
Introduction

Panel 5

We have several issues to examine in this Panel and given the preceding panels, we know that there will not be uniformity of opinion.

We heard yesterday that 30% of U.S. fatalities in the commercial fishing industry are from falls overboard. One goal of this panel is to examine this problem in the hope of identifying strategies to prevent falls overboard, help fishermen survival falls overboard, and more quickly recover those who fall overboard.

The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 addresses lifesaving equipment and requires that lifesaving equipment prevent immersion in water. This may require additional regulations and many vessels to be refitted with new lifesaving equipment.

Lastly, other lifesaving equipment required by regulations may or may not be the best that can be used to promote survivability because of the condition, design, or familiarity to the users. Again, the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 addresses the issue of lifesaving equipment by granting the authority to the Coast Guard to develop standards and approve equipment that may not be required by regulation.

Now I will introduce our panel.

Mike Grupa. Mr. Grupa is representing the Personal Flotation Device Manufacturers' Association.

Tom Thompson. Mr. Thompson is the Executive Director of the U.S. Marine Safety Association a trade organization representing marine safety device manufacturers.

Dr. Jennifer Lincoln. Dr. Lincoln is an injury epidemiologist from the Alaska Pacific Regional Office of NIOSH. Dr Lincoln was on yesterday's Panel 1 and today's Panel 4.

Richard Hiscock. Mr. Hiscock has a long history studying commercial fishing vessel safety and lifesaving equipment. He is a past member of the CFIVSAC. Mr. Hiscock was also a panelist yesterday on Panel 1.

Kurt Heinz. Mr. Heinz is Chief, Lifesaving and Fire Safety Division at U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters and has a long history working in the standards and approval of lifesaving equipment.