

FINAL REPORT
Sixth Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Ports
Technical Advisory Group on Port Security (TAGPS)
Panama City, Panama
Sunday, March 21, 2010

The Sixth Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Ports (CIP) included a meeting of the Technical Advisory Group on Port Security to report on progress on the 2009 work plan and to adopt a 2010 work plan.

Member states of the Technical Advisory Group include: Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. The United States is the Chair. Associate Members include: ESRI and SSA Marine.

Technical Advisory Group Chair, Gregory Hall, Director of the Office of International Activities at the U.S. Department of Transportation (Maritime Administration), offered welcoming remarks to participants and introduced new Associate Members ESRI and SSA Marine.

Functions of the TAGPS:

- a. To compile and exchange information on port security, including the use of advanced security technology for risk reduction;
- b. To design and maintain a database with information relevant to its work;
- c. Recommend training programs based on the member countries' needs;
- d. Recommend guidelines for port security;
- e. To prepare specialized reports, studies, and technical documents;
- f. To organize national and international meetings and activities on specialized topics in this area;
- g. To report to the Chair of the Executive Board in writing, every six months, on the progress and results of its work., and
- h. To prepare proposals and recommendations on policies and strategies and present them to the Inter-American Committee on Ports through the Executive Board.

The following agenda topics were either discussed or the subject of presentations at the meeting:

Associate Member: SSA Marine

SSA Marine is a major international terminal operator with a presence in ports throughout the Western Hemisphere. It owns and operates Manzanillo International Terminal (MIT) at the Caribbean terminus of the Panama Canal. Port Administrator José Iribarren represented MIT at the TAG meeting. He delivered a presentation on MIT's security operations and training programs for other SSA Marine terminals in the region, as well as MIT's expansion plans and social responsibility initiatives in the Colón area.

Port Security TAG: Disaster preparedness and risk mitigation

The Port Security TAG Chair briefly discussed the importance of risk assessment and contingency planning to promote safety and security in the region's ports. Facilitating the exchange of information on disaster preparedness and response was an objective on the TAG's work plan for 2009-2010. The Chair noted that this effort has taken on even greater relevance

since the earthquakes in Haiti and Chile. Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Costa Rica were recognized for providing information solicited by the TAG on contingency planning for natural disasters in their ports. The Chair directed members to information resources on disaster preparedness and response in ports available on the TAG website, www.safeports.org. These include a manual and presentations from the American Association of Port Authorities, as well as online courses from the University of Wisconsin Disaster Management Center.

USA: Port Security Risk Assessment Tool

Capt. Michael Brown of the United States Coast Guard gave a presentation on the Port Security Risk Assessment Tool (PSRAT). The PSRAT was developed by the Coast Guard to allow port authorities to assess the risk of terrorist attacks and other security threats geographically within their ports. It is a Microsoft Access based application that assigns quantitative value to subjective evaluations of security threats, allowing port authorities to rank threats according to risk. The PSRAT is available for download on the Coast Guard's website, <http://homeport.uscg.mil>.

Port Security TAG: Use of information technology to facilitate TAG meetings and information exchange

The Chair described how the TAG planned to use information technology to maintain dialogue and facilitate information exchange between physical meetings. The TAG's new website figured largely in this plan, as it serves as an online clearinghouse for port security information in the hemisphere. Webinars and teleconferences were two other tools discussed that will be employed by the TAG over the coming year. The Chair solicited ideas from members on possible topics for online presentations.

USA: Port Security TAG website

The United States presented the web site it created for the Port Security TAG, www.safeports.org. Brian Bedsworth of the U.S. Maritime Administration explained the site's functions and multilingual content. He emphasized how Member States could use the site's forum page to exchange information on best practices and continue discussions started during TAG meetings, as well as how the site could be used to recruit Associate Members from the private sector. Member States were also encouraged to participate in the site's management by contributing news items and information on relevant events.

Port Security TAG: 2010-11 Work Plan

The following work plan for 2010-11 was adopted by the Port Security TAG:

- Maritime Domain Awareness and information sharing: Continue to promote participation in the Maritime Safety & Security Information System and Virtual Regional Traffic Center of the Americas in the region. Discuss Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) systems in use in countries throughout the region and their benefits to ports.
- Contingency planning and preparation: Facilitate the exchange of information on planning for natural disasters and other potential security issues.

- ISO 28000:2007: Facilitate the exchange of information on the International Organization for Standardization's certification for security management systems, including those critical for supply chain security.
- Cooperation with outside institutions: Continue to reach out to and maintain contacts with outside institutions to facilitate cooperation in relevant areas. To include the Pan-American Health Organization, The Association of American Port Authorities and others to be identified.
- Website: Continue to maintain www.safeports.org to provide information on port security issues to Member States and facilitate discussion. Solicit more active participation from Member States.
- Webinars/teleconferences: Use communication technologies such as webinars and teleconferences to remotely host information sessions and discussions on relevant port security topics.
- Associate Members: Recruit new Associate Members from all Member States and encourage their active participation in TAGPS discussions and activities.
- Meeting structure: Continue internal dialogue on the structure and role of TAGPS meetings in order to improve the group's efficiency and efficacy.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the TAG will take place in Viña del Mar, Chile, during the CECIP meeting in March 2011.