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## Security and Response are Both Necessary

BY GARY P. LAGRANGE  
President & CEO, the Port of New Orleans

The collision of an offshore supply vessel with a container ship near the mouth of the Mississippi River one year ago this month nearly brought commerce at the Port of New Orleans to a halt for four days and highlighted the importance of the marine salvage industry.

The accident occurred in the foggy pre-dawn hours of Feb. 21, 2004. It killed the five crew members of the 166-foot long supply vessel, the *M/V Lee III*. The *Zim Mexico III* sustained damage to its bow, but the 21-crew members were uninjured.

The supply boat capsized and sank in Southwest Pass, the main cargo route from the Gulf of Mexico into the Mississippi River. Traffic was closed for four days, and we estimate that the Port of New Orleans and the worldwide shipping industry lost about \$58 million.

The impact could have been much worse, but the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet provided an alternative route for ships that draw a maximum of 36 feet. The channel of the Mississippi River is maintained to a minimum draft of 45 feet, so we weren't able to handle all of the ships that normally call on the Port of New Orleans through the MR-GO.

Considering that the Port of New Orleans and the Lower Mississippi River comprise the world's busiest waterway with 6,000 ocean going vessels moving through each year, the sinking of the Lee had national and international repercussions.

The Mississippi River connects our port to 14,500 miles of inland waterways that

reach 33 states and 62% of the consumer spending public of the United States. Perhaps John Q. Citizen didn't realize that the sinking of the *M/V Lee* was affecting commerce in his area, but it certainly was.

The Corps of Engineers, the Coast Guard, Bisso Marine (an ASA member) and a host of others played important roles in reopening a channel that is so vital to the Port of New Orleans and the nation as a whole.

But the incident also reminded us that all ports are vulnerable to incidents like this one, whether they arise because of an accident or - God forbid - if they would ever arise at the hands of terrorists.

When I took the reins as CEO of the Port of New Orleans on September 10, 2001, Port Security wasn't even on my top 10 list of priorities. How quickly things can change in a day!

In the three years that have passed since the tragedy of 9-11, port security has risen to become an issue of critical national importance, so much so that it was debated during the 2004 presidential election. Yet, America's ports continue to face the challenge of protecting our nation's commerce with very little funding.

Here in the Port of New Orleans, we have about \$64 million in increased homeland security funding needs, including overtime and personnel.

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LAGRANGE

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## Soundings

*Soundings* is published by the American Salvage Association to deliver the latest news on the marine salvage industry.

Articles, letters, questions and comments should be directed to Jim Bladh, Managing Editor, at the following address:

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Up to this point, the Port of New Orleans has received \$8 million from the federal government. That tells you we have a long way to go.

We're not alone. I'm serving this year as chairman of the American Association of Port Authorities, which is asking Congress for \$400 million a year in security funds for the next 10 years. That would probably take care of the needs as we assess them today for major deep draft ports across America, but even that number will increase as the technology improves and renders our security solutions obsolete.

In fiscal year 2005, Congress has appropriated about \$150 million in funding for port security. While that is an improvement over previous years, it is definitely not going to get us to where we really need to be. Seaports are responsible for generating about 85 percent of all Customs duties. Yet ports are reaping absolutely no benefit from those duties for Homeland Security projects.

Prevention is definitely part of the equation when it comes to keeping America's ports safe, but another critical issue is response. It's encouraging that the Department of Homeland Security has initiated the National Response Plan, which covers all incidents of national significance whether they are the work of a terrorist or merely an accident.

We're clearly working toward a unified, comprehensive system to respond to incidents like the sinking of the *M/V Lee*. It's hard to pinpoint whether such a system could have shaved off a day or even an hour of the quick response to clear the Mississippi River a year ago.

But there is room for improvement. Considering that the high cost of having the Mississippi River closed, we would be remiss if we didn't continue to work for better response to any potential threat to the commerce of this nation. Remember, most ports do not have the heavy lift salvage resources available at the Port of New Orleans, and all ports would benefit by the implementation of the long awaited U.S. Coast Guard Salvage and Firefighting regulations.

We've come a long way in the three years since 9/11 - when port security was mostly aimed at preventing pilfering instead of preventing terrorists - and I would say that we are on the right course. However, it should be clear to us all

that we have a long voyage ahead of us as we continually strive to make our transportation infrastructure safer from the threats of terrorism.

