



The Marine Assistance Industry Journal

A Quarterly Newsletter - Volume 53- June 2024



Chairman's Address

I was listening to an interview this week with someone who has over a thousand patents to his name. He had many words of wisdom, but one in particular stuck out to me.

He said that regardless of how many patents he has, whenever he submits one, he does so knowing he missed something, and that it could be improved upon. His exact words were "You should never fall in love with your invention."

At first, it seemed simplistic, but the more I thought about it, the more profound it seemed. All of us are proud of what we've built, and we're all equally confident that we did it best. It's worked for years, right? Why change the recipe now? Unfortunately, with that comes the danger of resting on what we've done, instead of learning and improving.

When talking to employees, whether new or experienced, I tend to highlight a few key things. I tell them that complacency leads to errors, and that we need to strive for perfection so we know we're always improving. I need to remember to take my own advice.

As our industry continues to evolve, we either need to adapt or get left behind. That's how evolution works. Just ask the T-Rex how those short arms worked out for him in the end.

Our industry is rather young in the grand scheme of things, and it seems that changes are coming faster and faster. We can resist those changes, and stick with business as usual, or we can focus on being nimble, adaptive, and open to growth and change. I don't know about you, but I'd rather be the one walking around the museum learning, than the bones on display.

Fair winds and following seas,

P. LeBlanc

SAVE THE DATE!



38th C-PORT Conference and Membership Meeting
January 27 – 29, 2025
Horseshoe Las Vegas

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**Thank You, C-PORT,
for 37 Years of
Preserving the legacy,
and Promoting the
future of the Marine
Assistance Industry.**



- The Safe/Sea Crew

Registration is open for the 38th C-PORT Conference and Membership Meeting being held at Horseshoe Las Vegas, located Center-Strip. The event runs from January 27 - January 29, 2025 and is immediately followed by the TowBoatU.S. conference.

The C-PORT Conference opens on Monday, January 27 with a welcome reception. Informative sessions with guest speakers run all day Tuesday and half day Wednesday. Planned sessions include presentations from US Coast Guard leadership, topic specific mini-sessions, risk management core principles recertification, salvage techniques, a legal perspective, reports, board elections, and more. There is plenty of time to visit with vendors and enjoy socializing at the receptions, luncheon, and awards banquet/gala.

The hotel room block is available for booking now. Visit the [C-PORT Conference webpage](#) for more information.

C-PORT met with Congressional members addressing a number of industry concerns.

A few C-PORT members joined executive director, Tina Cardone, at the nation's Capitol in May to talk with legislators about the challenges facing the marine assistance towing and salvage industry. Phil LeBlanc, Richard Paul, and Jeff Dziedzic supported CPORT's efforts to bring our concerns to the floor. It was a full two days of meetings with a diverse group of representatives, including congressional committee leaders. This interaction benefits our members and helps C-PORT bring our specific industry challenges to light.

Topics of discussion included industry workforce challenges. We asked for support through appropriations to the U.S. Coast Guard National Maritime Center modernization programs, to encourage and support Maritime Administration's, MARAD, outreach programs and financing programs, and to review the standards used by DOT regarding drug testing to include impairment rather than use tests.

C-PORT brought to the representatives' attention the need for a consistent SAR policy across the country. Strides are being taken through C-PORT's work with NENA (National Emergency Number Association) but without Congressional support, the policies and procedures being developed are merely suggestions.

We discussed the growing concern of public agencies using their grant funded equipment and training to compete with private businesses, an industry established by a Congressional mandate in the early 1980's.

The conversation continues.

During the Capitol Hill visit, *C-PORT met with US Coast Guard leaders* over dinner. The relaxed setting prompted healthy conversation about issues facing the industry. The brainstorming session produced a number of topics for further discussion.

AFRAS (Association for Rescue At Sea) held its annual awards ceremony and reception at the Hart Senate Office Building in Washington DC on April 10.

Phil LeBlanc, C-PORT chairman, and Tina Cardone, C-PORT executive director, attended the celebration. While speaking from the podium, Captain Joseph Re, USCG (retired), president of AFRAS, highlighted this year's AFRAS C-PORT Lifesaving Award recipients, Captain Carlos Galindo, and Captain Dan McClarren, bringing recognition and honor to those individuals and to all C-PORT members. AFRAS secretary Anne Kifer added how impressed she is with our industry's service to the boating community.

Providing the welcome address was Senator Susan Collins of Maine. Admiral Linda Fagan, Commandant, USCG, was on hand to offer congratulations to all award honorees. It was an opportunity to celebrate C-PORT members' contributions to the boating community, and to say hello to industry friends and acquaintances.

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Hello C-PORT Members,

I know there has been quite a bit of talk about trailers lately and how they are covered, so I figured this would be a great topic for this newsletter.

To start, the basic thing to know is that a trailer needs its own liability insurance. Now there are ways that a trailer can be covered while attached to the vehicle towing, but once it is detached from vehicle towing, it really becomes its own “auto”.

Many have reached out in regard to using personally owned vehicles, employee or owners, to tow trailers while operating for the business. Here are three scenarios and how they can be covered.

If there is a commercial auto policy in place for the company, personally owned vehicles towing trailers are not covered unless they have an “Employees as additional insured” endorsement added to the policy. This can provide limited coverage. Once this is established, then the commercial auto policy needs to have the correct symbols applied to their policy for liability to extend to the appropriate vehicle(s).

