

Panel Biographies
Lessons Learned from the FKS Bridge Allision and Collapse



Ryan Wartick: Regional Navigation Manager (Mid-Atlantic), NOAA's Office of Coast Survey

Ryan Wartick assumed the role of navigation manager in 2020 following more than 21 years of combined active-duty service in the U.S. Navy and NOAA Corps. Throughout his career, he has held a range of assignments focused on the production and maintenance of nautical charts, supporting NOAA's mission from the Arctic to the Gulf of America. His experience includes sailing aboard every NOAA hydrographic vessel, contributing to the advancement of maritime navigation and safety. Additionally, he represents NOAA for any maritime emergency response in the Mid-Atlantic region.



Marian Westley, Ph.D.: Director, Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services

Marian Westley, Ph.D., is the Director of the Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS), the nation's authoritative source for accurate, reliable, and timely water level and current measurements. In this role, she manages and advances a 24-hour operation to provide mariners, coastal managers, and other users with historic, real-time, and prediction data for ocean conditions along America's 95,000-mile coastline.

Dr. Westley has over 20 years of experience at NOAA. She joined CO-OPS in 2017 as deputy director, where she managed an annual operating budget of approximately \$40.5 million and led a blended workforce of approximately 150 federal and 65 contract employees. Before transitioning to acting director, she worked to establish operational policies and guidelines and led and participated in short- and long-range strategic, tactical, and program planning.

Prior to CO-OPS, Dr. Westley was selected for the tenth cohort of NOAA's Leadership Competencies Development Program, where she completed developmental assignments as the deputy director of the Climate Program Office in the Office for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and as the NOAA liaison to the Department of Defense's Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program. In both assignments, she worked on the intersection between climate change and national security.

From 2014 to 2016, Dr. Westley served as senior advisor to the NOAA chief scientist, Dr. Rick Spinrad. In that capacity, she worked on the transition of research to operations and applications, rewriting NOAA's formal policies on research and development (R&D) and the transition of R&D to operations, applications, and other uses. She also wrote NOAA's first-ever Strategic Research Guidance Memorandum and helped write the Chief Scientist's Annual Report.

Dr. Westley joined NOAA through the Office of Education's Graduate Sciences Program. She began her NOAA career at the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory (GFDL) in the Office for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research. At GFDL, she focused on climate science and policy, coordinating budget formulation for several climate research and modeling entities, serving on the writing team proposing a new Climate Service in NOAA, and providing advice to the U.S. government on proposals for climate engineering.

Dr. Westley has a Bachelor of Arts in physics and English from Yale University. She earned a Master of Science and Ph.D. in oceanography and a Graduate Certificate in ocean policy from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She feels like she has found her home in the National Ocean Service — and specifically in CO-OPS, an organization that combines support for operational oceanography and maritime safety with services that allow communities to become climate ready in the face of sea level rise.



Capt. John Betz: Chief Port Pilot, Los Angeles Pilot Service; Chair, Los Angeles/Long Beach Harbor Safety Committee

Captain John Betz, a double alumnus of California State University Maritime Academy (Cal Maritime), serves as chair of the California Maritime Academy Foundation Board. Capt. Betz earned his Bachelor of Science degree in nautical science from Cal Maritime and a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of California, College of the Law, San Francisco before returning to Cal Maritime to earn a Master of Science degree in transportation management.

After receiving his bachelor's degree from Cal Maritime, Captain Betz spent 17 years sailing on Chevron Shipping Company's ocean-going tankers, eventually serving as shipmaster. Chevron Shipping recognized Capt. Betz for various achievements, including developing an employee indoctrination program and inventing a patented apparatus that prevented fatal lifeboat accidents. Capt. Betz went on to build an independent consulting firm that specialized in a risk-based approach to ship management. He built an operational management system that formed the basis for a significant company-wide cultural shift for Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines and personally trained their entire engine officer corps.

