QAT Participants 1998-99

Group Member
Boat Repair Facilities
Bridge Tenders
Commercial Boating
Dade Heritage Trust
Environmental Management

Film Production, “Random Hearts”
Florida Marine Patrol (FMP)
Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection
Florida Dept. of Transportation
International Shipping Bureau

Marine Construction
Marine Council
Marine Engineers

Marine Services

Miami-Dade Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM)

Miami-Dade Fire Department
Miami-Dade Police Dept. (MDPD)
Miami-Dade Police, Marine Patrol
Miami-Dade Public Works/Bridges
City of Miami Fire Department
City of Miami Police Department
City of Miami Police, Marine Patrol Div.
City of Miami NET
City of Miami Waterfront Board
Miami River Commission
Miami River Coordinating Committee (MRCC)
Miami River Marine Group
National Hurricane Center
Neighborhood Associations

Port Captain
Property Holders (seized)

Representative
Cleve Jones, Jr. (QAT CO-CHAIR)
Jim Wellington
Karl Ruhnke
Raeganne Eastman
William Parkes, Jr.
Steven Hurst
Ben Mours
Christina Cabuzaeta
Francisco De La Torre
Doug C. Phelps
Catherine Porthouse
Tony Ruiz
Julian Padilla
Armando Armascoeta
Richard Bunnell
Phil Everingham
Robert Samara
Eduardo Duarte
Sandra Coll
Alan Byrd
David Byrd
(Diving & Salvage)
James Court
Kevin Cote
Jose Diaz
Craig Grossenbacher
Tim Joyner
Keven Mayo
Erik Penick
Jorge Linares
Lt. Mickey Breiford
Oft. Dan Toledo
Sgt. Daniel Llamo
O.A. Roque
Art Mandel
John Panella
Dallas Garrett
John Ward
Sgt. Jim Billberry
Sgt. Mario Roman, Jr.
Lazaro Alfonso
Sgt. Art Serig
Ruben Avila, Jr.

Switchboard of Miami

Nuria Claramunt
Nadine Johnson
Thamara Labrosse
Gigi Louthio
Esperanza Martinez
Franklin B. Monterrojo
Reynold Santana
Jose Babun
John Cassidy
Richard Dubin
John Lambrons
Mike Leon
Capt. J. Moncondilos
Bruce Schurges
Tom Smith
Eduardo Rodriguez
Mancio Rodriguez
Capt. Paul Hill
Capt. Dan McAlpin
Capt. Beau Payne
Capt. Mike Reid
Capt. Rick Winfield

Team-Metro

Terminal Operators

Tug Boat Operators (TUGS)

U.S. Coast Guard
(MSO Miami)

U.S. Customs Service (USCS)

Vessel Agents

Miami River Enforcement Group

City of Miami Fire Dept.
City of Miami Marine Patrol
City of Miami Police Dept.
City of Miami Neighborhood Enhancement Team
Florida Marine Patrol
Immigration & Naturalization Service
Miami-Dade DERM
Miami-Dade Fire Dept.
Miami-Dade Police
Miami-Dade Police, Marine Patrol
Miami-Dade Team Metro
State Attorney’s Office
United States Coast Guard
United States Customs Service

Miami River Commission
Telephone: (305) 361-4850

Miami River Commission
The Miami River Quality Action Team (QAT) continues to serve as a vital, working level forum for the identification and resolution of day-to-day issues. The primary focus of the QAT continues to be on navigation safety issues, bridge operations, environmental protection, and marine safety on vessels and facilities. Since the inception of the Coast Guard's strict enforcement of the Caribbean Cargo Ship Safety Code (applicable to vessels under 500 gross tons), the materiel condition of vessels trading on the River has much improved. Therefore, in the past year, we have shifted our safety focus more to the facilities side.

In an attempt to prevent casualties before they occur, the Coast Guard Marine Safety Office, in conjunction with Miami-Dade Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM), undertook a waterfront Facility Survey Project. The intent of the surveys was to identify those facilities with inadequate mooring arrangements and to require mooring systems improvements. By reducing the potential for vessels to break away from their moorings, we minimize the threat of damage to other vessels, facilities and bridges. Through this preventive measure, we will certainly reduce this risk of disruption to normal operations on the River. We have just now begun to issue requirements to facilities for mooring upgrades.

Additionally, on the facilities side, a multi-agency approach to safety and code enforcement has been reestablished. In the past few months, the Coast Guard along with the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County police and fire departments, have begun to conduct waterfront facility spot checks. Numerous unsafe fire, electrical, building code and marine safety issues have been identified and corrected as a result of these visits.

Soon, a Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement will formalize the cooperative working relationships of the QAT. We anticipate its full acceptance and signature from all members of the QAT Steering Committee by August 1, 1999. This document will serve as a continual reminder of our purpose and solidify our resolve to work together.

There continues to be increased attention focused on the Miami River. The newly formed, state chartered Miami River Commission has been appointed and is now fully functional. Serving as a clearinghouse for Miami River issues, the Commission has begun to focus on quality of life, dredging, public safety, and land use. Already, great strides in charting a course to accomplish the long-studied issue of dredging of the River have been achieved.

While much has been accomplished through the dedication of the all parties involved in the QAT, more still remains to be improved. As we move into the Year 2000, the charted course of the QAT will not stray from its original intended trackline. With renewed commitment and energy, our goal remains to improve the overall safety, environment and commercial viability for all who live and work on the Miami River.

“As we move into the Year 2000, the charted course of the QAT will not stray from its original intended trackline.”

Larry J. Bowling, Captain, USCG
Captain of the Port
In December, 1997, the Miami River Quality Action Team approached Switchboard of Miami with the idea of creating a specialized hotline to respond to the community’s need for a clearinghouse to report problems along the River.

With 36 federal, state and local agencies having jurisdiction over the Miami River, often there is a lot of confusion among citizens and river businesses as to which agency to contact to report problems and suspicious activities, or to obtain information about River programs and events. Additionally, citizens and business owners are rarely informed about the follow-up actions taken regarding their concerns. The Miami River Hotline serves as a means to alleviate this confusion, provide accountability for each agency and enable callers to be privy to the status of their complaint or request for services.

The hotline provides a 24-hour trilingual (English, Spanish, French/Creole) central point for the public to call for information or to make formal complaints on issues relating to navigation, disasters, vessel hazards, environmental problems and crime. The hotline can also be called for upcoming events, activities and volunteer opportunities on the Miami River.

