



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: September 27, 2016

In reply refer to: M-16-23 and -24

Mr. Thomas A. Allegretti
President and CEO
American Waterways Operators
801 North Quincy Street, Suite 200
Arlington, VA 22203

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters. We are providing the following information to urge the American Waterways Operators to take action on the safety recommendations being issued in this letter.

On September 13, 2016, we adopted our safety study, *An Assessment of the Effectiveness of the US Coast Guard Vessel Traffic Service System*.¹ Additional information about this topic and the resulting recommendations may be found in the study, which can be accessed at our website, <http://www.nts.gov>, under report number SS-16/01.

As a result of this safety study, we issued 21 recommendations, including 17 to the US Coast Guard, 1 to the American Pilots' Association, 1 to the Radio Technical Commission for Maritime Services, and the following 2 recommendations to the American Waterways Operators:

¹ *An Assessment of the Effectiveness of the US Coast Guard Vessel Traffic Service System*, September 13, 2016, SS-16/01.

M-16-23

Work with the US Coast Guard to conduct or sponsor research to evaluate and determine the feasibility and benefits of professional mariner representation on the watchfloor at each of the Coast Guard vessel traffic service (VTS) centers, and establish such representation at VTS centers, as appropriate, based on the findings of that research.

M-16-24

Work with the US Coast Guard to modify regulations, procedures, and equipment standards, as necessary, to ensure that vessels engaged in towing operations broadcast accurate automatic identification system information regarding tow size and tow configuration as well as vessel size.

Chairman HART, Vice Chairman DINH-ZARR, and Members SUMWALT and WEENER concurred in these recommendations.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate receiving a response from you within 90 days detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement them. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendations by number. We encourage you to submit your response electronically to correspondence@ntsb.gov. If it exceeds 10 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

[Original Signed]

By: Christopher A. Hart,
Chairman