

Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee
Harbor Safety Plan | Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

CHANGE LOG:

Changes Made	Sub-Committee	Date Approved
Amendments to LCRHSC mission statement, DOE description, and formatting changes.	Harbor Safety Plan Review Committee	03/09/2022
Updated formatting	Harbor Safety Plan Review Committee	05/2025

A. Purpose

The Harbor Safety Plan (HSP) of the Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee (LCRHSC) is provided as an information and educational tool. The HSP is intended to complement existing regulations by advising the mariner of unique conditions and requirements that may be encountered in the Lower Columbia Region. These standards and protocols have been developed by local experts. This document will be updated periodically with current versions posted on our web page: www.lcrhsc.org.

B. Procedures

The elements of the HSP are developed by subcommittees of the LCRHSC. For specific issues, interested parties and subject matter experts are included to assure the broadest perspectives on measures considered.

C. Guidelines and Standards of Care (SOC)

Standards and protocols included in the Harbor Safety Plan address operational and environmental issues unique to the Lower Columbia Region. The Harbor Safety Plan is not intended to supplant or otherwise conflict with federal, state or local regulations developed under legal authorities. Nor is the HSP intended to replace the good judgment of a vessel's master in the safe operation of his/her vessel.

The Columbia River SOCs:

- Were cooperatively drafted by regulators and industry representatives and provide information unique to the river system.
- Are to be implemented in accordance with all International, Federal, State and
- Local regulations, and the normal practices of good seamanship.
- Constitute the Minimum Standards of Care to be used in all referenced operations on the Columbia River System.

D. Harbor Safety Committee

The Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee (LCRHSC) is an open forum comprised of public and private entities with vital interests in assuring safe navigation to protect people, the environment, and property on the waterways within the Lower Columbia Region.

LCRHSC accomplishes their mission by adopting or developing appropriate standards and guidelines (Harbor Safety Plan) that address environmental and operational elements of maritime operations unique to the Lower Columbia Region.

The LCRHSC provides an inclusive, cooperative and equitable venue for addressing waterways issues to ensure the continuation and improvement of prudent management practices for our local waterways. Throughout the process, the LCRHSC strives to ensure reliable and efficient marine transportation.

E. Geographic Area

This HSP encompasses the Columbia River and its navigable tributaries from the seaward approaches to the Columbia River Entrance to Bonneville Dam.

F. Captain of the Port (COTP) Zone

For all navigation/marine safety, commercial vessel and waterways management, port security and environmental response issues in the Lower Columbia Region, the COTP (located at Sector Columbia River) is the primary Coast Guard authority. The legal boundaries for the Sector Columbia River Marine Inspection Zone and Captain of the Port Zone are set forth in 33 Code of Federal Regulations 3.65-15. The Captain of the Port has varying levels of jurisdiction extending to the outer limit (200 nautical miles) of the EEZ for foreign and domestic vessels.

G. Washington Department of Ecology (DOE)

Washington State Department of Ecology Ecology's Spill Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Program (Spills Program) focuses on preventing oil spills to Washington's waters and land, and planning for and delivering a rapid, aggressive, and well-coordinated response to oil and hazardous substance spills wherever they occur. The Spills Program works with communities, industry, state and federal agencies, tribes, and other partners to prevent and prepare for oil spills. The Spills Program also responds to spills 24/7 from six offices located throughout the state and works to assess and restore environmental damage resulting from spills.

Spills Program activities include:

- Preventing oil spills from vessels and oil handling facilities.
- Preparing for aggressive response to oil and hazardous material spills.
- Rapidly responding to and cleaning up oil and hazardous material incidents.
- Restoring public natural resources damaged by oil spills.

Core services include inspections of commercial cargo and passenger vessels of 300 gross tons or more for substantial risk, facility inspections, oil transfer monitoring, plan review and approvals, contingency plan drills, development of Geographic Response Plans, technical assistance, environmental restoration, and 24/7 response to oil and hazardous materials spills.

H. Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

DEQ's marine oil spill prevention program is responsible for the prevention and response to oil spills in Oregon's waters. Such spills pose a major threat to Oregon's waters, air, land and wildlife. The state's jurisdiction extends to activities occurring in the coastal waters within the U.S. territorial seas and inland waterways such as the Columbia and Willamette Rivers.