Since April 1998, Switchboard of Miami has been operating the hotline. Switchboard of Miami created and carried out a complete marketing campaign for its launch focusing on the creating awareness of the River as a valuable natural resource and building awareness of the hotline as a point of contact. The campaign targeted the concerned general public — those who live and work along the Miami River; businesses, boats and ships navigating the River; law enforcement agencies; governmental code enforcement agencies; and all other organizations that have an interest in the Miami River.

Switchboard of Miami created educational materials (brochures, cards, flyers, banners, T-shirts, magnets) in English, Spanish and Creole and conducted several mass mailings to all businesses and homes along the Miami River as well as all City, County and State officials and politicians and City of Miami NET (Neighborhood Enhancement Teams) offices. Other awareness efforts included a 30-minute television program; published articles on the hotline in The Miami Herald, in the Marine Council’s Trade Winds and other maritime publications; participation in Miami River Day, Earth Day and Bayanza; and public service announcements released to all segments of the media.

Funding for the Miami River Hotline was designated by the Miami River Study Commission through the State of Florida’s 1997 Special Appropriation 1196 and delivered through a contract with the South Florida Management District.

Since its inception, the Miami River Hotline has received 202 calls from individuals with questions or complaints relating to crime, environmental issues, navigation, special events and volunteer opportunities, government and consumer services and general support.

Promoting the Miami River Hotline takes continuous effort. Switchboard of Miami will continue to conduct community awareness efforts to promote the Miami River Hotline including ongoing mass mailings, purchasing radio spots on Creole and Spanish speaking radio stations and participation in Miami River-related events and activities. Additionally, Switchboard of Miami sends out PSAs to all local segments of the media on a monthly basis.
Traditionally, Miami-Dade’s Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM) has taken a strongly proactive role on issues affecting the water quality, habitat, and general environment of the Miami River. For many years, Miami-Dade County also served as the informal sponsor of the Miami River dredging effort. While the leadership of the dredging effort has recently been undertaken by the Miami River Commission, DERM is still an active participant of the MRC Dredging Committee, the Miami River QAT and the Miami River Enforcement Group. While the environmental health of the Miami River depends upon the cooperation and dedication of all Miami River entities – neighborhoods, businesses, and a host of agencies (Coast Guard, Florida’s DEP and the EPA, among others) – DERM continues to exercise high visibility and strong enforcement on the Miami River.

Early in 1998, DERM determined that its program effectiveness, efficiency and productivity could be improved by eliminating program overlap and duplication of staff effort. For example, a boatyard might be visited by several inspectors to check permit compliance for marine facility management, industrial waste management, air quality or underground tanks, yet different inspections are required if the boatyard needs to repair docks or bulkheads. Still another group of staff checks for environmental compliance and follows up on enforcement issues. As a result, several programs were consolidated to form a new Miami River management group within DERM.

The newly organized team is part of the Coastal Resources Section in the Natural Resources Division. The team focuses on permitting and enforcement in the Miami River watershed, and continues to implement the marine facilities operating permit program (the MOPs). The Miami River team also oversees grants for derelict vessel removal and Wagner Creek enforcement. This approach is expected to reduce duplicative or even contradictory requirements, and enhance the working relationship of the department and the regulated community.

DERM’s Miami River management team has regularly reported on environmental protection to the QAT.

**PROBLEM:** Abandoned or derelict vessels continue to appear on the Miami River, posing navigational and/or environmental hazards, despite ongoing and successful removal efforts.

Derelict vessels continue to cause environmental and navigational problems on the Miami River and its tributaries. Often derelict vessels may contain substances on board that, once discharged to the waters of the Miami River, become pollutants and add to contaminated sediments. News reports in the early summer of 1999 attributed a seven-mile oil spill to the derelict Sea Witch, which sank before it could be removed.

**SOLUTION:** Continue the current Derelict Vessel Removal program operated by the Florida Marine Patrol (FMP) and DERM. Continue the QAT search to improve options for prompt removal, including establishment of a dedicated funding source, strengthening local mooring codes, and enhancing local authority to remove abandoned vessels. Educate the public that...
Derelict vessels should be reported immediately to the Florida Marine Patrol at (305) 795-2145.

The Florida Marine Patrol tracks derelict vessels as part of the state's Derelict Vessel Program. When a vessel is reported, the FMP then inspects it to determine if the vessel is indeed derelict. The FMP then attempts to identify the owner to order removal. Identified vessel owners who ignore FMP orders are subject to penalties, arrest, and prosecution.

Because of the agency's rigorous search for vessel owners and its ability to seek penalties, the FMP has successfully forced owners of abandoned vessels to remove them, saving taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars. If ownership is impossible to determine, the vessel is placed on a list maintained by the FMP for vessel removal. The FMP has dedicated a law enforcement officer exclusively to enforce derelict vessel regulations and accelerate the administrative steps related to documenting derelict vessels.

Funding for removal of derelict vessels comes from the Florida Derelict Vessel Removal Program and the Florida Inland Navigation District. In the latter part of 1998, Miami-Dade County was awarded $73,500 to remove more than 40 derelict vessels from County waters, including 15 from the Miami River. In a revised contractual process encouraged by the QAT, listed vessels are now grouped in geographic areas for greater cost effectiveness and efficiency of removal, in the hopes of speedier removal. The QAT will continue to assess options to eliminate the problem of derelict vessels.

**PROBLEM:** How to involve the marine community and marine facilities in creating and implementing Best Management Practices.

**SOLUTION:** Continue support for the Marine Facilities Annual Operating Permit Program and the Marine Facilities Advisory Committee from the QAT and marine community.

Implemented in 1990 by Ordinance 89-104, DERM's Marine Facilities Program regularly inspects more than 85 permitted facilities on the Miami River and its tidal tributaries. These facilities include shipping terminals, boatyards, boat repair facilities, recreational docking facilities, commercial salvage and fishing operations and boat manufacturers. The Marine Facilities Best Management Practices (BMPs) were developed by the program in concert with the Marine Facilities Advisory Committee and serve as guidelines for day to day operations to promote "good housekeeping" practices.

Examples of BMPs include the segregation and proper disposal of wastes such as oil, fuel, solvents and waste paint; the maintenance of sewage pumpout systems for vessels; and control techniques for pressure cleaning, bottom paint removal, sand blasting or spray painting. Compliance with BMPs reduces pollution and allows facilities to minimize wastes generated from various processes performed on site.

