



AMERICAN SALVAGE ASSOCIATION NEWS RELEASE

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AMERICAN SALVAGE ASSOCIATION URGES PASSAGE OF COAST GUARD REGULATIONS FOR MARINE FIREFIGHTING AND SALVAGE 13 YEARS FOR REGULATIONS' PROMULGATION UNACCEPTABLE, ASA SAYS

Washington, DC – The American Salvage Association (ASA) has been urging the United States Coast Guard to move forward and promulgate critically important regulations for marine salvage and firefighting, which have been suspended three times and stalled for more than 13 years.

The regulations are more important now than ever before as the nation faces the threat of terrorist incidents in the marine transport sector, be they in ports, terminals or aboard ships. While government has been working to prevent terrorist incidents from occurring, an efficient, professional, specialized response capability for marine disasters is required. Professional marine salvors often serve as first responders at the time of marine incidents, working quickly to minimize damage and expedite recovery. By promulgating the long awaited regulations, the U.S. Coast Guard would not only improve the nation's marine environmental protection capability, it would also improve the nation's homeland security and terrorist response capabilities.

As a case in point, a collision involving a supply vessel resulted in the closing of the Mississippi River to heavy ship traffic for five days last month and demonstrated how ports could be an inviting target to terrorists. Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge said that it, "had not escaped" security planners that terrorists might try to disrupt traffic by sinking a vessel in an important waterway, thereby seriously impacting commerce and the economy. Only the prompt response and professionalism of an ASA member company, Bisso Marine Company, headquartered in New Orleans, allowed the river to be cleared so quickly. Few ports in the United States currently have the benefit of local salvage capability similar to that available at New Orleans.

"Our country needs a National Salvage Policy now. The salvage community stands ready, willing and able to assist the United States with matters of maritime protection, casualty response planning, vessel and cargo salvage, marine environmental protection, wreck removal and harbor clearance," said ASA President Dick Fairbanks. "It is simply unacceptable for our nation to wait more than 13 years for these critically important regulations to be enacted," he continued.

The American Salvage Association is a trade association promoting professionalism and improving marine casualty response in American coastal and inland waters.

