

## Coastal Safety Committee Meeting

The Coastal Safety Committee held its summer meeting in Las Vegas on June 7-8, 2011. The meeting was attended by a record 40 (Attendees Link) representatives of 27 companies from all three U.S. Coasts and the Great Lakes. The Committee was welcomed to Las Vegas by outgoing Chairman Jeff Slesinger, Western Towboat Company. Mr. Slesinger highlighted the Coastal Safety Committee's challenges of the last two years – fostering the continuing evolution and growth of safety programs in the midst of economic pressures, the anticipation of the new regulatory structure of /Subchapter M the many challenges ahead, including economic pressures and the coming of sub chapter M. However, he noted, even in the midst of these challenges, we still have continued to foster the evolution and growth of all of our safety programs. We have done that well, he asserted, and the Coastal Safety Committee is on the leading edge of AWO's safety efforts, already tackling the creation of a Safety Culture and near-miss reporting goals recommended by the Future of AWO Safety Leadership Task Force. Mr. Slesinger then asked the group to nominate Matthew Baker, Manager Safety and Training, Moran Towing Corporation, as the new Chairman of the Coastal Safety Committee for a term of two years. After a second, Mr. Baker was elected unanimously.

Mr. Baker then introduced AWO Chairman of the Board of Directors Peter Stephaich, Chairman, Campbell Transportation, who welcomed the Committee telling them that their work was important to the association and offering his personal support for their efforts. This Committee, he said, along with the Interregion Safety Committee, are important parts of the association's commitment to improving safety and we depend on the Committees' expertise, passion, and hard work in guiding and supporting AWO members in their continuing efforts to constantly improve the safety of our people, the public, and the environment.

After Mr. Stephaich's remarks, Mr. Slesinger introduced the Honorable Robert L. Sumwalt, Member of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), who addressed the Committee on Creating Safety Cultures in Transportation. Mr. Sumwalt began his remarks by explaining that a "safety culture" is defined by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission as "the core values and behaviors resulting from a collective commitment by leaders and individuals to emphasize safety over competing goals to ensure protection of people and the environment." Based on this definition, he challenged Committee members to consider whether a safety culture exists at their companies. Quoting James Reason, author of *Managing the Risks of Organizational Accidents*, he said, "If you are convinced that your organization has a good safety culture, you are almost certainly mistaken; a safety culture is something that is striven for but rarely attained."

Mr. Sumwalt explained that the five keys to establishing a safety culture are: 1. A management culture where senior management demonstrates a commitment to safety and a concern for hazards that are shared by employees at all levels within the organization; 2. An informed culture

where the organization collects and analyzes “the right kind of data” to keep it informed of the safety health of the organization; 3. A reporting culture where employees are open and encouraged to report safety problems, assurance that the information will be acted upon, confidentiality will be maintained or the data de-identified, and assurance employees will not be punished or ridiculed for reporting; 4. A learning culture where the organization is able to learn and change from its prior mistakes; and, 5. A just culture where employees realize they will be treated fairly, not all errors and unsafe acts will be punished (if the error was unintentional), but those who act recklessly or take deliberate and unjustifiable risks will be punished.

Mr. Sumwalt concluded his remarks by again asking the Committee to consider if a good safety culture existed at their companies and encouraged them to remember that striving for that goal is the surest way to achieve safety improvement at all levels within the company. Member Sumwalt’s presentation can be accessed by following this link \_\_\_\_\_ (NTSB1).

The Committee next heard a report from Dale Sause, President, Sause Brothers, and Co-Chairman of the Future of AWO Safety Leadership Task Force (FOSL). Mr. Sause outlined the plan approved by the AWO Board of Directors at its meeting in April that establishes a vision of what it means for AWO and AWO members to lead the industry in safety and environmental stewardship over the next 10 years. Specifically, the plan challenges the association to create a strong safety culture, leading the industry in safety and environmental stewardship by exceeding regulatory minimums, striving for continuous improvement, and measuring performance. Key elements of the plan are:

- AWO members will lead the industry by having robust safety management systems. We will support AWO members by making that requirement more flexible and allowing use of ISM Code as an alternative to the RCP.
- AWO members will lead the industry by having processes in place to make continuous improvement more than a vision or a slogan.
- Safety statistics. We can’t improve what we don’t measure; this is part of the continuous improvement cycle.
- Near-miss reporting. AWO members will lead the industry by putting in place internal processes for sharing near-misses and lessons learned within our companies.
- Environmental stewardship.

Mr. Sause acknowledged that this is an ambitious plan, but keep in mind, he said, “It is a 10-year plan; our goal is to challenge ourselves to be safety leaders, but not overwhelm AWO as an organization or individual AWO members. These elements won’t take effect overnight. We’ll begin a process of standing up working groups in a phased manner over the course of several years to flesh out the task force recommendations. We propose that the Task Force on the Future

of Safety Leadership remain in existence to provide ongoing oversight as those working groups are stood up.”

Mr. Sause ended his presentation, pointing out that many of the elements of the plan are exactly those recommended by Mr. Sumwalt in his presentation on establishing a safety culture and telling the Committee that the association will need all of its members to contribute to this 10-year effort, none more than the members of the two AWO Safety Committees. A copy of Mr. Sause’s presentation can be accessed by following this link \_\_\_\_\_(FOSL2).

Continuing the theme of establishing a safety culture, the Committee next heard a presentation by Dione Lee, QSC Solutions. Ms. Lee explained that to be successful in implementing a safety culture companies must establish core values that stress safety is not a “program;” it is interwoven into everything the company does and is committed to the philosophy that incidents are unacceptable. A copy of Ms. Lee’s presentation can be accessed by following this link \_\_\_\_\_ (Implementing a Safety Culture3).