On a personal auto policy that the owner or employee has, there is an exclusion for “Business Pursuits”. This exclusion excludes coverage for larger commercial trailers. Generally, if this is the type of trailer that is being hauled, then a commercial policy should be purchased, if not already.

To continue off scenario 2, if the trailer is a smaller trailer and hauled by a private passenger auto, pickup truck, or van, the “business pursuits” exclusion may not apply and there may be coverage on the personal auto policy. If this is the route that you follow, as an employee or owner, make sure that your liability limits are raised are adequate.

On the other hand, if you do have a commercial auto policy, make sure that you are asking for Symbol 1 liability. This will cover all trailers towed by a company vehicle, owned and non-owned.

If you do not have and/or cannot get Symbol 1 liability, then coverage will change. For the sake of article length, I will give one last scenario.

If you have Symbol 7 liability, which is “specifically described autos”, then non-owned trailers of any load capacity are covered, but only when attached to a covered vehicle. Owned trailers up to 2,000 lbs. are covered for liability while being towed, but any owned trailers over that capacity will need to have their own liability coverage and should be specifically scheduled.

These are just a few scenarios, but I hope this article has shed some light on trailers and how they are covered. If you would like to discuss this more, please feel free to reach out.

Also, please remember that as a benefit of your C-PORT Membership, Starkweather & Shepley will provide a free consultation and review of your current insurance program to ensure completeness of coverage.



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Please feel free to reach out to Nate directly at noberg@starshep.com or call 401.408.6877.

C-PORT is seeking nominations for the prestigious AFRAS C-PORT Lifesaving Award.

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 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. AFRAS and C-PORT are proud to continue this decade long program recognizing these heroic actions of C-PORT members.

The Award is conferred on an individual or group of individuals who perform exceptional acts in attempting to save life in the maritime environment. Instances where the rescuer places their own life at risk will be given highest consideration. The Award may be given posthumously.

To be considered for this year's award, the lifesaving event must have occurred between September 30, 2023 and September 30, 2024. 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 may be emailed to tcardone@cport.us or mailed directly to the C-PORT office at 4251 NE 27th Ave, Lighthouse Point, FL 33064. Nominations may be sent at any time so long as they are received no later than October 7, 2024 to allow sufficient time for the vetting of the nominations. AFRAS will present the Award at the C-PORT Awards Banquet Gala on Tuesday, January 28, 2025..

C-PORT presents Distinguished and Meritorious Service Awards to members who demonstrate the professional principles that our association promotes. These marine assistance professionals go above and beyond their dedication to providing service to the boating public through extraordinary and exemplary actions.

Nominations are to include a full description of the circumstances and events giving rise to the nomination and may be emailed to tcardone@cport.us or mailed directly to the C-PORT office at 4251 NE 27th Ave, Lighthouse Point, FL 33064. These award recipients will be honored at the C-PORT Awards Banquet Gala on Tuesday, January 28, 2025.

New Merchant Mariner Credential Format

On March 1, 2024, the U.S. Coast Guard will begin issuing Merchant Mariner Credentials (MMCs) in a new format. This new mariner credential will replace the legacy passport-style red book and associated endorsement labels.

The complexity and degraded reliability of the custom printers used to print the MMC books necessitated a change to the credential printing process. The new mariner credential is formatted on 8.5" x 11" waterproof and tear-resistant synthetic paper. It contains numerous security features including micro-printing, foiling, and intricate patterns. The new credential is printed on readily available commercial desktop laser jet printers and will vastly improve print services and availability. To learn more about the new MMC, please visit [the National Maritime Center \(NMC\) website](#).

The new MMC document will be issued for all approved applications, to include credential endorsements, beginning March 1, 2024. You will no longer receive separate endorsement labels (i.e., stickers), but rather a new MMC document with the endorsements incorporated. The new credential will be issued on a day-forward basis, and all legacy credentials will remain valid until the indicated expiration date.

To validate a new MMC, use the Coast Guard's credential verification tool at [MMLD Credential Verification \(uscg.mil\)](#). For a document search, select "MMC" as the document type and enter the document number. On the new MMC, the document number can be found on the red cover section beneath the corresponding barcode and will have the prefix "Z".

If you have any questions, contact the NMC Customer Service Center by e-mailing IASKNMC@uscg.mil or calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

Sincerely,

/B. W. Clare/

Bradley W. Clare
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Commanding Officer

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 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 or 954-261-2012.

Insurance Program for Marine Assistance Companies - Administered by Starkweather & Shepley Insurance Brokerage, Inc. - Designed and underwritten by Travelers 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. -Contact Nate Oberg: 401.408.6877 noberg@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 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 or 954-261-2012 if you have an interest in hosting a class.

Mentor Program, exclusively for C-PORT company members. Virtual roundtable discussions with guest speakers. Second Tuesday of the month. Information is emailed to all company members prior to the sessions. If you are a member and not receiving these emails, contact Tina Cardone at tcardone@cport.us or 954-261-2012

What to be more involved? Let us know! We want to hear from you! Reach out to Tina at tcardone@cport.us or call us at 954-261-2012.



C-PORT was founded in 1985 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>.

C-PORT (Conference of Professional Operators for Response Towing)
4251 NE 27th Avenue, Lighthouse Point, FL 33064

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