Miami-Dade County's annual celebration of Biscayne Bay, Baynanza, also encourages public stewardship for the Miami River. As part of Baynanza '99, volunteers assist in the clean up of three sites along the shores of the Miami River: Jose Marti Park, Sewell Park and Curtis Park. More than 100 volunteers participated in this year's event. Everything from automobile tires, lumber, plastics and shopping carts were removed from the shoreline's public parks under this volunteer program. Volunteers will continue to seek ways to expand Baynanza to other sites along the Miami River.

**PROBLEM:** Stormwater Runoff

According to the Department of Environmental Protection, contaminated stormwater runoff is the
leading source of water pollution in the State of Florida. Water quality in the Miami River is poor compared to other portions of Biscayne Bay and its tributaries, in part due to stormwater runoff. Pollutants from runoff limit the full recreational and economic use of the Miami River and also degrade the receiving waters of the Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve. Contaminated stormwater runoff is not only an aesthetic and economic problem, but also a problem affecting human safety, water quality and populations of a vast number of organisms.

**SOLUTION: Continue Stormwater Capital Improvement Projects in the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County; maintain public education efforts.**

Through the Stormwater Utility Capital Improvement Project Program, Miami-Dade DERM has taken on the task of retrofitting storm drainage systems to maximize flood protection and minimize the water quality and quantity impacts of stormwater runoff in unincorporated areas and on County roads. A series of Stormwater Utility Capital Improvement Projects are currently under design or construction which, along with numerous local drainage projects, will enhance the capacity of the existing drainage system in routing stormwater to appropriate channels, after achieving compliance with water quality regulations. Listed below is a brief description of Capital Improvement Projects expected to impact the surface waters of the Miami River and its tributaries.

**Control Structure at NW 12 Avenue and NW 14 Street Morris Park Outfall** – The objective of this project was to prevent further salt intrusion into the Biscayne Aquifer by upgrading the existing salinity control structure. In addition, the structure acts as a weir device, controlling the stormwater runoff discharge to the Seybold Canal. The project was constructed in 1995 at a cost of $46,000.

**Miami River Outfall Retrofit – Basin 21 NW 22 Avenue, from Flagler Street to the Miami River** – This project will retrofit the existing stormwater drainage system to reduce stormwater runoff contaminants. The existing system provides minimal treatment. The intent of this improvement is to treat the full first inch of runoff – generally thought to be the worst – prior to any discharge. The project is under design with an estimated cost of $650,000. A South Florida Water Management District (SFWM) grant to DERM has covered a portion of design costs. The County is currently negotiating with the City of Miami to obtain the necessary drainage easements for this project. This construction project ranks as the number 7 priority basin in the DERM Technical Report 88-2 (Calas, Valdes).

**Miami River Outfall Retrofit – Basin 23 NW 22 Avenue, from NW 36 Street to the Miami River** – The objective of this project is to reduce the stormwater runoff contaminants entering the Miami River by providing treatment for the full first inch of runoff prior to any discharge. The project design is complete and the project is under construction. The total estimated cost is $1,017,000. The SFWM assisted with 50% of the design cost, and has committed to 60% of the construction cost. This project was identified as the number one priority basin in the DERM Technical Report 88-2 (Calas, Valdes).

**Lawrence Waterway Pollution Control Structure** – The construction of a pollution control structure at the NW 7 Street drainage system’s discharge to the Lawrence Waterway is scheduled for Fiscal Year 1999. The intent of the improvement is to control or remove floatables and solids within the structure itself prior to final discharge to the canal. The Lawrence Waterway improvement is estimated to cost $61,000. This project is included in the priority list of the Quality Neighborhood Improvement Bond Program, and will be financed through the Stormwater Utility Revenue Bond Series 1999.

DERM is involved in many public education projects intended to increase awareness about stormwater issues. Because the basin that drains to the Miami River covers an area of 69 square miles, the public must be apprised that trash on the streets within the basin eventually ends up in the River. A stenciling program placing reminder messages at drains discharging to the River provides an effective tool to achieve this education at key sites within the basin.
PROBLEM: Harmful Human Impact on Manatees

The Miami River is an important habitat for the Florida manatee in Miami-Dade County, providing freshwater and a refuge during cold weather. The animals are observed in the River and its tributaries year-round. Many travel to Biscayne Bay seagrass areas outside the Miami River to feed. Others prefer freshwater areas upstream of the floodgates, during warm weather. Due to the mild winters in 1998 and 1999, manatees were regularly observed in the freshwater portion of Tamiami Canal and the lakes south of Miami International Airport.

Manatees face many dangers in the Miami River and its tributaries, including crushing in floodgates, vessel collisions, and entrapment in drainage structures. In 1998 through June 1999, 15 manatee carcasses were recovered in Miami-Dade County, including three in the Miami River watershed upstream of the floodgates.

SOLUTION: Floodgate modification, Fender Systems, increased Enforcement and continued Public Education

A manatee protection device was installed in the floodgate system on the Miami River in 1997 and on Tamiami Canal in 1998. A piezo-electric sensor triggers a closing gate to reverse direction and reopen when a live animal is detected. These devices have thus far proven effective at eliminating manatee deaths in the floodgates.

Ship terminals and other facilities providing mooring for large vessels are required to install fender systems to prevent manatees from becoming crushed between a vessel hull and a bulkhead. Almost all facilities in the Miami River have come into compliance with this condition in the MOPs (marine facility operating permits) issued by DERM.

Several law enforcement agencies monitor vessel speed restrictions in the Miami River and Blue Lagoon freshwater lake system around Tamiami Canal, which helps to protect manatees from vessel collisions. The City of Miami Police and Marine Patrol, U.S. Coast Guard, and Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission have been especially active in this capacity. Additionally, the QAT regularly bolsters manatee awareness in its Miami River Annual Report.
Marine Safety

**PROBLEM:** The Miami River as a port and waterway system continues to be plagued by improperly attended and moored vessels.

Many commercial freight vessels moored on the River have been found to be inadequately moored or have inadequate professional mariner personnel on board to properly attend to the vessel. In one notorious case involving *MV Rex Bear*, the vessel, while moored near the mouth of the Miami River, suffered the loss of its stern mooring line when a passing dead ship tow caused the vessel to surge against its moorings. Because of the severely wasted condition of this derelict vessel, its stern mooring bit was ripped from the deck plating resulting in the vessel’s stern swinging dangerously out into the channel of the River.

**SOLUTION:** Take aggressive regulatory measures to resolve dangerous conditions if corrective measures are not immediately and voluntarily taken by vessel owners or operators.

The Coast Guard Captain of the Port took immediate steps to order *Rex Bear* relocated to a safer location. Even after the vessel was moved to a secure spot, the River became plagued by a series of pollution incidents involving *Rex Bear*. Had the vessel been properly attended by an onboard qualified person, it is believed these incidents would not have occurred.