*Gary LaGrange took leadership of the Board of Commissioners of the Port of New Orleans in September 2001. A native of South Louisiana, Mr. LaGrange came to New Orleans after serving as Executive Director of the Mississippi State Port Authority at Gulfport. Since becoming Port's President and CEO, the port has opened new state-of-the art facilities. These include the Napoleon Avenue Container Terminal, which opened in January 2004. The \$101 million facility is the most technologically-advanced container terminal in the world. The port also opened its first ever dockside cold storage facility, which has helped New Orleans gain an even larger share of the export poultry market.*

## Fostering Communication

BY MAURICIO GARRIDO, Vice President, Titan Maritime, LLC

Communication continues to be recognized as the most essential tool of today's fast turning business environment. The level of success of any business venture can be directly proportional to the communication flow throughout the venture.



GARRIDO

The business of marine salvage is no different. In fact, our uniqueness requires us to be expert communicators amidst a harsh society where ships are viewed as ocean polluters and "Sanford & Son" remains as the most popular salvage company in America. However, the integrated effort of the ASA continues to achieve unexpected success toward bridging this gap by delivering an effective and consistent message. The message continues to be heard, to the point where the word "Salvor" is now History Channel lexicon.

In early 2004, the ASA membership came together and focused on the true mission: to share our knowledge and experience at all levels within the USCG and other government agencies. The

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effort was easily fueled by trying to answer: How can they regulate us if they don't know what we do? The answer became obvious: Training.

The ASA Training Committee was rapidly organized and a training proposal submitted to the USCG for their evaluation. The proposal consisted of a comprehensive eight-module training program covering both technical and commercial aspects of marine salvage response operations. However, each of the eight training modules was to be developed and presented by a different ASA member company, bringing a broader base of knowledge and practical experience.

Feedback was positive, resulting in the award of a fixed price contract to the ASA for delivering a three-day training program to the USCG Gulf Strike Team headquartered in Mobile, AL. Based on the needs of their unit, the leadership of the Gulf Strike selected specific instruction modules and scheduled the course for early September 2004.

Shortly after receiving award notification for the Gulf Strike Team program, we were contacted by the USCG Salvage Engineering Response Team (SERT) operating out of the Marine Safety Center in Washington, DC. Following the prompt submittal of a bid package to the SERT, ASA was again awarded the contract to provide their training. Similarly, the SERT selected specific modules and scheduled the course for early October.

We were now faced with the most challenging phase of the effort: course development. The committee pulled together and the Training Package reached "almost final form" within two weeks of the scheduled dates for the Gulf Strike Team course. However, the aggressive hurricane season led to the cancellation and postponement of the course until early December.

On October 5-7, 2004, ASA members Foss, MPC, Donjon, and Titan successfully presented the Marine Salvage Response course to a group of nearly 17 Coast Guard officers and civilians. The course encompassed a homework assignment requiring students to submit commercial and technical salvage proposals to a review board. The class was divided into three groups (salvage companies) and each group was required to role-play and orally present their proposals. The exercise was not only fun, but it afforded the

students a brief glimpse of the time constraints, risk assessment, and other challenges salvors face when trying to land a job.

A couple of months later, on December 7-9, we convened at the Aviation Training Center in Mobile, home of the Gulf Strike Team. This time, members Donjon, Resolve, Bisso-T&T, MPC, and Global Diving faced a diverse group of about 40 including personnel from the Pacific Strike Team, Eighth District, Seventh District, MSO New Orleans, MSO Miami, MSO Jacksonville, MSO San Juan, MSO Corpus Christi, National Strike Force, and the hosting Gulf Strike Team.

All in all, both courses were a true success. We received excellent feedback along with valuable constructive criticism which will enable us to improve our product. More importantly, however, is the fact that the training forum afforded the ASA the ideal setting for sharing doctrine and professionalism with our most important client: the U.S. Coast Guard.

The ASA is now focusing its efforts in developing training programs for the USCG commands along the U.S. West Coast as well as those in the New England region. We are hopeful that by mid-2005, we will have at least two more programs on the front burner.

In closing, we cannot afford to forget that teamwork and unselfish dedication remain as the vital ingredients to the success of this program.

One for all and all for one! 

