AIRA Advisory Panel Meeting
Advisory Panel, Management Team, Facilitation Team,
and Local Government Representatives
April 17, 2014

ATTENDEES

Advisory Panel: David Arzt (Primary-Mariner, Pilot); Louis Audette (Primary-Mariner in Local Trade, Oil Barges/Tankers); Doug Burn (Alternate-Resource Manager); Tom Gemmell (Primary-Fisheries); Layla Hughes (Alternate-NGO Environmental); Simon Lisiecki (Primary-Mariner, Innocent Passage); Shirley Marquardt (Primary-Local Government); Ed Page (Primary-Mariner, General); Mike Ruiz (Alternate-Mariner, Salvor); Whit Sheard (Primary-NGO, Environmental); Bob Umbdenstock (Primary-Mariner, Salvor); Jeff Williams (Primary-Resource Manager)

Stakeholder groups without representation included: Mariner, Containership; Mariner, Tramper; and Subsistence Users

Local Government Representatives: Julie Dirks, City of Atka; Layton Lockett, City of Adak; Andy Varner, City of Sand Point.

Management Team: Krystyna Wolniakowski, NFWF; Cdr. Gary Koehler, USCG, MSTC Jay Calkins, USCG; Gary Folley, ADEC; Crystal Smith, ADEC; Jay Wright, NFWF.

Analysis/Facilitation Team: Tim Robertson, Sierra Fletcher and Michelle Prior, Nuka Research and Planning Group, LLC; Leslie Pearson, Pearson Consulting LLC

Subject Matter Experts: Cdr. James Houck, USCG; Trisha Bergmann and Stephanie Altman, NOAA International; Martin Robards, Wildlife Conservation Society; Michael Lindgren, UAF-SNAP

Public and Other: Tom Lakosh; Aaron Poe, Aleutians Bering Sea LCC; Catherine Berg, NOAA; Rick Bernhardt, ADEC.

Purpose of the Meeting

The purpose of this meeting was to identify routing measures through the Aleutian Islands that would be applied to international trade vessels. The recommended routing measures will be incorporated into the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Particularly Sensitive Sea Area and Routing Measure applications. These routing measures will also become the basis of the volunteer routing measures recommended as part of the Optimum Response System recommendations.

Presentation

Status of Bering Sea PAR/Routing Measure Update: Cdr. Houck (USCG D17) indicated the Coast Guard has been trying to work with international partners to make shipping through the Bering Strait safer and more predictable. The Coast

Guard is proceeding with developing a voluntary routing measure under IMO for the Strait. Poor charting makes it difficult to ensure no unintended consequence. NOAA will be conducting hydrographic surveys this year and charting the Bering Strait to support a proposed 4-nautical mile/2-way route through the Strait.

Analysis of 3-Years of Satellite Vessel Data in the Aleutian Islands: Martin Robards (WCS) provided a briefing on the analysis of data from the period of July 10, 2010-August 31, 2013 for bulk carriers, dry cargo, tank ships and fishing vessels in the study area. Approximately 41.48 gigabytes and 73 million points of data were processed with assistance from the University of Alaska Fairbanks-Scenarios Network for Alaska and Arctic Planning (SNAP) with 91.8% of the data obtained found to be usable. There are three distinct northern routes transiting through the Bering Sea and one route south of the Aleutian chain. Tank ship traffic typically transits west of Attu Island and through Unimak Pass. In addition to transiting west of Attu Island, containership and bulkers utilize other passages such as Buldir, Amchitka and Amukta, particularly during December and January. This traffic swings south of the Aleutian Islands during the spring and summer months. Transiting traffic can be found in the same areas as the fishing fleet. Recommendations for using AIS data in the future include having the ability to pre-filter data, allowing for a better understanding between data collection entities and end-users regarding the use of data for planning purposes, and tying the data into tactical applications.

Routes and Offshore Distance Analysis: Doug Burn (ABSI LCC) provided a briefing using the analysis conducted above and determining distances offshore. After vessels transit through a pass vessels typically transit 50 or more nautical miles offshore through the Bering Sea until approaching an exit passage. Traffic transiting on the southern Aleutian Islands route is in closer proximity to the islands, within 12-50 nautical miles near the central Aleutian Islands (See the following poster: http://www.aleutiansriskassessment.com/files/AIRA_Poster_Version2.pdf) Routing measure discussion should include traffic transiting south of the Aleutian Islands.

Vessel Drift Save/No Save Analysis: Tim Robertson (Nuka Research) presented a tool developed to add the discussion for routing measures. This tool included tug speed (13 knots)/distance and an onshore wind component (20 knots) to be able to get to a disabled vessel at different locations in the Aleutian Islands. Tug locations were Unalaska and Adak. The tool included routes presented from the 3-year satellite data analysis and the routes identified in the Alternative Planning Criteria (APC) operating procedures.

Alternative Planning Criteria (APC) Operating Procedures: Leslie Pearson (Pearson Consulting) and Ed Page (MXAK) introduced the participants to the operating procedures for tank vessels; non-tank vessels; and fishing, towing and offshore supply vessels transiting through the Aleutians. The operating procedures

for non-tank vessels apply to those that are members under the APC and went into effect January 31, 2014. APC member vessels are required to report their positions as they enter the Western Captain of the Port zone (WCOTP) prior to transiting through the area and are tracked via AIS to ensure compliance. Approximately 40% of the vessels transiting the region are in innocent passage and not required to comply with the APC. Those that must comply with the APC, which includes offshore distances, occasionally must deviate but are required to report the reason for the deviation (storm avoidance, mechanical, shipboard exercise). The APC offshore distances have not been vetted through the AIRA PSSA/Routing Measure workgroup.

Public Comment: One individual, Tom Lakosh, participated in the public portion of the meeting and provided comments. The information provided will be posted on the AIRA public website.

Routing Measure Discussion and Outcome: As a base for the discussion the APC operating procedures and offshore distances were utilized and vetted. In general the primary northern routes through the Aleutians are recognized as standard routes for transit through Unimak Pass and that vessels should transit 50 nautical miles or greater offshore. Twelve nautical miles offshore through passes was suggested since this distance correlates with the territorial sea boundary. A 50-75 nautical mile distance was suggested for the Aleutian Island southern route. In addition to the offshore distances, the Advisory Panel recommended an offshore distance of twelve miles around Bogoslof Island.

Action Items:

- ☐ Further analyze data for the two central passes to understand what types of vessels are using them and whether use varies by season (storm avoidance).
- ☐ Map out areas to be avoided on a chart (for southern route 50 nm and 75 nm distance offshore)
- ☐ Develop the routing measure application, which defines the area.
- ☐ Incorporate the routing measures into a PSSA application.