After several months of interactions with the local agent for the vessel’s overseas owners, *Rex Bear* was donated to a local sport fisher association which planned to sink the vessel under Miami-Dade County’s Artificial Reef Program. The vessel was towed to the County’s facility on the River and prepared for sinking by Mr. Cliff Kunde of the Atlantic Gamefish Foundation under the watchful eyes of field representatives of the County’s Department of Environmental Resources Management and the Coast Guard Captain of the Port.

To prepare vessels for the artificial reef program, workers must meticu-
lously remove all oil pollutants, hazardous materials, debris, and structural materials that could escape the vessel in its sunken state and cause harm to the marine environment. All hatches and doors are removed or welded open to allow easy entry and exit by fish or SCUBA divers.

The Miami River QAT held its regular meeting on June 16, 1998, while embarked and underway on the Coast Guard Auxiliary Vessel *Kingfisher*. A prominent item on that meeting’s agenda was to observe the sinking of *Rex Bear*. At 10:00 a.m. experts from the Miami-Dade Police Department Bomb Squad detonated a series of carefully placed charges that opened *Rex Bear’s* hull to the sea. Within minutes the vessel went safely to the bottom and to a new productive life as an artificial reef.

**PROBLEM:** The Miami River, like the rest of South Florida, is in perennial danger of being adversely and severely affected by hurricanes.

South Florida sits directly in the general path of hurricanes. A storm of serious strength striking the Miami River threatens vessels, businesses and inhabitants located along the River with sustained high winds, extremely heavy rainfall, tornadoes spawned in the outer weather bands of the storm, storm tidal surge, and high water resulting from storm water runoff from the Everglades. Studies conducted by scientists of the National Hurricane Center concluded that a storm of the duration and intensity of Andrew, striking at the worst case position relative to the Miami River, would result in significant damage to property and threat to human life. The combination of storm produced hazards could cause vessels to break their moorings and be wind-driven into other vessels and bridge structures. Many vessels could sink in the River. If this were to occur, the River would close to commerce until the sunken vessels could be located and removed. Bridges would not be usable by motorists, pedestrians or vessels until structural and mechanical engineering surveys were completed and damage repaired, resulting in a significant blow to local and state economies.

**SOLUTION:** To the greatest extent possible, clear the River of commercial vessels and missile hazards well in advance of the storm’s arrival.

When a storm begins to threaten the ports and waterways of South Florida, Coast Guard port preparedness field teams fan out through the area to warn commercial vessel and waterfront cargo facility operators of the storm’s potential for striking. To minimize the impact to the port, commercial vessel masters are warned they must depart U.S. waters of South Florida well in advance of sustained storm force winds. Waterfront cargo facility operators must secure all property to minimize the missile threat created by wind-blown objects.

Owners, operators, masters or shipping agents of vessels not capable of getting underway because of non-operational or material condition must request permission from the Coast Guard Captain of the Port to remain in port. Field personnel will visit the vessel to verify the vessel’s condition. Commercial vessels allowed to remain in port through a storm must meet a strict set of requirements including deployment and continuous tending of additional mooring lines to properly sized and constructed land side fixtures; and fully manned bridge navigation and engineering plant watches to control the vessel if moorings are broken. These arrangements will be checked by Coast Guard patrol personnel to ensure the master has taken adequate measures.

Coast Guard port preparedness patrols will commence their visits to facilities and vessels when a storm having sustained winds of tropical storm force or
and others in close proximity. Marine navigational and communications systems may likewise be affected by the Y2K Dilemma.

**SOLUTION:** Vessel and waterfront facility owners and operators should determine the degree to which their systems may be affected by the Y2K dilemma.

Presently, the Coast Guard has focused on three critical Y2K periods: September 9, 1999; December 30, 1999 to January 2, 2000; and, February 29, 2000. During these periods, the maritime community should expect to be under tighter controls by the Coast Guard Captain of the Port.

Ideally, manufacturers should be asked to provide certification to the user that their equipment is Y2K compliant. Alternatively, date-sensitive systems should be tested by running the clock forward to December 31, 1999 to see if failures in a controlled test will occur. The Coast Guard has developed a risk assessment worksheet to determine the degree of risk posed by vessels and cargo handling operations. The worksheet differentiates by type of vessel, cargo carried, number of passengers on board, waterway, weather condition, cargo handled, and degree of Y2K compliance of critical control systems. If necessary, the Coast Guard Captain of the Port will prohibit the passage of vessels that score very high on the risk point scale. For vessels that score lower in risk that want to make passage along congested waterways, the Captain of the Port may insist on additional ship personnel stationed at manual override stations for steering, engine control and anchoring systems; escort by tugs; and passage in good weather and daylight conditions only. Members of the maritime community will be issued the risk assessment worksheet by way of a Captain of the Port Marine Safety Information Bulletin as soon as the worksheet is made available by Coast Guard Headquarters.

**PROBLEM:** Substandard cargo vessels continue to dominate vessel examination activities.

The Caribbean Cargo Ship Safety Code (CSCSC) has had a great impact on the Miami River community in that the Coast Guard is seeing considerably fewer substandard vessels of less than 500 gross tons (GT). While in past years as many as 50 vessels at any given time were on hold due to safety deficiencies on the Miami River, today we see about half that number placed on hold. However, cargo demands continue to increase unabated, and the trend indicates a shift away from non-containerized cargo. Smaller vessels (such as those traditionally seen on the Miami River) may be decreasing in numbers, giving way to an increase in port calls by vessels more capable of carrying containerized cargo and achieving economies of scale (between 500 and 3,000 GT). These vessels fall under the safety requirements set forth in the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), resulting in a greater number of SOLAS detentions — which are increasingly the lion’s share of River deficiencies — on vessels that frequent the Miami River.

However, a large fleet of non-SOLAS size vessels (those less than 500 GT) remains on the River. The historic problems experienced with these vessels could resurface or be further compounded if trade opportunities between the United States and Cuba were to become a reality. The need to serve an expanded market could give rise to more Flags of Convenience (FOCs) established in the Caribbean to cash in on the greater demand for tonnage. Furthermore, the eventual world-wide shortage of high quality, small tonnage (greater than 500 GT, less than 3,000 GT) vessels could result in a return to more low quality vessels calling upon the Miami River.

