

Maritime Commerce and Navigation Safety Work Group

2024 Progress Report

Reporting Period: January 2024 – December 2024

Work Group Webpage:

<https://www.midatlanticocean.org/ocean-planning/work-groups-collaborative-efforts/maritime-commerce-and-navigation-safety-work-group/>

Work Group Leads:

- Federal: Matt Creelman, U.S. Coast Guard
- State: Ryan Green, Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program
- Regional: Jes Watts, Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean

Work Group Members: Work group membership is open to government and non-governmental entities operating in the five Mid-Atlantic states and the District of Columbia that are willing to participate in work group activities. Members are expected to contribute on monthly work group calls and assist with project implementation.

2024 Member Roster:

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	AFFILIATION
Joel	Bernosky	New York Department of State (NYDOS)
Avalon	Bristow	Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO)
Matt	Creelman	United States Coast Guard (USCG) D5 WWM, CIV
Will	Fidew	Virginia Maritime Association
Jefferson	Flood	Virginia Coastal Zone Management (VA CZM)
Ryan	Green	Virginia Coastal Zone Management (VA CZM)
Stuart	Griffin	Griffin Maritime Strategies; Delaware Pilots, retired
Dan	Hurley	United States Navy
Tony	MacDonald	OPC; Monmouth University UCI
Nick	Napoli	MARCO Senior Advisor; (NROC)
Colleen	Roche	NOAA Northeast Regional Navigation Manager
Karl	Vilacoba	MARCO Data Portal; Monmouth University UCI
Ryan	Wartick	NOAA Mid-Atlantic Regional Navigation Manager
Jes	Watts	Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO)

Work Group Goals, Objectives, and Actions: This work relates to the OAP's Sustainable Ocean Uses Framework Goal, which is to "plan and provide for existing and emerging ocean uses in a sustainable manner that minimizes conflicts, improves effectiveness and regulatory predictability, and supports economic growth," by improving awareness of maritime commerce and navigation in the Mid-Atlantic. Its primary intention is to increase institutional awareness of new maritime commerce and navigational information for consideration in regional ocean planning.

ACTIVITY 1: Ensure that updated maritime commerce and navigational information is reflected on the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal.

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

Progress Period: January 2024 - June 2024

The Portal team collaborated with the U.S. Coast Guard to add data and promote a public comment period on a final proposal to establish a network of shipping safety fairways along the East Coast. The proposed rule would codify 18 fairways between the Rhode Island and Florida coasts, one anchorage outside of the Delaware Bay approaches, and other associated routing measures.

Monthly and annual AIS vessel transit counts maps were added to show traffic patterns for several vessel types in 2023. Users can manually toggle or automatically animate the monthly maps to see how the patterns changed over the course of the year. With the latest additions, the Portal now houses nearly a thousand AIS maps showing vessel activity for years and months dating back to 2011.

The Portal team worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to add maritime data of interest to Mid-Atlantic users. Two maps showing USACE National Sediment Management Framework Borrow Areas and USACE National Sediment Management Framework Placement Areas were added within the "Sand" dropdown of the Maritime theme. A USACE Ports and Port Statistical Areas layer, showing the boundaries of entities such as the Port Authority of New York/New Jersey, was also added.

Progress Period: July 2024 - December 2024

A USACE Ports & Port Statistical Areas map layer showing the boundaries of port areas and the extents of port authorities and other port entities, such as the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey and the Port of Virginia, was added to the Portal. The data can be found in the Administrative theme.

A trio of map layers added to the Portal in September provide a detailed view of navigation channels maintained by the USACE. The Channel Area, Channel Reach and Channel Quarter layers can be found in the Portal's Maritime theme by clicking on the "Channels" dropdown. With the addition of this more detailed data, the Portal has retired its previous Navigation Channels data layer.

A pair of map layers added to the Portal show areas used by the USACE for the deposit and extraction of sand and sediments for dredging and beneficial reuse projects. The USACE National

Sediment Management Framework Borrow Areas and USACE National Sediment Management Framework Placement Areas map layers can be found on the Portal by clicking the “Sand” dropdown in the Maritime theme.

ACTIVITY 2: Plan, organize, and host informational webinars and roundtable dialogues to discuss competing ocean usage interests of the Mid-Atlantic region.

Expected Completion Date: Ongoing

Progress Period: January 2024 - June 2024

The Work Group began planning an informational webinar and roundtable discussion around maritime navigation safety during – and ahead of – the construction phase of offshore wind development. This webinar will follow an open dialogue among governmental entities (Federal, state, and Tribal) hosted by the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Planning Committee (Mid-A OPC) in August 2024.

Progress Period: July 2024 - December 2024

The Work Group developed a list of dialogue topics for 2025, including: Navigation Safety and Offshore Wind, Submarine Cables, USCG NAVCEN [Interactive LNM](#).

MARCO provided Portal demonstrations to attendees at BOEM Central Atlantic 2 public open houses in North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey in September. Representatives of maritime industries were among the hundreds who learned about MARCO and its work at these tables.

ACTIVITY 3: Ensure easy access to information on maritime event resources through integration with the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal

Expected Completion Date: May 2025

Progress Period: July 2024 - December 2024

MARCO staff and the Data Portal Manager engaged with federal and state agencies through both preliminary and in-depth stakeholder discussions to better understand user needs and identify priority maritime events for the Theme. Based on this feedback, the work group refined the project scope, narrowing the focus to a specific set of maritime events and gathering base information, such as jurisdictional boundaries and responsible agencies (e.g., stranding centers, state and federal agency AORs). This theme is on the agenda for collaboration with the Portal Tech Team.

