

Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Committee seeking members

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Peninsula Clarion

The proposed Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Committee is another step closer to reality. After writing and receiving comments on a draft charter, the group's convening committee is searching for another essential organizational element: members.

The Harbor Safety Committee is being assembled by project manager Tim Robertson of environmental consulting group Nuka Research, who lead the Cook Inlet Risk Assessment, a study of the probability and consequences of oil spills in the Cook Inlet. The creation of a harbor safety committee is a preventative measure strongly recommended by the Risk Assessment.

In a previous Clarion interview, Robertson said the Harbor Safety Committee will serve as a way for different users of the Cook Inlet to corroboratively determine best practices for the region, and that their first priority will be the creation of a comprehensive Harbor Safety Plan, a set of voluntary recommendations for safe vessel operation in Cook Inlet.

After presenting the Risk Assessment report in November 2014, Robertson, with members of the Coast Guard and the non-profit group Cook Inlet Regional Citizen's Advisory Council, formed a committee to write a charter and prepare to solicit members for the Harbor Safety Committee. The draft charter was released in late April, and a comment period on it ended in early May.

Now the Harbor Safety Committee is seeking to fill its twenty seats with representatives from groups including environmentalists, pilots, operators of oil terminals, tankers, ferries, tugs and barges, LNG carriers, cruise ships, salvagers and responders, recreational boaters, and the ports of Anchorage, Homer, and MacKenzie. Applicants from maritime groups should have a Merchant Officer's credential or a current position on a vessel or in a maritime company operating in Cook Inlet. For other positions, applicants must live in a Cook Inlet community.

The committee's managing board will appoint from the applicants a representative and an alternate to fill each seat. The application period is open until June 4. If interested, a letter of interest and a resume should be faxed to (240) 368-7467 or emailed to

CIRAapplicants@nukaresearch.com.

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