

Panel Biographies
Harbor Safety Committee Challenges



James Prazak: Chair, Harbor Safety Committee National Steering Team; Current Member and Past Chair of the Lone Star Harbor Safety Committee; Performance Director at Tricon Energy, Ltd.

James has 36 years' experience working in the chemical industry, with the first 20 years at Dow Chemical and the balance at Tricon Energy. At Dow, James began in Marine and Terminals division, spent a few years in the Rail division, and then went back to global support in Marine and Terminals with responsibilities including vetting, maritime regulatory affairs, emergency response and technical support. In 2010, James joined Tricon, first as Global Operations Manager and now as Performance Director, where he is responsible for all technical matters, transportation regulatory affairs, and compliance. James served as the Chair of the Chemical Transportation Advisory Committee for many years, and as the past Vice Chair of the National Chemical Transportation Safety Advisory Committee (which replaced the former committee). James was elected to the Executive Committee for the Lone Star Harbor Safety Committee when it was formed, and served as the Chair from 2016-2018. James currently serves on the Lone Star Harbor Safety Committee, representing the Chemical Industry. James became involved in the National Steering Committee at the 2016 conference in Portland, served as Chair of the conference in Houston in 2019, and assisted on the planning committee for the 2019, 2022, and 2024 conferences.



Carl Bertapelle: Marine Operations Services Manager at Merchants Exchange, Secretary/Treasurer of the Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee

Carl Bertapelle serves as Secretary/Treasurer of the Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee and is the Marine Operations Services Manager at Merchants Exchange. He joined the organization in 2021 following several terms as a Board Member and Officer of the Merchants Exchange Board of Directors.

He brings extensive expertise in vessel and cargo operations, as well as safety and regulatory compliance. In his current role, he coordinates with regional and national partners on vessel intelligence, communications, maritime domain awareness, and emergency response. He is a core contributor to key regional safety initiatives through active involvement with the Lower Columbia River Harbor Safety Committee, the Maritime Fire and Safety Association, the Columbia River Safety Task Force, and the Columbia River Port Coordination Team.

Carl began his maritime career during the Exxon Valdez oil spill, sailing aboard a U.S. government research vessel in Kodiak, Alaska. He later earned his USCG Merchant Marine Officer License and spent several years at sea before transitioning ashore in 2006. Prior to joining the Merchants

Exchange, his shore-side leadership roles have included cargo inspection, testing, and stevedoring operations, culminating in his service as District Manager of Columbia River Operations for Talon Marine Services beginning in 2014.



Christine Titus: Port Operations, Louisiana Maritime Association (LAMA); Secretary/Treasurer, Greater New Orleans Port Safety Council Harbor Safety Committee

Christine works for LAMA representing vessel agents and maritime stakeholders across the Lower Mississippi River and leading initiatives that strengthen communication, regulatory coordination, and operational readiness. Christine also serves as the Secretary/Treasurer on the Executive Committee of the GNOPSC Harbor Safety Committee, contributing to port safety policy development, interagency coordination, and best practices for navigation on the Lower Mississippi River. She is the Immediate Past President and an active board member of the Women’s Professional Council (WPC) of New Orleans, supporting leadership development and professional advancement for women across the region. Christine also serves on the Board of Directors of the Louisiana Society of Association Executives (LSAE), where she collaborates with association leaders statewide on governance, professional development, and organizational excellence. In addition to these roles, she is the Maritime Transportation Sector Chief for InfraGard Louisiana and is actively involved in many other industry organizations and regional initiatives across Louisiana’s maritime sector.



Patrick Gallagher: Chair, 2026 Conference Planning Committee; Chair, Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee; Executive Director, Marine Exchange of Puget Sound; Member, Harbor Safety Committee National Steering Team

Patrick is the Executive Director of the Marine Exchange of Puget Sound and a retired Coast Guard Commander with over 25 years of maritime experience. Patrick has been stationed throughout the United States including tours in New York City, Oregon, and Hawaii. Patrick is deeply committed to ocean conservation while promoting the future of maritime industry.



Scott White: prospective Chair, Massachusetts Bay Harbor Safety Committee; CEO of Montserrat Maritime, LLC

Scott White serves as the CEO of Montserrat Maritime, LLC providing expert consultation and advice for complex matters pertaining to Marine Transportation System operations and Critical Infrastructure sectors. Additionally, he serves as the President for the Massachusetts Bay Harbor Safety Committee and a Board Member of the Beverly, MA Harbor Management Authority. Mr. White previously served within the Cybersecurity

and Infrastructure Protection Agency's Region 1 (Boston) office, initially serving as a Critical Infrastructure Analyst and rising to the position of Regional Operations Manager, where he was responsible for leading the integrated coordination of regional-level communication and geospatial activities to obtain an overall understanding of regional critical infrastructure. Mr. White retired from active duty in the U.S. Coast Guard in September of 2015 after serving for more than 28 years in numerous operational, leadership, and program management positions. He is a maritime operations and regulatory compliance expert with a comprehensive background in transportation safety, security, and preparedness operations and policy. Mr. White is a certified marine inspector with qualifications and experience in marine casualty investigations and enforcement, as well as incident management.