

PURPOSE OF THE PUGET SOUND HARBOR SAFETY PLAN

The Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee (PSHSC) is a duly constituted body of public and private stakeholders who share the common interest of safe, environmentally responsible and efficient use of Puget Sound and adjacent waters. As such, the PSHSC takes responsibility for developing standards and protocols that address those environmental and operational elements of maritime operations that are somewhat unique and especially significant to Puget Sound. The standards and protocols contained in the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Plan complement and supplement existing and future federal, state and local laws and regulations. Because these standards and protocols are generally non-regulatory in nature, their development and implementation can be more timely than regulatory actions.

With its regular meetings and broad stakeholder group participation, the PSHSC offers an agile and vibrant forum to lead the stakeholder community in identifying and resolving conflicts or concerns, existing and potential, in the commercial and recreational use of Puget Sound. The PSHSC should be viewed as the agent of choice by government, industry and environmentalists to present and respond to user conflicts, desired new environmental practices, new safety initiatives, and natural resource conflicts or changes. The PSHSC can also support and expand upon the work of other Puget Sound focused organizations, such as the Puget Sound Partnership, the Puget Sound Area Maritime Security Committee (AMSC), the Pacific Northwest Area Committee (AC)/Regional Response Team (RRT), the Puget Sound Marine Firefighting Commission (PSMFC) and others.

Action Items: Especially important action items for vessel masters will be highlighted throughout the plan in special "action items" boxes like this one.

PROCEDURES:

The elements of the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Plan are developed by “focus teams” which are subcommittees of the Operations standing committee of the PSHSC. To assure the broadest perspectives on measures considered, focus teams are expected to include interested parties within the PSHSC and to reach beyond the PSHSC for membership, participation and advice.

As possible additions and/or corrections to the Harbor Safety Plan are identified, the Chair of the Operations standing committee will appoint one or more PSHSC members to lead a focus group to consider the issues and bring recommendations to the full PSHSC.

GUIDELINES:

Standards and protocols included in the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Plan will address operational and environmental issues unique to Puget Sound. The Puget Sound Harbor Safety Plan is not intended to supplant or otherwise conflict with federal, state or local regulations developed under legal authorities. Nor is the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Plan intended to replace the good judgment of a ship's master in the safe operation of his/her vessel. The Puget Sound Harbor Safety Plan is intended to complement existing regulations by advising the mariner of unique conditions and requirements that may be encountered in Puget Sound and adjacent waters and the standards and protocols developed by local experts for ensuring greater safety in light of those conditions and requirements.