The Committee next heard from a panel of AWO members, moderated by Dione Lee, who discussed their experiences in establishing a safety culture at their company. The panel included Peter Stephaich, AWO Chairman of the Board; Dale Sause, Co-Chairman of the FOSL Task Force; Robert Sumwalt, Member of the NTSB; and representatives from several AWO member companies including: Dunlap Towing, Foss Maritime, Moran Towing Corporation, and Tidewater Barge Lines. The panel was joined by Ron deBruyne, a representative from EDOC Systems. The panel engaged the audience with questions to consider in establishing a safety culture and shared their companies’ experiences and challenges. Notes from the panel discussion can be accessed by following this link \_\_\_\_\_. (Safety Culture Panel QSC Notes10)

After lunch the Committee reconvened and heard a presentation on creating a near-miss reporting culture from Ron deBruyne, EDOC Systems, who talked about challenges in implementing any new program. A copy of Mr. deBruyne’s presentation can be accessed by following this link \_\_\_\_\_ (Edoc Change Management4). Also on the subject of near-miss reporting, Julie Hile, Hile Group, shared the experiences of the railroad industry in establishing a near-miss reporting program which they refer to as Confidential Close Call Reporting or C3RS. This program was developed in close cooperation with the railroad industry’s regulator, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Many of the elements of this program contain the essential elements of establishing a safety culture presented by Robert Sumwalt including moving away from traditional blame-based investigations, and instead concentrating on prevention of future incidents. Ms. Hile’s presentation can be accessed by following this link \_\_\_\_\_ (C3RS5).

Kevin McSweeney, Manager - Safety & Human Factors Group, ABS, and Dr. Brian Craig, Lamont University, briefed the Committee on a near-miss reporting program that is designed to obtain and review incident and near-miss reports. Currently, the program has collected

approximately 28,000 records (injuries and near-misses). The collected data is coded by extracting information from each record, and then sanitized by removing company and individual specific information. Information in the database of incidents and near-misses can be used to identify trends and possible cause(s) of accidents, identifying potential corrective actions and ultimately developing and sharing results. Copies of these presentations can be accessed by following these links \_\_\_ (Near-Miss6)(Near-Miss7).

The afternoon meeting ended with a panel discussion of existing member near-miss reporting programs. Participating on the panel were representatives of AWO member companies K-Sea Transportation and the Hile Group. Joining the AWO member representatives were Mr. McSweeney, ABS, and Dr. Craig. Some of the issues addressed by the panel were how companies define a near-miss; how companies process near-miss information, what barriers have been seen to a successful near-miss reporting system, what processes have worked and what haven't worked within a near-miss reporting system, how to sell the value of near-miss reporting to company upper management, and finally, how companies promote near-miss reporting internally.

Following the first day's meeting, the Committee enjoyed a cocktail reception jointly sponsored by Foss Maritime, McAllister Towing, Moran Towing Corporation, and, Tidewater Barge Lines. Attendees then joined together to enjoy a social dinner at Le Provençal Restaurant located in the hotel.

On June 8, the meeting reconvened at 8:30 a.m. with a presentation given by George Clark, Penn Maritime, on a research project conducted by Warsash Maritime Academy. This project seeks to study fatigue in mariners working on both 4/8 and 6/6 watches. Participants' fatigue levels were studied while operating simulators with the use of subjective sleepiness scales, actigraph watches, psychomotor vigilance tests, and EEGs. The tests were carried out on simulator-based voyages replicating actual vessel operating conditions. This research project funded by the European Union will publish its results in December of 2011. A copy of the presentation can be accessed by following this link \_\_\_\_\_ (Warsash University8).

Mr. Clark's presentation was followed with a presentation by Gregg Trunnell, Pacific Maritime Institute, titled "E-Navigation, Friend or Foe?" Mr. Trunnell's presentation illustrated a simulated voyage in Australia which demonstrated graphically how mariners can become overdependent on electronic navigation tools such as electronic charts.

The meeting ended with a roundtable discussion led by Jeff Slesinger on the pervasive problem of distracted operation, which is an issue affecting all transportation modes. Mr. Slesinger noted that many companies have instituted a no cell phone use when driving policy. One attendee recounted Shell Oil Company's policy of terminating any employee using a cell phone while driving, or while working on terminal property. Most attendees agreed that distracted operation was a problem that would need additional work and would benefit from some leadership from AWO.

The final presentation delivered by Jo Ann Salyers, Salyers Solutions, was an overview of the current Phase IV Northwestern University Sleep Study that is examining the effectiveness of an “anchor sleep” and “nap sleep” strategy. Results of the prior Phase III study indicated that crewmembers on both the front and back watch obtained similar time in bed of more than eight hours but only slept a total of six to six and one half hours. The phase IV study is recruiting participants now, and will examine the impact of the 6/6 square watch work schedule on sleep and wake patterns of vessel wheelhouse crew on the vessel and at home to determine sleep and general health issues that may impact sleep quality and fatigue. The report on the Phase IV findings is scheduled to be completed in February 2012. A copy of the presentation on the Northwestern University study can be accessed by following this link\_\_\_\_\_ (NU Sleep Study9).

The Committee adjourned at 11:30 a.m. and will next meet in January 2012 in New Orleans, in conjunction with the Interregion Safety Committee and Southern Region Annual Meeting. For more information, please contact, Bob Clinton at 703-841-9300, [bclinton@vesselalliance.com](mailto:bclinton@vesselalliance.com)