

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Port Tampa Bay strengthens emergency readiness by receiving mobile command unit



Port Tampa Bay officially takes ownership of the port's new mobile command unit, constructed at MBF Industries, Inc., the specialty vehicle company, located in Sanford, Fla. *Left to right:* John Baker, President MBF Industries; Jim Saboff, CFO, MBF; Jake Taylor, director of operations, MBF; Paul Anderson, president and CEO, Port Tampa Bay; Franz Iporre; integration engineer; MBF. *Upper:* John Lambert; electrical engineer, MBF; Jim Long, director of sales, MBF.

TAMPA, Fla.—The state's largest seaport reached a new level of storm and incident preparedness this week by taking ownership of a new mobile command unit (MCU), designed as a turnkey temporary administrative command solution after a major storm or other destructive event or hazard.

Following closely on the heels of the port's recent designation as "StormReady," by the National Weather Service (NWS), the port's acquisition of the new mobile unit further strengthens the port's dedication to overall preparedness—of extreme importance because the port is a highly critical asset as the region's energy products gateway. With this new command unit, the port has more utility and functionality that will enable essential port staff to be able to work more efficiently in getting port

operations back up and running and to more efficiently assess damages and promote the protection of life and property. The unit's sophisticated technologies will greatly reduce the time required to reestablish communications, access control and vessel traffic monitoring from remote locations.

Port Tampa Bay intends to make the unit available to any of its safety partners on an as-needed basis, in order to maximize its potential. The unit has been partially funded by a \$705,000 grant from the Federal Port Security Grant Program of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as well as the port's required 25% matching contribution.

"Safety and security are key priorities at Port Tampa Bay, and this mobile command unit is lifting the port to a far greater level of critical readiness in the event of a heavy weather event or other natural or man-made occurrence that would negatively impact port operations, access and safety," Paul Anderson, port president and CEO, said. "Port Tampa Bay is grateful to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for recognizing our needs and our critical role and for providing grant funding for this truly game changing asset."

Port Tampa Bay is Florida's largest port and the largest economic engine in west central Florida, supporting nearly 80,000 jobs and generating almost \$15 billion in annual economic impact. In addition to being a top 10 U.S. cruise port, the port handles a wide array of bulk, break bulk, containers and roll-on/roll-off cargoes, and is a major shipbuilding and repair center.

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