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**Designated Waterfront Facility Inspections & Discrepancies**

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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*Since the QAT formation, the average number of discrepancies found during inspections and spot checks has decreased by 55%.*

* Applies to 31 facilities on the Miami River that handle hazardous goods/dangerous cargo.
SOLUTION: Increased targeting of problem vessels and industry proficiency in SOLAS regulations and a continuing proficiency in the CCSSC.

The Coast Guard has a fully implemented targeting system aimed at identifying high risk vessels (those that pose a threat to the environment, port safety, life and/or property). Those vessels are placed under close Coast Guard scrutiny. Through the aggressive pursuit of penalties, denials of entry for substandard vessels, and the detention of those substandard vessels discovered in port, an active deterrent is created. Additionally, the QAT’s industry outreach better informs and educates the maritime community on the administration and means of compliance with existing and new regulations.

PROBLEM: Poor maintenance of bridge lighting and poor communications among vessel operators, bridge tenders and bridge owners pose a significant threat on the Miami River waterway system.

The 1998 Quality Action Team heard numerous complaints about the condition and operation of bridges, including concern over navigational light outages, bridge curfews, and communication problems between bridge tenders and vessel operators.

SOLUTION: Open dialogue between tugboat captains and bridge owners to better focus on the safe movement of vessels through the many bridges on the River; take necessary steps to resolve dangerous conditions resulting from inadequate navigation lights and communication problems; make sure that bridge tenders recognize the five-whistle emergency blast as having priority over bridge curfews.

Numerous QAT meetings were devoted to dealing with bridge problems. The Coast Guard Captain of the Port, Coast Guard Bridge Administration and County and State bridge owners worked together to thoroughly investigate each complaint and enact solutions, agreeing to hold periodic meetings to address present and future waterway issues.

The QAT notes that issues concerning navigational lights are a constant problem. When lights are reported as inoperable, repairs are expeditious. However, because lights are not monitored at every shift of bridge tenders, the bridge owner and the Coast Guard Bridge Division must rely on the waterway user to report light outages. As a result, tugboat captains have agreed to keep journals and report incidents for better monitoring of the situation.

Tugboat captains also expressed concerns about the difficulty of bringing a large tow to a stop and holding in place when they have missed the last passage of a bridge by a minute or two before the curfew goes into effect. Because the Miami River bridge curfews were put in place to relieve motorizing congestion, waterway users must plan to negotiate bridges during non-curfew hours. However, federal regulations do allow emergency openings for vessels in distress. If tugboat captains cannot safely stop their tow, thereby placing themselves and the bridge in a distress condition, they can signal the bridge by sounding five short blasts in rapid succession. Under federal regulations, bridge tenders must respond with an immediate opening upon a sounding of the five blasts.

The biggest problem on the Miami River...
System has been poor communications between bridge tenders and vessel operators. This issue focuses on the lack of response by bridge tenders to radio communications from tug, for several possible reasons. Inadequate response may be due to broken radios, or the fact that radio use is not a required element of bridge tender response procedure, or the bridge tender’s and vessel operator’s inability to communicate in a common language. Vessel captains also complain of bridge tender failure to warn ships about mechanical delays up or down River which may force them to seek a temporary place to lay-up while a bridge is being repaired.

When these problems were raised at the QAT, the Captain of the Port and the Coast Guard Bridge Administration met with bridge owners (representatives of the County and the State) to discuss this particular issue at length. Resolutions to promote clearer communications between bridge tenders and vessel operators are being worked out, particularly through improved and increased use of radio equipment. The Coast Guard and bridge owners are also formulating procedures through which bridge tenders will communicate with each other in order to advise vessel operators of possible bridge delays throughout the River.

**PROBLEM:** Substandard mooring fixtures and crumbling sea walls on facilities along the Miami River pose a safety threat to facilities and vessels. In some places, there are no seawalls.

Waterfront facilities on the Miami River have experienced incidents in which undersized or wasted vessel mooring fixtures have failed, resulting in damage to the facility, the moored vessel and to other vessels in the vicinity. These incidents have raised concern over the adequacy of mooring systems and the structural integrity of waterfront facilities on the Miami River.

**SOLUTION:** Conduct Visual Facility Surveys of all commercial cargo ship facilities on the Miami River focusing on the adequacy of vessel mooring fixtures.

In an effort to increase the overall safety of the Miami River, the Coast Guard Captain of the Port is conducting visual facility surveys of all terminal facilities on the Miami River. The intent is to ensure that all facilities are adequate for the activity and size of vessels that moor on the waterfront. Coast Guard is looking principally at the adequacy of seawalls, bulwarks and landside ship mooring fixtures.

If, during the course of the visual facility surveys, apparent deterioration of the general condition of both vessel mooring system fixtures and waterfront land retaining structures are observed, a Captain of the Port requirement will be issued under the Ports and Waterways Safety Act (33 C.F.R. Part 160). The owners/operators will be required to furnish an engineering analysis or conduct a dynamic load test to show that suspect fixtures are adequate in size and holding capability.

In addition, Coast Guard field personnel also engage in joint agency visits with Department of Environmental Resources Management, City of Miami Police Department, City of Miami Neighborhood Enhancement Teams, City of Miami Fire Department, Miami-Dade County Team Metro, Miami-Dade County Police Department and Miami-Dade County Fire Department. These agency teams inspect waterfront facilities for compliance with all federal, county and city safety requirements, building codes, land uses and operating permit requirements.

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Recreational Boaters!

Check out the Marine Council’s website to find boater destinations on the Miami River:

[www.marinecouncil.com](http://www.marinecouncil.com)

Also, the QAT suggests that it easier to navigate when you’re on the Miami River, captains should monitor **Channel 09** (the same channel used to call bridges) to be informed about the locations of oncoming, potentially large, commercial traffic.
Commercial Viability

Recent enhancements to Miami River facilities and services, along with required Coast Guard safety and environmental improvements, have allowed the Miami River’s cargo industry to handle a record volume of commerce with a new level of efficiency. Additionally, the successful 1998 implementation of the Caribbean Cargo Ship Safety Code has meant that a higher caliber of steel-hull vessels has replaced the small wooden vessels that traditionally called upon the River.

Not only are the River’s major carriers expanding their capabilities, but smaller services continue to manage steady trade relationships despite the threatened competition offered by a new international and state-of-the-art port in Freeport. Ship’s agents, marine contractors and environmental firms with Miami River operations are playing integral roles in maintaining commerce, handling approximately $4 billion a year in cargo. The private terminals of the River have secured a solid leadership position in serving shallow-draft Caribbean markets, earning their reputation as Florida’s fifth largest port.

