

Briefing for PWSRCAC Board of Directors – May 2023

INFORMATION ITEM

Sponsor: POVTS Committee and Alan Sorum
Project number and name or topic: Tanker Speed Reduction Operational Review

1. **Description of agenda item:** On numerous occasions during the past year and a half, Mr. Rick Steiner has requested that Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council (PWSRCAC) endorse vessel – whale strike mitigation efforts by requesting the establishment of a Vessel Speed Reduction (VSR) for the TAPS tanker fleet and SERVS tug fleet operating within the Prince William Sound (PWS) and Gulf of Alaska.

In taking these requests for support under advisement, PWSRCAC Board President Robert Archibald and PWSRCAC Executive Director Donna Schantz requested that POVTS investigate the maritime operational impact of the proposed speed reductions on the TAPS fleet, and to subsequently produce recommendations pertaining to Mr. Steiner's requested actions of the Board.

2. **Why is this item important to PWSRCAC:** The mission of the Council is to promote environmentally safe operation of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) terminal and associated tankers. The Port Operations and Vessel Traffic Systems Committee (POVTS) supports this mission by advising the Board on matters related to the marine aspects of the TAPS operation. The effect of vessel speed on the safety of whales is an environmental operating condition of interest to the Council.

3. **Previous actions taken by the Board on this item:** None.

4. **Summary of policy, issues, support, or opposition:** None.

5. **Committee Recommendation:**

- A. The POVTS Committee recommends that PWSRCAC *should not* at this time send a letter to NOAA requesting the issuance of a rulemaking for a tanker VSR in PWS and Gulf of Alaska.
- B. The POVTS Committee recommends that the PWSRCAC *should not* at this time send a letter to all PWS tanker owners/charterers requesting that, as NOAA considers the proposed rulemaking, they voluntarily adopt an interim VSR as proposed.
- C. The POVTS Committee recommends that the PWSRCAC *should* continue to monitor statements made, or actions taken by NOAA, PWS tanker owners/operators/charterers, and other interested parties concerning vessel – whale interaction in PWS and VSR rulemaking.
- D. The POVTS Committee recommends that the PWSRCAC *should* be prepared to comment, as is appropriate and timely, on statements made, or actions taken

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by NOAA, PWS tanker owners/operators/charterers, and other interested parties concerning vessel – whale interaction in PWS and VSR rulemaking.

6. **Relationship to LRP and Budget:** None.
7. **Action Requested of the Board of Directors:** This is an informational item from the POVTS Committee presented by the request of the Board.
8. **Alternatives:** None.
9. **Attachments:** None.