowBoatU.S. Catalina, for his actions on September 11, 2017 in finding and rescuing a boater who had fallen overboard, well offshore. The boater feared no one would rescue him in time, with no life jacket in 71 degree water. In his own words: "He pulled up next to me, very calm and professional, and I was like a cat that just got thrown in a

bathtub. I couldn't thank him enough but I didn't want to annoy him either. The truth is I don't know how to thank him. Captain Nathan saved my life."

Captain James Freeman, TowBoatU.S. Tampa Bay, for his actions on September 22, 2017 in finding and rescuing two persons whose boat had sunk. It was not until they were safely ashore did Freeman discover that the vessel did not have a working VHF radio and the boater was only able to make one cellular call before being swept away. Freeman's knowledge of the area and immediate action enabled him to find them before they were swept out to sea.

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The 31st C-PORT Conference Awards, continued.

C-PORT Meritorious Service Awards were presented to:

(Pictured are Shawn Brule, accepting for London Walker, Captain Christina Davidson, Will Beck, accepting for Chris Allen, and Cody Catapano.)



Captain Chris Allen, Sea Tow Palm Beach, was patrolling the Jupiter Inlet on June 21, 2017 when he was notified via VHF radio that six divers were separated from their dive boat east of the Jupiter Inlet. At that time, U.S. Coast Guard crews from Lake Worth Inlet Station, a Coast Guard helicopter from Miami, and Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office marine units all began their search. Within minutes of receiving the call, Allen had located all six stranded divers and brought them aboard his vessel and returned them safely to their dive boat.

On June 10, 2017, Captain Cody Catapano, Sea Tow Crystal Coast, heard a distress call for a vessel that had hit a shoal, resulting in an injury to one of the crew members on board. The man had fallen and hit the back of his head on a table, leaving him bleeding and unresponsive. Once on scene, Catapano jumped aboard to check on the injured crew member. Catapano helped load the injured man onto a back board and transferred him onto the Coast Guard's rescue boat. The injured man was then transported back to the dock where an ambulance was waiting. Later, Catapano learned the injured man was awake and responsive, only needing some staples to help mend his head injury.

Captain Charles "London" Walker, TowBoatU.S. Cape Cod, was patrolling just off Browns Bank on August 13, 2017. Walker noticed three adult men swimming who appeared to be struggling and being swept quickly in the three knot current. Without hesitation, he maneuvered his towing vessel up to the first two men to assist them aboard. The third swimmer had become separated and was barely keeping his head above water. All three swimmers were rescued in less than four minutes.

AFRAS/C-PORT Lifesaving Award Presented - At the C-PORT Awards Banquet and Gala, Captain Nathan Lins, Cat Tow Inc./ TowBoatU.S. Catalina was awarded the Association For Rescue At Sea (AFRAS)-C-PORT Lifesaving Award. On behalf of AFRAS, Mr. Charles "Skip" Bowen, Master Chief of the Coast Guard, USCG (retired) presented Lins with this esteemed honor. This is the eighth year that AFRAS presented this prestigious award to a C-PORT member. In 2010, AFRAS had expressed a desire to establish a program, in cooperation with C-PORT, to annually recognize a deserving member of C-PORT that has shown exceptional skill and determination to save lives during a rescue incident in the maritime environment. Instances where the rescuer places their own life at risk were given highest consideration. John Ward, C-PORT chairman, stated, "This is what our guys do, everyday. They serve the boaters. It's an honor to have them recognized for their lifesaving efforts."



On September 11, 2017, Lins heard a distress call for a man overboard. His directional finder showed a strong signal in the direction of a sailboat he could see about 4 miles away. They were in the middle of nowhere, so Lins felt confident that was the boat making the distress call. Lins caught up to the sailboat and was told that a man had fallen overboard without a life jacket, and the crew struggled to get the boat off of autopilot and now they were disoriented and unsure where the person had fallen overboard. Luckily the woman had taken a picture of the GPS when the man fell.

It was blowing 15 knots making it very choppy, and the water temperature was about 71 degrees creating an immediate concern of hypothermia. Lins had traveled about a mile when spotted the man's head, barely above water. He estimated the man had been in the water at least 45 minutes and was struggling to survive with waves crashing over his head. Lins maneuvered his vessel to within 10 feet of the man, and threw him a flotation device. It landed near his chin and the man grabbed it and held on to it desperately, but was too tired to swim that short distance. Lins called out to the man to hold on, and skillfully maneuvered closer. Standing on his swim platform, Lins pulled the man onboard. He then notified US Coast Guard and returned the man to his sailboat.