Cargo Carrier & Shipping Industry Update

An April 1999 report of the Army Corps of Engineers’ Ports and Waterways Division, Navigation Data Center, notes that 66 piers, wharves and docks are active on the Miami River, many of them in service of the River’s cargo terminals. Together, these terminals have a container storage capacity of nearly 7,000 TEUs, with room for development of several times that number.

The Corps also notes the Miami River’s significance as an “important maritime transportation corridor.” U.S. Coast Guard reports specify that over 1,300 cargo vessels called on the Miami River in 1998, representing more than 80 ports of call throughout the Caribbean and Central and South America.

A prosperous marine industry supports Miami River trade, providing hundreds of direct jobs ranging from terminal services, boat and equipment repair, packing, loading and trucking, to thousands of indirect jobs dependent on the marine industry. In 1988, a dozen River tugboats served cargo vessels, representing four different towing companies, a record high.

Tugboat activity is a good indicator of cargo vitality on the River. Tug captains act as River pilots to oceangoing vessels, escorting them along the five-and-a-half-mile stretch of the River’s navigable waterway. On this journey, tugs with ships under tow negotiate 11 bascule bridges and four fixed bridges placed between the River’s marine industrial area toward the airport (west), and the mouth of the River toward downtown (east).

PROBLEM: Tug captains and terminal operators identify shoaling and sitting in the channel due to accumulated sediments as the major problem restricting trade on the Miami River.
Sediment buildup in the River’s channel allows the movement of loaded cargo vessels only at high tide, and then many vessels cannot load to full capacity. Additionally, River sediment is contaminated, creating exorbitant disposal costs for the local sponsor and making the River dredging project unaffordable. Finally, contaminated sediments moving into Biscayne Bay threaten the marine life and fragile ecosystem that provides recreational and economic opportunities for more than four million South Florida residents.

Although the need to dredge the River is widely recognized, the cost and logistics of removing contaminated sediments have confounded all previous efforts to find a solution.

**SOLUTION:** Terminal and vessel operators have joined forces with the Quality Action Team and the Miami River Commission by serving on the newly created MRC Dredging Committee. The result is a broad-based coalition of community leaders, business interests, agencies and federal, state and local officials who have united to work for the River’s cleanup.

The MRC Dredging Committee has devised a workable plan to dredge the River in phases, a prospect which appeals to both industry and agencies. Advantages of phased dredging are lower immediate costs and more manageable logistics. The MRC administration has succeeded in eliminating the most significant historic barrier to dredging the River by winning a ruling from the Army Corps of Engineers to shift the burden of cost sharing to the federal government, thereby significantly reducing the disposal costs to the local sponsor. Updates on dredging can be obtained from the Miami River Commission: (305) 361-4850.

**PROBLEM:** Solid waste, submerged pilings, bulky items and derelict vessels also impede mooring and navigation for recreational vessels in the River’s waterway.

**SOLUTION:** Dredging the River’s channel will eliminate 90% of the River’s submerged hazards. Until then, individual mariners need to remain vigilant when close to the shoreline. In the meantime, the Army Corps and the Coast Guard are empowered to take action on immediate threats blocking the channel, and the Florida Marine Patrol continues its work to remove derelict vessels.

Even after the Miami River is eventually dredged, the QAT will continue to play an important role in keeping the River clean by reporting problem areas and supervising the work of the Miami River Hotline. The QAT will encourage greater promotion and utilization of the hotline number along the riverside as a source to report dumping and bulky trash problems.

**PROBLEM:** Concern over the “gentrification” of the working River and the subsequent loss of marine facilities has escalated as downtown development poses greater non-water dependent land use along the River.

**SOLUTION:** Continue to emphasize the importance of marine industry in the QAT Annual Report, address concerns to the MRC’s Economic Development Committee, work toward developing a defined area of protective zoning for the cargo industry, and explore options for preserving the total number of existing marinas and terminals.
The working River has experienced greater appreciation in recent years from resident observers, downtown workers and people enjoying riverside dining and entertainment. Despite this appreciation, however, the push toward redevelopment of the downtown area has meant that long-standing terminal locations are in jeopardy of being sacrificed—sometimes for higher community use, and sometimes for the convenience of development. By working to support the marine industry on the River and demonstrating publicly its economic value, the QAT will create a favorable climate for the marine industry’s long-term survival.

**Boatyard & Commercial Marina Viability**

There are currently seven marine repair plants on Miami River waterfronts that handle oceangoing vessels, tugs, towboats and small craft of various types. October 1998 saw the addition of a significant new boatyard and commercial facility at Revenge Marine, Inc., occupying the previously abandoned Allied Marine Shipyard on the South Fork of the Miami River. (See Industry Spotlight.)

At the west end of the River’s North Fork, one of the oldest commercial facilities, Jonesport Miami, also offers a full service shipyard on more than 1,200 feet of bulkhead waterfront. A large machine shop meets the needs of coastal freighters, tugs, barges, patrol craft and Coast Guard cutters. Two floating dry docks handle haul-out capacities of 1,600 and 859 long tons each. In recent years, a total of 76 of the world’s most elegant megayachts worth millions of dollars have been repaired on the Jones floating dry docks.

*The Tommy, one of 76 megayachts serviced by Jonesport Miami.*
Located at 12th Avenue, the Merrill Stevens boatyard reports revenue of $10.7 million in 1998, up $2.5 million from the previous year. Industry executives describe 1998 as one of the best years in the history of the boatyard since its establishment in 1923.

Merrill Stevens’ market splits between 20% commercial workboat activity, with the remaining 80% devoted to privately owned luxury vessels ranging between 30 and 200 feet.

**Bridges: The Critical Link**

**PROBLEM:** Both commercial vessel operators and recreational boaters report bridge operations as a problem on the Miami River. Additionally, downtown traffic is sometimes backed up by bridge openings which may be unnecessary.

Public support for the working River is eroded when motorists are frustrated by traffic backlogs due to unnecessary bridge openings. Circumstances dictating the opening of bridges are clearly delineated by Coast Guard policy with an emphasis on safety; nevertheless, occasionally tug captains with large vessels under tow complain about dangerous delays when they request bridge openings.

**SOLUTION #1:** To address complaints about delays and bridge operations, the QAT hosted a series of discussions to define and resolve bridge problems on the River.

After a comprehensive review, the Coast Guard Marine Safety Office (MSO) leadership called together appropriate parties to resolve bridge issues. The MSO also distributed a Bridge Complaint Form through the QAT so that River users will document problems for more effective resolution in the future. (See Marine Safety section of this report.)