## ASA Members Provide Unified Response in Oil Spills

Several Members of ASA joined together in an attempt to salvage the grounded *M/V Selendang Ayu*, which lost power off Unalaska Island on December 7.

After the vessel reported it was adrift, efforts to tow the vessel were provided by an ASA member's tug which slowed the drift of the ship from 4kts to 2kts, but the tow wire failed and the ship went aground and broke apart between Skan Bay and Spray Cape at approximately 6:00 p.m. on December 8. A United States Coast Guard Jay

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*"Great information presented! The greatest benefit was exposure of Coasties to professional salvors. We don't have a lot of chance to work in this type of environment."*

- Marine Salvage Response course participant

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Hawk helicopter crashed while removing the last of the seven crewmembers from the stricken vessel. Six of the seven crewmembers were lost. Within hours of the grounding, ASA member salvage companies began to arrive at the Incident Command System's (ICS) headquarters in Dutch Harbor, Alaska.

Combined aboard the two vessel sections was a full cargo of soybeans, 424,000 gallons of Intermediate Fuel Oil (IFO 380) and 18,000 gallons of marine diesel. Assessing the two sections of the vessel was necessary to develop salvage plans for removal of the fuel and determining the possibility of re-floating the vessel sections. Three seats were made available on a Coast Guard Jay Hawk helicopter to lower a team aboard the wreck to complete a survey. Parties interested in surveying the vessel were numerous and consisted of salvors, surveyors from hull, cargo and P&I interests, owners and government and regulatory agencies. In the end, it was determined that the boarding party would consist of three salvage experts from three ASA member companies representing six ASA member companies vying for the salvage work.

The three-man team was chosen after it was determined by the ICS that the combined effort of the three ASA member companies, working as one team, would provide the most comprehensive report possible to be shared with all interested parties.

On December 12, the team, representing six ASA member companies, boarded and surveyed the damaged vessel. A three-man ASA team boarded and surveyed the forward section on December 14.



ASA members responded to the grounded M/V *Selendang Ayu* in December in Alaska.

The information obtained by the survey team was submitted to the Unified Command as one report from the ASA members. This information was used to determine the scope of salvage services to be engaged. Three proposals were submitted by ASA member salvage companies from a combined group of six member companies. On December 15, a contract was awarded to one of the member companies to perform fuel removal from the stern section. This work is underway today.

"Having ASA's member companies work together in this fashion exemplifies the spirit of the ASA and clearly demonstrates the Association's commitment to our mission," said Richard Fairbanks, ASA President, and founding member.

ASA members also were contracted to assist in the case of the tanker *Athos I*, which began leaking oil as she entered a terminal off the Delaware River outside of Philadelphia, PA, on the evening of November 27, 2004. Three ASA General Members, along with an Associate Member, joined together to respond to the casualty.

The ASA members provided salvage assistance, as well as the pumping, lightering and removal of the crude oil. The *Athos I* is currently on even keel, and free of all cargo. At the direction of the U.S. Coast Guard, ASA members are working to patch the hull of the tanker and prepare her for dry dock. 🗣️

## National Maritime Salvage Conference Scheduled for November 1-3, 2005

SAVE THE DATE! The 2005 National Maritime Salvage Conference, sponsored by ASA, will take place November 1-3, 2005 in New Orleans, LA.

The first day, Tuesday, November 1, will offer a training seminar focusing on mock salvage arbitration proceeding, and marine salvage operations.

The conference program for Wednesday, November 2 and Thursday, November 3, 2005 will include a discussion of Maritime Security, Wreck Removal, Harbor Clearance, Firefighting Contracting, U.S. Salvage Regulations and the International View of the Salvage Industry, Incident Command Structure (ICS), Responder Immunity, Salvage and the Environment, Places of Refuge, Training and Safety, and more.

*Professional Mariner* magazine will also present its Plimsoll Safety Award.

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“The National Maritime Salvage Conference 2005 will offer guidance to representatives of the maritime community, including governmental representatives, ship-owners, underwriters, attorneys and salvors alike, on matters concerning salvage regulations, salvage plans and training, environmental protection, port security and wreck removal,” said Richard Fairbanks, President of the ASA. “For anyone in the U.S. and international maritime salvage community, mark your calendars now for this not-to-be missed conference in 2005!” he continued.

Visit [www.americansalvage.org](http://www.americansalvage.org) to register and for the full program/agenda. 

