



PORT SECURITY AND EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

KEY POINTS:

- The Port Security and Emergency Operations Division is a key component of the Strategic Goal titled Stewardship and operates under the motto: **“Safely Protect and Secure – People and Commerce”**
- The Port of Houston Authority is first Port Authority in the world to be certified to the ISO 28000 standard for Supply Chain Security.
- In 2018, Port Houston received the US Coast Guard Admiral Bennis Award for Excellence in Maritime Security.
- We maintain a robust response capability with 38 Police Officers and 50 Firefighters.
- Partnerships are critical to the security of the Port of Houston Authority and surrounding communities.

BACKGROUND:

Among the top priorities of Port Houston are the security of its facilities, and the safety of the people who work at the port and live in the surrounding communities. Whether the threat is from nature or manmade, our emergency management, police, security, and fire departments stand ready to respond. Port Houston works closely with all its partners on the federal, state and local levels, and its private sector partners that operate more than 150 facilities along the Houston Ship Channel.

The U.S. Coast Guard is the lead agency in protecting the waterways and regulating the security of vessels and maritime facilities. U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the lead agency in cargo security and screening cargo for potential hazards. Port Houston’s main security responsibilities are to maintain a secure perimeter at its terminals, limit access to restricted areas of Port Houston’s property, and to meet all regulatory requirements.

ISO 28000:2007 INTERNATIONAL SECURITY STANDARD:

On March 27, 2008, PHA was certified to ISO 28000:2007, Security Management System (SMS), making it the first Port Authority in the world to receive this international security designation. The certification initially covered the Barbours Cut and Bayport terminals. In subsequent years, the Manchester Terminal, Woodhouse Terminal, and the Turning Basin Terminal were added to the certification.

This international standard sets out stringent requirements for a security management system. Measures developed by the Port Houston to meet these standards include improvements in security processes/procedures/practices, more detailed documentation, broader training of the Port Authority police force and security partners, and more efficient processing of vehicles through its gates.

PORT HOUSTON STRUCTURE AND ASSETS:

- **PORT POLICE:**

The Port of Houston Authority has 38 police officers to patrol our eight facilities as well as provide mutual aid for surrounding communities. All Port Police Officers are certified Peace Officers in the State of Texas, requiring ongoing training and certifications. The 24x7 Dispatch Center, with nine Dispatchers, dispatches for all aspects of emergency response.

- **FIRE DEPARTMENT:**

Our 50 firefighters are also certified by the State of Texas. The Fire Department has the only certification program in Texas for Marine Firefighters, making it a premier waterborne firefighting service. Personnel must also be EMT certified and have completed the Firefighter Structural certification before being placed in a fire station for duty. Three state-of-the-art firefighting vessels provide firefighting capability throughout the port complex.

- **SECURITY DEPARTMENT:**

Three Facility Security Officers maintain five Facility Security Plans as required by the Maritime Transportation Act (MTSA), and assist in guiding the security policies of the Port. The Credentialing Office manages the MTSA mandated access requirements for our secure and restricted areas. A security contract provides over 110 security guards to man our more than 20 access points.

- **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT:**

Recognizing the critical importance of an overarching emergency management approach to all hazards, Port Houston has a fulltime Emergency Manager. The Emergency Manager is responsible for the continual updating of the Port Houston Emergency Response Plan, coordination of drills and exercises across all Divisions, preparations for hurricane season, reviews of major emergency responses, implementation of any "lessons learned", and acts as the liaison with other local/state emergency management agencies.

PORT SECURITY GRANTS:

Many of the response assets and capabilities developed by Port Houston have been fully or partially funded by federal Port Security Grants (PSG). To date, Port Houston has utilized over \$62M in PSG funding for items such as: maintenance of existing security infrastructure, radiation detectors, training courses, access control systems, camera systems, the purchase of three fireboats, upgrading of the emergency operations center, a cybersecurity assessment, and a mobile command center.