**SOLUTION #2:** The QAT and marine industry must do all that they can to ensure that each bridge opening is indeed necessary; continuing education aimed toward recreational boaters should provide ongoing reminders that all antennas, Bimini tops and outriggers which can be lowered to permit passage under a bridge should be.

Bridge improvements and replacements will require somewhat fewer bridge openings in the near future, since proposed bridge designs for both S.W. 2nd Avenue and N.W. 12th Avenue are significantly higher than existing bridge clearances. Widened spans should also contribute to better traffic flow, although there is no question that bridges will still need to open for cargo vessels during non-curfew — non-drive time — hours. (Bridge curfew hours are 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.) Bridge replacement is an important part of traffic enhancement and downtown development for the Miami River.
Infrastructure Improvements & Downtown Development

The Coast Guard's 1998 facility inspections have also led to some infrastructure improvements for maritime facilities on the Miami River and are widely speculated to spur the renovations of many others. Additionally, the 1998 federal designation of an Empowerment Zone with its bordering Enterprise Zones for resident workers is contiguous to parts of the River and promises economic benefits for further improvements and commercial development in appropriate River environs.

The City of Miami has also undertaken important revitalization of the River at Lummus Park. Successful in winning state funding for the area known as Riverside (the north side of the River from 5th Street to the mouth), the City is currently engaged in developing a revitalization plan to establish an entertainment destination for pedestrians and local traffic. An experienced team of professionals familiar with the Miami River has been hired to spearhead this effort.

Riverday '99

The Lummus Park/Riverside area was also the site of the 1999 Riverday festival. Sponsored by a coalition of River interests (Antillean Marine, the Miami River Commission, the Miami River Marine Group, Dade Heritage Trust, the Downtown Development Authority, Swire Properties, and the City of Miami, among others), Riverday '99 was successful in drawing public attention to the River's heritage and economic potential. Boat rides, tours and day-long entertainment drew 2,000 people to the River's waterfront. A Marine Expo hosted by the agencies of

the QAT added to a better understanding of the River's intense activity. The Miami Riverday festival will enter its fourth consecutive year with the millennium on the first Saturday in April, 2000.

Film studios continue to appreciate the River's potential. In 1998, producers for a major motion picture called "Random Hearts" coordinated with the QAT for a quiet period on the River during several important film segments set along the Miami River.

In other downtown developments, a Chicago entrepreneur recently launched The Miami River Jungle Tour to bring further appreciation of the River to tourists visiting South Florida. A proliferation of waterside and seafood restaurants continues to thrive with River development. Finally, the Miami River Commission is leading committees on Economic Development and Commerce, Greenway Development, Stormwater Improvement and Quality of Life issues for the Miami River, all which positively impact the working River's commercial viability.

Riverday '99 activities.
Enforcement

The Miami River Enforcement Group (MREG) is comprised of law enforcement and regulatory agencies operating on, or along, or having jurisdiction over the Miami River and the adjacent land within the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County. Acting with DERM as the lead agency, the MREG performs multi-agency inspections of facilities along the Miami River. This approach is beneficial to both facility operators and regulatory agencies alike. Facility operators benefit from the unified, consistent enforcement approach by local, state and federal agencies with sometimes concurrent jurisdiction. The agencies benefit from an increase in knowledge across jurisdictional boundaries, increased interagency cooperation and greater efficiency.

The MREG offers a consistent approach to enforcement by allowing waterfront facilities not currently in compliance with regulations to come into compliance. The MREG multi-agency inspections have also helped to combat the single greatest problem of enforcement identified by agencies: lack of resources.

PROBLEM: The greatest problem affecting Miami River enforcement effort is identified as limitations in staff and funding.

SOLUTION: Emphasize and pursue a creative combination of continued efforts, new initiatives and alternative funding sources.

A variety of new programs and funding sources are described in this section. In addition to the Miami River Enforcement Group’s regulatory efforts aimed at marine operators, a number of agencies are devoted to stopping environmental infractions and criminal activities taking place in the larger context of the River (such as Customs, Coast Guard, DERM, multiple local police forces, the State Attorney’s Office, Marine Patrols, etc.). A desirable end product of reduced crime is enhanced quality of life for the River community through the improvement of neighborhoods.

PROBLEM: A lack of attention to the Miami River and its navigable tributaries in the West Little Havana area has lowered property values, increased smuggling, harmed the environment and discouraged the commercialization of waterside properties.

Long neglected code compliance and environmental, safety and law enforcement problems can be resolved with increased staff and funding. The City should designate this River neighborhood to serve as a “laboratory” for the nation to measure the success of community policing and government initiatives.

SOLUTION: In 1998, the City of Miami Police Department received a one million dollar grant from the Community Oriented Policing Services program under the U.S. Department of Justice. The funding provides technology and training for officers within three areas of Miami to undergo community partnership development and problem solving training. One of the areas chosen was the West Little Havana NET area along the Miami River.

The City of Miami Police Department recognized the West Little Havana area on the Miami River as a suitable “neighborhood” for implementation of the SARA problem-solving management model used in community policing. The application of the SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment) model encourages sergeants and their community officers
to use external and internal resources to be innovative and “think outside the box” in addressing problems within a specific beat. The intent in West Little Havana is to improve the quality of life and promote marine business interests along the contiguous waterfront properties. The expected result is a reduction in crime, increased property values, greater environmental protection and improved commercial viability. Halfway through completion, the program will solicit post data from the West Little Havana NET in the fall of 1999 to determine the success of the training.

**PROBLEM: Limitations of agency resources in staff and funding for other distressed neighborhoods along the Miami River.**

**SOLUTIONS: Identify a funding source to supplement Miami River enforcement needs.**

A second creative application for funding was undertaken in 1998 by the City of Miami to supplement limited resources through application to the Department of Justice. Again granted under the Community Policing Services Program, the City of Miami is slated to receive $26 million dollars to fund 168 new positions for police forces to fill in “distressed neighborhoods.” The Miami River is recognized under the terms of this grant as a “distressed neighborhood;” as a result, the City of Miami will dedicate funding for 18 new officer positions over a three-year period specifically targeting the Miami River. Officers will be phased in as they qualify for duty and funds become available.