## President’s Message

BY RICHARD FAIRBANKS, President,  
American Salvage Association



FAIRBANKS

The holidays this past year presented unique challenges for the U.S. salvage industry. On Friday Evening, November 26 (Thanksgiving Weekend) the fully laden 60,000 dwt tanker *Athos I* struck an object on the bottom of the Delaware River causing a sizable crude oil spill and a serious list on-board the vessel. A few days later, on December 8, the fully laden 70,000-ton bulk carrier *Selendang Ayu* lost power off Dutch Harbor, Alaska. She grounded and broke into two pieces spilling both her cargo and bunkers into the sea.

As the *Athos I* is a tanker, she had a USCG approved Vessel Response Plan (VRP) which was activated immediately. The “Qualified Individual” (required to be named in her VRP by the USCG) activated her Spill Management Team within minutes. The Qualified Individual activated the Salvors named in the VRP on request by the USCG. Salvage advice was then immediately available to the master and QI by telephone. Salvage advice was available on site within 3 hours of request. As the sun rose on Saturday November 27th, less than 24 hours after the incident, both the spill and salvage response were in full mobilization.

The *Selendang Ayu* was a bulk carrier, not a tanker. She was therefore not bound by the VRP requirements of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 and not required to have a USCG approved Vessel Response Plan despite her bunker capacity being in excess of 2500 cubic meters.


It would not be fair or accurate to say that the lack of a VRP caused her grounding or destruction but the fact is

that a salvage contractor was not appointed until December 15, approximately a week after the casualty. This took much too long.

The USCG Authorization Act of 2004, recently passed by Congress, has a provision which should improve this situation. It basically extends the Vessel Response Plan requirements to all self-propelled vessels over 400 grt. The regulations implementing this law have not been published as yet but the USCG finally has the legal ability to publish regulations and fix the problem. This can only be a good thing for the environment and the maritime emergency response industry.

The pending (since 2002) USCG Salvage Regulations are still pending, maybe for years to come but there seems to be renewed hope. With VRP now being required of non tank vessels the primary objection of the tanker industry to the salvage regulations has been removed. Equality and fairness have been restored! Maybe we will now see the Salvage Regulations finalized.

Both the USCG and ASA have been revisiting Area Contingency Plans this past year. Remember them? They were created to provide guidance for responding to maritime emergencies, primarily pollution emergencies, in each COTP zone. They are not so easy to look at now with the fear of terrorism causing open access to be questionable but those that we have seen are still incomplete. They all neglect salvage response. The ACP’s have Salvage Sections but those Sections are largely misleading, out of date and for the most part, empty. Some have Sections on Marine Fire Response, most have amazing detail on booming strategy to protect sensitive resources but very little guidance or help in confining oil in the casualty or providing strategies to remove casualties from our waterways and ports. The USCG now seems to have renewed interest in filling this gap. They are working hard to provide salvage advice for each COTP zone for inclusion in their Area Contingency Plans.

The regulatory environment seems to have changed over the past six months. We are encouraged by the interest in Marine Emergency Response and we seem to feel a breeze of fresh air coming from the right direction. Perhaps progress will be made in 2005. ASA will be pushing for that. 

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*“The regulatory environment seems to have changed over the last six months... perhaps progress will be made in 2005.”*

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## ASA News Bits...

At its Fall Board meeting, **ASA elected J. Kenneth Edgar, Marine Response Consultants, and Captain Jack Ringelberg, P.E., JMS Naval Architects & Salvage Engineers, as Chairman and Vice Chairman, respectively, of the ASA Associate Membership Committee.** Among the initiatives of this committee, *ASA Soundings* will feature an Associate Members Column, which will begin with the next issue in the spring. Stay tuned!

ASA, as a supporting organization of the Connecticut Maritime Association (CMA), announces **SHIPPING 2005**, March 21-23, 2005 at the Westin Hotel in Stamford, CT. For details and to register, visit [www.shipping2005.com](http://www.shipping2005.com).

Also mark your calendars to attend the **C-Port Towing & Salvage Conference**, Feb. 15-16, 2005 at the Fort Lauderdale Marriott in Fort Lauderdale, FL. For details and to register, visit [c-port@wpa.org](mailto:c-port@wpa.org).