Capt. Betz is currently the chief port pilot at the Port of Los Angeles, the largest container port in the western hemisphere. He jointly manages the Los Angeles Pilot Service, a team of dedicated professionals that diligently strives to ensure the safe and efficient movement of vessels within the Port. He holds pilot licenses for Los Angeles/Long Beach Harbors, San Francisco Bay, Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, and various minor Alaska ports.

Capt. Betz chairs the Los Angeles/Long Beach Harbor Safety Committee and California Maritime Academy Foundation Board and is a Los Angeles City Historical Society board member. He is a member of the Propeller Club of Los Angeles/Long Beach, Cabrillo Beach Yacht Club and American Legion Post 43. He is a past president of the California State University Maritime Academy Alumni Association and a former commissioner on the State Bar

of California, Admiralty and Maritime Law Commission. He has also served in both the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Navy Reserve.



Katherine Chambers: Acting Associate Technical Director for Crisis Preparedness Research and Development, Engineer Research and Development Center, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Chair, Resilience Integrated Action Team, U.S. Committee on the Marine Transportation System

Katherine is currently an Acting Associate Technical Director for Civil Works Research at the Engineer Research and Development Center with a focus on Crisis Preparedness. She joined ERDC in 2014 and has since specialized in applying resilience concepts to U.S. Army Corps operations, including marine transportation, asset management, and emergency response. She has led many research projects, supported ERDC's Structural Health Monitoring Program, and gained hands-on experience through emergency deployment and a detail with Corps Headquarters' Asset Management Branch. In 2024, she served as an ERDC Liaison at the Pentagon with the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works – Management and Budget Office. Outside of the Corps, she has chaired several World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure working groups focused on various aspects of port resilience. She also has been the Chair of the U.S. Committee on the Marine Transportation Systems Resilience Integrated Action Team where she has led the publications of four interagency after-action reviews of hurricane seasons. She holds a Master of Science from Purdue University and a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Wittenberg University.



Larry Landgraver: Equipment and Fleet Manager/Facility Security Officer at the Port of Longview; Chair, Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee

Larry Landgraver serves as the Chair of the Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee and is the Equipment and Fleet Manager and Facility Security Officer for the Port of Longview. He joined the Port in 2015 as a Marine Terminal Superintendent and has held progressively senior leadership roles overseeing marine terminal operations, safety, and security.

Larry brings extensive experience in harbor safety, cargo operations, regulatory compliance, and emergency preparedness. As Facility Security Officer, he is responsible for port security planning, coordination with federal and regional partners, and integration of safety and security requirements into daily marine operations. In his current role, he supports day-to-day cargo operations, fleet and equipment management, labor coordination, and implementation of the Port's Climate Action Plan, ensuring operational resilience while maintaining a strong safety culture.

Larry is actively engaged in regional maritime safety and response efforts through his participation in the Maritime Fire and Safety Association, Area Maritime Security Council, Salvage and Marine Firefighting Subcommittee, and other Columbia River maritime organizations. His work focuses on strengthening interagency coordination, improving

emergency response readiness, and advancing best practices for safe and efficient harbor operations.

Prior to joining the Port of Longview, Larry served as a Superintendent with Jones Stevedoring, managing cargo operations throughout the Pacific Northwest. He is a graduate of Washington State University and resides in Kalama, Washington with his wife and three dogs.



Capt. Matt Lagarde: Vice President of Safety, Training, and Compliance, Ingram Barge Company; Master Towing Unlimited Upon Western Rivers, Great Lakes, and Inland Waters; Immediate Past President, Greater New Orleans Port Safety Council Harbor Safety Committee

Matt has served as President of the Maritime Navigation Safety Association since 2010, as a Chair of the American Waterways Operators Inter-Region Safety Committee, and as Chair of the Greater New Orleans Port Safety Council HSC. He has also served as a Committee Member with the Nation Towing Safety Advisory Committee for the USCG for 3 appointments including chair of several key working groups. Matt also serves the New Orleans Port Coordination Team in Marine Transportation System (MTS) Recovery.