

MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN

MSIB 004-18

Date: June 11, 2018

2018 HURRICANE SEASONAL ALERT

Hurricane Port Condition Requirements

This MSIB clarifies USCG mandated hurricane procedures and defines Hurricane Port Conditions for Port Fourchon, Louisiana Offshore Oil Port, Houma Navigation Canal, Port of Morgan City, Port of Iberia, Intracoastal City, the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, and all terminals, facilities, and waterways in the Captain of the Port (COTP) Houma/Morgan City area of responsibility.

General Vessel and Barge Mooring Requirements for Heavy Weather

To promote safe navigation and protect vital infrastructure the Coast Guard will enforce the following regulations found in 33 CFR 803:

No person may secure a vessel or barge to trees or to other vegetation.

No person may allow a vessel or barge to be moored with unraveled or frayed lines or other defective or worn mooring.

No person may moor barges side to side unless they are secured to each other from fittings as close to each corner of abutting sides as practicable.

No person may moor barges end to end unless they are secured to each other from fittings as close to each corner of abutting ends as practicable.

Barge Moorings: Barge-to-barge; barge-to-vessel; barge-to-wharf or pier. The person in charge shall ensure that a barge moored to another barge, a mooring or spar barge, a vessel, a wharf, or a pier, is secured as near as practicable to each abutting corner of the barge being moored by:

- (1) Three parts of wire rope of at least 7/8 inch diameter with an eye at each end of the rope passed around the timberhead, caval, or button;
- (2) A mooring of natural or synthetic fiber rope that has at least 75 percent of the breaking strength of three parts of 7/8 inch diameter wire rope; or
- (3) Fixed rigging that is at least equivalent to three parts of 7/8 inch diameter wire rope.

For further information regarding the severe weather and high water moorings, the U.S. Committee on the Marine Transportation System's recommends the Best Practices for Preventing and Managing Breakaway Vessels found at:

[http://www.cmts.gov/downloads/Best Practices for Preventing and Managing Breakaway Vessels.pdf](http://www.cmts.gov/downloads/Best_Practices_for_Preventing_and_Managing_Breakaway_Vessels.pdf).

In addition to setting port conditions, the COTP will take the following actions commensurate with each Port Condition:

Port Condition Whiskey (gale force winds (34kts/39mph) within 72 hours):

Port Status: Open to all commercial traffic.

- Contact port authorities, other government agencies, and industry stakeholders to identify and address concerns over port status, activities, and emergency preparations.
- The COTP will issue a MSIB requiring the following information to be submitted to Vessel Traffic Service, Berwick Bay:
 - (a) All self-propelled oceangoing vessels over 500 GT and all oceangoing barges and their supporting tugs remaining in port will complete and submit to the COTP within 24 hours for approval, a REMAINING IN PORT CHECKLIST FOR 500 GT (GRT) VESSELS (Annex A of the Maritime Hurricane Contingency Plan). Each vessel intending to remain in port must request permission from the waterfront facility where mooring and forward that information to the COTP at COTPHoumaSevereWeather@uscg.mil.
- The Coast Guard will have increased harbor patrols and will advise vessel and facility operators of any conditions that require immediate action or correction.
- The Coast Guard will advise vessel operators of anticipated times of floodgate and bridge closures affecting their ability to seek safe refuge and will provide best points of contact information to obtain accurate updates.
- Advise port stakeholders of intentions for setting next condition.

Port Condition X-Ray (gale force winds (34kts/39mph) within 48 hours):

Port Status: Open to all commercial traffic.

- The Coast Guard will continue to contact waterfront facilities to determine their intentions and any vessels moored thereto. Individually assess vessels desiring to remain in port, and issue COTP Orders as appropriate.
- Contact deep draft vessels at anchor and determine their intentions.
- Inspect wharf and pier areas with waterfront facility representatives during harbor patrols.
- Spot check mariners and waterways to determine the status of hurricane preparations.
- Advise port stakeholders of intentions for setting next Port Condition.

Port Condition YANKEE (Gale force winds (34kts/39mph) expected within 24 hours):

Port Status: Vessel traffic control measures in effect.

- The COTP may close portions of the port in response to forecasted weather and actual damage, impact, or threat in different geographic areas within the port.
- Establish a Safety Zone controlling vessel movements and activities as appropriate, including:
 - (a) Close ports, where necessary, to all commercial vessel traffic except as specifically allowed by COTP. Port closure will not apply to vessels that are capable of completing the cargo load/discharge cycle in less than 12 hours. The area affected by this order includes all Navigable Waters of the United States within 12 nautical miles of shoreline.

- Issue COTP Order as appropriate for any vessels or facilities not complying with Port Condition requirements:
 - (a) Each self-propelled vessel over 500 GT without COTP approval to stay in port will be directed out of port.
 - (b) The COTP will approve or direct, as necessary, final mooring arrangements for vessels remaining in port.
- Advise port stakeholders of intentions for setting next Port Condition.
- Establish safety zone preventing red flagged barges from mooring along shore in Houma central business district and other population centers as identified by the COTP.

Port Condition Zulu (gale force winds (34kts/39mph) expected within 12 hours):

Port Status: Vessel traffic control measures in effect. The default for ZULU is closure of the port and facility operations.

- The COTP may deviate from this default and keep ports open with restrictions and close only portions of the port in response to forecasted weather, actual damage, impact, or threat in different geographic ports within the COTP Zone.
- Establish a Safety Zone controlling vessel movements and activities as appropriate, including:
 - (a) Close ports, where necessary, to all commercial vessel traffic (including vessel transits within the port). This prohibition will not apply to vessels that have requested and received approval from the COTP to transit the port. The approval of the COTP will only be granted if the transit can be made safely and mooring or anchorage space has been identified; or if the vessel is departing to sea, only if the vessel can reach safe water prior to encountering hurricane conditions.
- Suspend cargo operations involving bulk liquid dangerous cargoes (including bunkering and lightering operations), unless permission is requested to continue operations and approval is granted. Approval will be given on a case-by-case basis. This approval provision does not apply to operations involving Cargoes of Particular Hazard or Certain Dangerous Cargoes, which in every case must be suspended.

Post-Hurricane Conditions

As soon as practicable following the passage of the storm, the COTP will:

- Assess whether to close ports and waterways, maintain closure, or open with or without restrictions.
- Assess whether to maintain a Safety Zone restricting vessel movements until the navigation channels can be surveyed and declared safe for passage.
- Coordinate completion of channel surveys as needed.
- Conduct maritime damage and risk assessments emphasizing channels, bridges, anchorages, piers, and wharves.
- Organize a post-hurricane Port Coordination Team conference call with senior representatives from other federal, state, and local government agencies and industry stakeholders to assess, outline, and prioritize the recovery effort for the COTP Zone:

All hurricane informational documents will be posted to Homeport at the following link: <https://homeport.uscg.mil/port-directory/houma>. MSIBs and related updates can be found in the "Safety Notifications" section. The Maritime Hurricane Contingency Plan can be found in the "Contingency Plans" section.

If you have any questions, please contact Marine Safety Unit Houma Officer of the Day at (985) 665-2437, the Marine Safety Unit Morgan City Officer of the Day at (985)397-330, or at COTPHoumaSevereWeather@uscg.mil.



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