## From the Editor

BY JIM BLADH, Managing Editor - *Soundings*

Another year is before us and while we look forward to a prosperous year in the marine salvage industry, we are still troubled by the lack of U.S. Coast Guard regulations for marine fire-fighting and salvage. With recent incidents in Philadelphia (the *Athos I*) and Alaska (*Selendang Ayu*), which benefited from the quick response of several ASA General and Associate members, we continue to see the need to maintain and stand behind this ever-valuable industry.




We at ASA look forward to a great year ahead, as we continue our United States Coast Guard training program and initiatives, look forward to our next Board meeting in April, and promote our 2005 National Maritime Salvage Conference in November in New Orleans. As well, in the year ahead and beyond, ASA's General Members will work more closely than ever before with our Associate Members and good things will surely result from that relationship.

In this issue of *Soundings* we focus on port security and the need to consider response as high of a priority as we do prevention. Port of New Orleans President and CEO Gary LaGrange offers an insider look from one of the nation's - and the world's - busiest ports.

Mauricio Garrido, Vice President, Titan Maritime LLC, who has led the ASA-developed Training Program for the Coast Guard, provides his views on why this program is a success and why it is much needed.

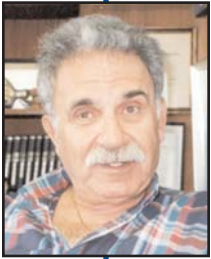
As always, if you have questions, comments or suggestions about *Soundings*, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes for 2005! 

*Jim Bladh*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

							
February 15-16 C-PORT Conference Ft. Lauderdale, FL	March 21-23 SHIPPING 2005 Stamford, CT	April 19 ASA Spring Meeting Arlington, VA	April 20-22 AWO Spring Convention Washington, DC	May 10-11 Tugs & Barges Stamford, CT	May 15-19 IOSC Miami, FL	October 6-7 AWO Fall Convention Chicago, IL	October 31 ASA Fall Meeting New Orleans, LA
					November 1-3 Salvage Conference 2005 New Orleans, LA	November 30-December 2 Workboat Show New Orleans, LA	



## Spotlight on Marine Pollution Control

By DAVID USHER  
President


Since 1967, Marine Pollution Control (MPC) has established itself as a leader in oil and hazardous materials response operations with special capabilities in portable emergency pumping systems to facilitate maritime casualty operations. Beginning in a small office with attached garage situated in an industrialized area of southwest Detroit, MI, the company now maintains seven buildings in Detroit and 18 additional pumping equipment depots strategically located across all U.S. coastlines and overseas (UK and South Asia).

Beginning in the early 1970s MPC senior response team members, based on their experiences during jobs like the Amoco Cadiz, foresaw the need for lightweight, portable emergency lightering systems (hydraulic) to reduce the risk of pollution and improve salvage response capabilities. Watershed events in the company's history include the lightering of the Exxon *Valdez* in 1989, the production of the company's own KMA 333 model lightering pump in 1993, and participation in the joint industry/U.S. Coast Guard viscous oil testing program (ongoing).

It is MPC's philosophy to guide and improve the environmental and salvage regulatory process by proactively participating in the formulation of the nation's policies on these critical issues. MPC was the charter member of the Spill Control

Association of America (SCAA), and an organizing member of ASA.

Most recently, MPC's senior staff has been involved in consulting with members of the federal government and industry on the interrelated matters of salvage and Homeland Security, including creating standardized ways of responding to incidents involving Weapons of Mass Destruction.

MPC has been actively involved in many of the nation's noteworthy pollution-related salvage responses when liquid lightering operations were involved. In addition to its work on the Exxon *Valdez*, MPC was present during the lightering of heating oil off the barge Morris Berman in San Juan harbor in 1994, the removal of gasoline from the wreck of the *M/T Jupiter* in Bay City, MI, in 1990, and the lightering of the *M/T Presidente Riviera* off Marcus Hook, PA in 1989, and most recently responded to the *M/T Athos I*. In 1991, senior staff members were dispatched by the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Inter-Agency Assessment Team to participate in managing the worldwide response to the massive oil spills that were caused during the first Persian Gulf War (Operation Desert Storm). 

Visit us at

[www.marinepollutioncontrol.com](http://www.marinepollutioncontrol.com)

# Meet the ASA Membership

For membership information, please contact Dick Fredricks at (703) 373-2267.

## Associate Corporate Members



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