



Quick Look Report

Executive Summit for Small Vessel Stakeholder Leadership

Homeland Security Studies and Analysis Institute, Arlington, VA
March 11, 2011

On 11 March 2011, the Homeland Security Studies and Analysis Institute (HSI) hosted small vessel stakeholders from the private sector, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and other federal, state, tribal and local authorities in an Executive Summit for the Public Report of the *Department of Homeland Security Small Vessel Security Strategy Implementation Plan*. After a welcome by Analytic Services CEO Dr. Ruth David, RADM Paul Zukunft, USCG Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety, Security and Stewardship, and Thomas S. Winkowski, CBP Assistant Commissioner, Customs and Border Protection for Field Operations, spoke about the DHS small vessel security strategy and about the implementation plan.

RADM Zukunft reviewed the history of small vessel security threats, highlighted the main elements of the plan, and described how it has guided programs during its development following the national and regional small vessel security summits. He described it as a guide for future action and offered examples of how it would be implemented locally. He stressed its importance as detailed strategic overview, its layered defense approach, and the flexibility it offers to match local requirements. He outlined progress made already to advance interagency operations (centers, and interdiction) and improve coordination between stakeholders. Lastly, he underscored the critical importance of the partnership with the localities through Area Maritime Security Committees.

Mr. Winkowski indicated that the implementation plan offers a detailed roadmap of goals and objectives and an integrated approach for DHS components and their partners. He stressed that the plan represents the first time that a unified approach to small vessel vulnerability has been adopted; a major step forward in the evolution of DHS. He noted that the plan both requires and benefits from the high degree of cross-sector partnership. He commented on the plan's sensitivity to the U.S. tradition of freedom of the seas and the expectations of boaters, pointing out that CBP is not in the business of inconvenience, but of protection. He described how newly developed, easy-to-use

systems for filing float plans and reporting arrivals allow CBP to segregate the low-risk from potentially higher-risk boats, which greatly benefits CBP's efficiency and effectiveness. Finally, he discussed how the plan is designed to be flexible and incorporate boater input to make it maximally effective and minimally intrusive. As he viewed it, the more CBP knows about boaters, the more easily they can target non-compliant or high-risk small vessels, and at the same time improve safety on the water.

Robert Gauvin, from the USCG Office of Vessel Activities, provided an overview of the overall planning process and the development of the plan. He highlighted numerous ongoing DHS small vessel security operational elements and accomplishments that occurred during the planning process, and he described several new activities proposed in the plan. He reiterated the importance of private sector and public input in the creation of the plan and its future success.

A panel discussion elaborated on the DHS component perspectives. The panel consisted of: Mr. Sean Moon, Transportation and Cargo Policy, DHS Office of Policy Development; Mr. Jeff Hoedt, Chief, Office of Boating Safety, USCG; and Mr. Daniel Piscopo, Trusted Traveler Programs, CBP.

Mr. Moon described how the implementation plan, as with the strategy, has truly represented a "one DHS approach" – the right thing done the right way. He stressed that the effort supports the President's vision of transparency, and pledged to keep stakeholders informed. He described how the Secretary's direction to the components would deal with the complexity of managing the risks that come from the small vessel threats. He also noted that the effort has affected the International Maritime Organization's small vessel security guidelines and the plans of allied nations. Finally, he explained that the plan includes a method to track actions so that the Secretary will know what is happening and what needs to happen to make the plan a success.

Mr. Hoedt thanked the national association members for attending and for their participation and interest. He stated that the USCG approach would be to promote mandatory education of boaters about the threats and measures for safe operation of pleasure craft. The boating community can expect attention to uniform education standards at the federal level that will stress the rules about security zones and vessel ownership documentation. He noted that the Vessel Identification System (VIS) is currently voluntary, with 32 of 56 states and territories participating. He indicated that almost all of them maintain electronic records, effectively providing a foundation for a national database. He indicated that there are no plans for incorporating radio-frequency identification (RFID) or other technologies as the main means of vessel identification. A participant in the audience stressed that America's Waterways Watch needs more support and suggested a number of ways to advance its use.

Mr. Piscopo focused his remarks on the CBP Small Vessel Reporting System (SVRS) and its newly developed, easy-to-use web-based interfaces tested by boaters in Miami, St. Thomas, and Puerto Rico. He described how the updated system enables people to enroll online, facilitates an interview process, and grants approval to pre-file float plans. He

described how efficiently it allows CBP to segment risk. The system has been developed and pilot-tested with extensive boater participation, and now has 6,700 members. He indicated that it would soon be implemented on the northern border and rolled out nationally, with a goal of being widely available on a free and voluntary basis in time for the Memorial Day holiday.

In the general session that followed, Mr. Piscopo indicated that information about the SVRS would be made available through multiple channels, including the Coast Guard Auxiliary, the small vessel security stakeholder mailing list, and boat shows. In response to a query from the audience, the CBP representatives indicated that they want to get away from telephone and radio interactions, and instead use widely available smart phone and computer consumer technology. They wanted to automate as much as possible, and make the system easy to use. They described initiatives such as Global Entry, by which boaters could submit an application, be vetted, join the program, and then check in easily and quickly after a trip abroad. Mr. Gauvin noted that float plans would also help with safety and search and rescue. He pointed out that advances in positioning system technology were being explored to integrate automatic identification system (AIS) and emergency position-indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) capabilities, making them less expensive and jointly supportive for safety and security.

RADM Paul Zukunft closed the meeting by thanking the stakeholders for attending. He emphasized that he is proud that there are 17 million+ small vessels in the United States, thanks to America's robust system of boating, safety, and security. He reiterated that terrorist use of small vessels is a real threat and stressed that the plan was a proactive approach designed to preserve traditional freedoms and access. Much of the plan is aimed at staying informed of active threats in order to target preparedness and response activities to locations. He pointed out that the intent is to take advantage of existing technologies, such as Watchkeeper and commercial off-the-shelf hardware and software. He closed with a reminder that the strength of the plan is its reliance on people—the 80 million boaters who can see something and say something.

* After the meeting the public report version of the plan, developed by HSI, was emailed to over 5,000 stakeholders and placed on the public DHS Small Vessel Security website at:
http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/gc_1299623119339.shtm