WORKING WITH PRIVATE INDUSTRY/PARTNERSHIPS:

Port Houston works very closely with private industry and federal agencies along the Houston Ship Channel seeking areas for cooperation and mutual interests.

- **The Area Maritime Security Committee (AMSC)** - This Committee was established under the direction of the U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port (COTP) in 2002. It is an inclusive group of impacted maritime constituents throughout the COTP region, providing input on a variety of security issues. Port Houston is a member of the AMSC's Executive Committee and participates actively in a number of its subcommittees.
- **Houston Ship Channel Security District (HSCSD)** – The HSCSD was signed into law in 2007 by Governor Rick Perry. It is, in essence, a public/private partnership of the major facilities that make up the port terminals and industry in the area of the Houston Ship Channel. It takes advantage of the long tradition of cooperation among companies and governmental entities working in the ship channel area, particularly in matters of preventative and responsive security and safety. Assessments of the facilities, included under the law, provide the funding of overarching security initiatives on behalf of all stakeholders. It is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors, with eight appointed by industry and three appointed by local governmental entities, including one from Port Houston.
- **Channel Industries Mutual Aid (CIMA)** - CIMA is the oldest and largest mutual aid organization in the nation. CIMA is a non-profit organization combining the fire-fighting, rescue, hazardous material handling and emergency medical capabilities of the refining and petrochemical industry along the Houston Ship Channel. Port Houston's three fireboats are included in this network. Since 1955, this organization has been providing cooperative assistance and expertise for all kinds of emergencies -- both natural and manmade. CIMA provides world-class, rapid-response, assistance whenever emergencies occur.
- **The East Harris County Manufacturers Association (EHCMA)** – EHCMA is a voluntary alliance of about 125 chemical manufacturers, refiners and supporting distribution and terminal facility managers in the Bay Area (Baytown, Deer Park, Houston, La Porte, North Channel and Pasadena). Founded in 1987, EHCMA is the largest network of its type in the world. EHCMA has a Security Subcommittee that addresses the many issues of petrochemical companies in securing their facilities and works closely with CIMA, the AMSC and the HSCSD to prepare for natural and manmade disasters.
- **U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)** – The USCG is the lead agency for maritime security throughout the nation, including waterways security and facility security. A close working relationship is maintained with the USCG on a daily basis through inspections, audits and response operations.
- **Customs and Border Protection (CBP)** – Also vital to the operations and security of the port is CBP. Close to 200 CBP officers work the Houston Ship Channel, providing cargo screening operations, immigration clearances and surge operations for illicit trans-shipments of goods. Port Police participate in many of the surge operations. A strong partnership exists, as daily cargo movements require constant interaction with CBP personnel at Radiation Monitoring Portals (RMPs) and other inspections stations.

- **Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) and Houston Police Department (HPD)** – Local law enforcement is the cornerstone to security operations. Funding from some of the HSCSD initiatives has allowed the establishment of Marine Patrol Units for the HCSO and HPD. HCSO also monitors many of the security cameras for the security of the upper Houston Ship Channel, and dispatch law enforcement officers to security incidents, from a location inside the USCG Command Center.
- **Houston Area Maritime Operations Center (HAMOC)** – The newest initiative, known locally as HAMOC, is a joint team of all agencies involved with securing the Houston Ship Channel. Port Houston is represented on the Executive Steering Committee, and the Port Police participate in the operations. HAMOC provides cross-agency visibility on operations ongoing by each agency, and collaborates to ensure efficiency in responses.
- **Lone Star Harbor Safety Committee (LSHSC)** – Established in 2011, to succeed the Houston Galveston Navigational Safety Advisory Committee, the LSHSC continues to bring maritime stakeholders together to address waterway safety. Port Houston is represented by a seat on the Board, and also currently serves on the Dredging Sub-Committee, advocating for channel deepening and expansion.