In the man's own words: "As the boat moved farther and farther away I realized two frightening things, chasing it was impossible and also what a small speck hidden by swells I was becoming. At this point preparing for death consumed my every thought. ...Panic was beginning to grow again and hope was fading. I was about 30 yards away off of his port side as he was about to pass. Then at the last moment the boat turned towards me but I was still in disbelief that he saw me. It wasn't till he looked over the side to adjust steering not to run me over that I was overwhelmed with what just happened. He pulled up next to me, very calm and professional, and I was like a cat that just got thrown in a bathtub. I couldn't thank him enough but I didn't want to annoy him either. The truth is I don't know how to thank him. Captain Nathan saved my life."

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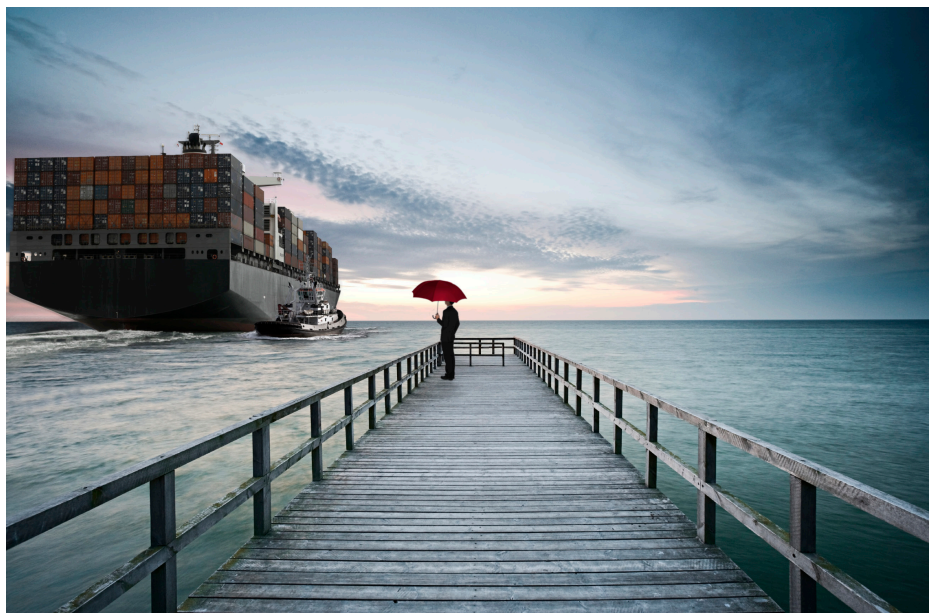
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C-PORT Honors Members - During the C-PORT Awards Luncheon, C-PORT membership anniversaries were honored with a number of members in attendance receiving recognition. Receiving 15 year anniversary pins were Larry Tieman, American Marine Services/TowBoatU.S. Tampa Bay, and Paul Amaral, Channel Watch Marine/TowBoatU.S. Ventura. Recognition for 20 years went to Terry Hill, Potomac Marine/TowBoatU.S. Potomac with 25 year anniversary pins to Cory Offutt, Biscayne Towing & Salvage/TowBoatU.S. Miami, Lee Sykes, Atlantic Coast Marine Group/TowBoatU.S. Beaufort, and Carlos Galindo, Poseidon Marine Towing/TowBoatU.S. Islamorada. There was a special mention to Poseidon Marine Towing for maintaining the long standing membership founded by the McCune's in 1993.

Those anniversary members unable to attend the conference included:

10 Year Members:

Bruce Fendig-Sea Tow Brunswick; Fred Leger-TowBoatU.S. Lake Charles; Bob Harris TowBoatU.S. Lake Lewisville; Joe DiMartino-TowBoatU.S. Naples; Gregory Ewing-TowBoatU.S. Needles; Gary O'Reilly-Sea Tow Northern Chesapeake; and Roger Slade-TowBoatU.S. Port Hadlock

15 Year Members:

Kevin Freestone-TowBoatU.S. Big Pine Key

20 Year Member

Jeffrey Pullen-TowBoatU.S. Lake Washington

25 Year Members

Chris McCarthy-Sea Tow Newport/LA; and John Dady-TowBoatU.S. Jamaica Bay

C-PORT 30 year anniversary members were celebrated during the C-PORT Awards Banquet and Gala held that same evening. Honored was Dan Cavaluzzi, Sound Tow-Pro Marine/TowBoatU.S. City Island. Cavaluzzi joined C-PORT in 1988 and has remained an active, strong supporter of the industry.