**PROBLEM: While a lack of agency staffing to respond to emergencies (nights and weekends) is common to all agencies, the problem is compounded by the varying abilities of agencies and the limits or boundaries of their jurisdictions.**

**SOLUTION: Before disbanding, the Miami River Study Commission, the forerunner of the Miami River Commission, dedicated funding to the City of Miami Marine Patrol for overtime hours to be used during night time and/or weekend hours along the entire navigable length of the Miami River.**

A total of $25,475 will be used by the City of Miami Marine Patrol to provide enhanced River patrols, either by vessel and/or vehicle, by a team of six officers working in two-person crews. A minimum of 810 overtime hours, approximately 135 hours each for the six-person team will fulfill the terms of the contract administered by the South Florida Water Management District. Hours of patrol vary between 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. A minimum of 80 patrols covering surveillance and enforcement are specifically required in the contract.

Miami River Special Enforcement Patrol Details began in April of 1999, with data currently reported through the middle of June. Among 143 vessels identified, other statistics so far reported include the following (list is not inclusive of all activities):

- 3 Arrests (misdemeanors)
- 33 Boating Infractions
- 32 Safety Inspections
- 4 Boats Towed
- 3 Boats Assisted
- 1 Boat Impounded
- 11 Citizens Aided
- 83 Public & Business Contacts Made

The City of Miami Marine Patrol will keep an ongoing log of daily activities until the terms of the contract are met.
PROBLEM: Signage on the Miami River posting enforcement requirements are faded, missing and/or out-of-date.

Idle speed signs are missing; bridge signs need replacement; key areas are devoid of signs; manatee signs are sometimes not visible or are fewer in number than deemed appropriate; many signs are unauthorized.

SOLUTION: Replacement and restoration of authorized signs.

The QAT received the cooperation of the Miami-Dade Police Department to conduct a signage inventory patrol of the Miami River along with the USCG Marine Safety Office. The MDPD is also identifying what agency is responsible for which signs. In June of 1999, the completed survey report was forwarded to the Florida Inland Navigation District to request funding the renewal of signs along the Miami River. All marine facilities on the River post Manatee Awareness signs. The Miami River Marine Group provides reminder notification to marine facilities to keep signs clear and to remove superfluous signs from their waterfronts.

PROBLEM: Confusion among citizens and River businesses as to which agency to contact to report problems and suspicious activities.

SOLUTION: Better promotion of the Miami River Hotline.

Since April of 1998, Switchboard of Miami has been operating the Miami River Hotline. However, a six-month delay in funding and contract implementation meant that the hotline lacked a strong marketing component after its initial introduction. When the contract was finalized near the end of 1998, a renewed marketing campaign generated an increase in phone call activity. Continued marketing efforts are currently underway. (See Miami River Hotline on page 2 of this report.)
Miami River Commission

The Miami River Commission was created by the Florida Legislature in 1998 to encourage and oversee the continuous improvement of the Miami River. The MRC is assigned with the coordination of public policy related to the Miami River as well as the development of plans, priorities, programs and budgets to substantially improve the River area.

The Miami River is one of the greatest natural features of the region as well as one of the most underutilized opportunities in Miami. The MRC intends to substantially improve the “Working River” through environmental enhancement, facilitating water related commerce, inspiring downtown waterfront development and beautifying the River shorelines. Downtown development projects will honor the people of Miami by keeping the River available to the public through the use of riverwalks, greenways and parks. The Miami River Commission’s hope is to rejuvenate the River to a place where South Florida’s residents and visitors can work, play and enjoy the beauty and commerce of the Working River.

The Miami River Commission structure is three-tiered: a Policy Committee consists of elected officials, stakeholders and citizens; a Managing Director has the responsibility to implement plans and programs; and various working groups accomplish the above goals. The following working groups and committees have been created as of June 1999:

- Dredging Working Group
- Greenways Subcommittee
- Quality of Life Working Group
- Stormwater Subcommittee
- Public Safety Working Group
- Economic Development/Commerce Working Group
- Ethics Committee

Working groups consist of all governmental agencies that have jurisdiction in the River area, as well as volunteers and representatives of business and civic associations.

The MRC Managing Director is David Miller. The Chair of the Policy Committee is Robert L. Parks.

The following individuals are currently appointed to the MRC Policy Committee in accordance with the descriptions specified by the 1998 Florida Legislature.

**Governor**
- Hon. Jeb Bush
- Designee: James Murley, FAU/RIU Joint Center for Environmental & Urban Problems
- Designee: Ralph Carri, Florida Coastal Management Program

**Chair of Miami-Dade Delegation**
- Rep. Willie Logan
- Florida House

**Chair of Governing Board South Florida Water Management District**
- Michael Collins
- Designee: Gerardo Fernandez Rundle
- Designee: Gary Winston, Assistant State Attorney

**Mayor of Miami**
- Hon. Joe Carollo
- Designee: Kelly Mallette, Policy Advisor

**Mayor of Miami-Dade County**
- Hon. Alex Penelas
- Designee: Sandy O’Neil, Special Advisor

**City of Miami Commissioner**
- Hon. Joe Sanchez
- Designee: Eileen Taubbe

**Miami-Dade County Commissioner**
- Hon. Bruno Barreiro
- Designee: Alfredo J. Gonzalez

**Neighborhood Representative**
- Dr. Ernest Martin
- Designee: Virginia Newell
- Sallye Jude
- Designee: Jane Caporelli
- Janet McAliley
- Designee: Theo Long

**Representative of Environmental or Civic Organization**
- Robert L. Parks
- Designee: None
- Cleve Jones, Jr.
- Designee: Wiliam Parkes, Jr.
- Sara Babun
- Designee: Tom Parker

**Member-at-Large**
- (City of Miami Commission)
- (Miami-Dade Commission)

**Ex-Officio Members (non-voting)**
- U.S. Senator Connie Mack
- U.S. Senator Bob Graham
- U.S. Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
- USCG, Captain of the Port, Lawrence J. Bowling
Special thanks to the following organizations whose contributions made the publication of this annual report possible:

- Ameritrade
- Anchor Miami Propeller
- Antillean Marine
- Atlas Inc.
- Bernuth Agencies
- Branching Out, Inc.
- Bunnell Foundation, Inc.
- City of Miami Marine Patrol
- Cliff Berry Inc.
- Coastal Tug and Barge
- Dockside Marine Electronics
- Florida Marine Towing
- Hydraulic Sales and Service
- Independent Maritime Audit Services
- International Maritime Ships Agents, Corp.
- Jones Boat Yard
- Kelly Tractor Company
- The Marine Council
- Merrill Stevens Dry Dock Co.
- Miami-Dade Department of Environmental Resources Management
- Miami River Information Service
- Miami River Marine Group
- Miami Ship Services
- Precision Environmental Labs
- Rigel Ships Agency
- Schurger Diving and Salvage
- Sea Terminals North River
- South Florida Water Management District
- United States Coast Guard
- United States Customs Service