Not present at the conference also celebrating 30 years of C-PORT membership were Don Schmidt, Michigan Marine Salvage; Chris Olmsted, Olmsted Marine Service; and Criquet Codeluppi, Cleveland Marine Towing/TowBoatU.S. Cleveland. The association thanks these long standing members for their guidance and support through the years.



Congratulations to C-PORT on 31 Years as the Voice of the Marine Assistance Industry

- John, Pete, Phil & the Safe/Sea Crew



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*From the Desk of the Executive Director-
Professional Salvors Save Lives and Property*

C-PORT (Conference of Professional Operators for Response Towing) is the national trade association for the marine assistance towing and salvage industry. Our members act as first responders and force multipliers assisting the U.S. Coast Guard and other government agencies with their missions of security and safety for the boating community. C-PORT represents over 250 professional towing and salvage companies throughout the country, with a large number operating on Florida waters.

There is pending legislation in Florida that if passed, will accomplish only this: increased risk for the loss of property and damage to the environment; increased costs for recreational boaters; and increased confusion for the boater.

Our professionals have been providing lifesaving and property saving services for decades, with assistance to over 40,000 Florida boaters each year, over 130,000 cases throughout the nation. We oppose this legislation.

Every professional salvor knows that time is of the essence when saving a boat from further damage.

They understand that it can be a very scary situation for the boater when their boat is sinking, or their boat is precariously close to the jetty and the surf is pushing it aground. Rescuing the people while preventing property loss is what professional salvors do. It's not as simple as one may think to provide a customer with a written, hard cost estimate up front. It is difficult to determine cause of flooding or how many holes there are in real time; the situation is often getting worse by the second and the boat would be sunk by the time the assessment is made and the paperwork is done.

If there is time to make an assessment and complete an estimate, the boater is really agreeing to the cost to recover his lost boat, with little or no value remaining to the property. The boat is now damaged beyond repair and the boater still has to get the boat out of the waterway and hope that is done before any pollutants enter the environment.

Skill and promptitude are hallmarks of any reputable service. Professional salvors save property value and often the entire boat. Salvage forms are clearly written, one or two sided documents that contain protections for the boater from any amount of overreaching by the salvor. Salvors don't have the power to demand more than their services are worth. No insurance company, no arbitration panel, no court, will allow it.

Educating the boater before needing our services is paramount. Boaters should understand their insurance coverage, their towing membership packages, and who the salvors in their area should they need help. All professional operators are more than happy to talk to their customers about their services. Expecting that conversation to take place while someone's boat is sinking or being hit by surf on the rocks or the beach is dangerous to everyone.



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Risk Management Training Courses are available on the C-PORT website, www.cport.us. The program C-PORT administers 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 establishing standards for professionalism and 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 or 954-261-2012 with any questions regarding this program.

Marine Assistance Company Operations Guideline, exclusively for C-PORT members. These guidelines promote safe operations and provide regulatory guidance. C-PORT members may obtain access to this document at the C-PORT website, www.cport.us or contact Tina Cardone at 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.

ACAPT- Accredited for Commercial Assistance and Professional Towing- C-PORT has developed the ACAPT program to recognize the professional who is willing to adhere to standards of service, training, and equipment.

With the growth of the marine assistance towing and salvage industry has come a strong need for assurances of towing industry professionalism and expertise. The boating public, US Coast Guard, and state and local public agencies are often unsure of the qualifications of vessels offering assistance, sometimes leading to a reluctance to accept private assistance, and to a negative image of the industry being portrayed in the press. The ACAPT distinction recognizes the professional who is willing to adhere to high standards of service, training, and equipment.

Visit the C-PORT website at www.cport.us or contact Tina Cardone at 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. Notify Tina Cardone at tcardone@cport.us or 954-261-2012 if you have an interest in hosting a class.



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. 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 www.cport.us.
