

# SAMS® Newsletter



**Message from the Editor Page 2**

**President's Message Page 3**

**Ethics Page 4**

**Education at IMEC Page 7**

***...and More!***

Editor: John Lowe, AMS®  
Cover by Penny Lowe  
Layout/Design by Mark Shea

# SPRING 2025



**John Lowe, AMS®  
Immediate Past President  
SAMS® Newsletter Editor**

**Don't be afraid to say NO:**

Hello Everyone,

We recently received some sad news about the loss of a long-term member of the SAMS® Family, Jim Sepel, AMS® from Juneau Alaska. Jim and I served on the Board of Directors together and became friendly despite butting heads on several occasions during policy revisions. My wife and I visited Jim, his wife Joyce, and son Darin in Alaska in 2019 where they showed us the magnificence of the Juneau area he was so proud of. Fair seas Capt. Sepel.

The art of marine surveying requires close contact between the surveyor and client. Sensitive information is shared between parties and a certain level of trust is required. We often speak about how we promote ourselves as surveyors to prospective clients but do we always do enough to vet clients.

Very often when we get an ethics complaint against a member, we hear them comment that they had a funny feeling about the client who complained against them. Don't be so eager to get an assignment that you fail to be proactive about protecting yourself. You should be asking questions about your potential clients boating experience, boats that he has owned before, intended purpose of the subject vessel and the like. Spend some time in that initial phone conversation and feel out the caller. Is this someone you want to spend a possibly very long day with? You may want to do a quick internet search on an individual before committing, its amazing what such a search may reveal. I often have callers say "I feel like I'm being interviewed" and in a way they are, and I have told potential clients that. I just don't see us getting along and I choose to pass on the assignment. Once you're in contract with someone who may be potentially unpleasant or worse (litigious) it may be difficult to extract yourself from. TRUST YOUR GUT!

Be Well !!  
I will look for you in the yards.



**Kristoffer Diel, AMS®  
SAMS® President**

Ahoy, Fellow SAMS® Surveyors and Associates.

I hope this finds everyone healthy and as busy as they want to be! Here we are in April, already. It has been a record busting winter, but spring is next. Even here in New Orleans, where we had 24” of snow. Everyone north of us says ‘soooo’... However, the last big snow here was 11” in 1895!!! There are not ANY snowplows in the whole state!

Down to business - The SAMS® Office is doing a remarkable job of keeping ahead of the changes and we have basically recovered from the financial disaster of the New Orleans IMEC, last year. A shout out to the BOD for keeping some funds in CD’s, that allowed us to continue without having to shut down. AND, the dues increase was a big factor in the recovery.

THANK YOU! to Mr. & Mrs. Shea, Ms. Cheryl Roach, and Ms. Jessica Manchino, for going to work in the office every day! [Remember, that is why many of us became surveyors, so we did NOT HAVE to go in every day!

We are still being blessed with new surveyors, however there is a growing number retiring. Please reach out in your area and discuss SAMS® Membership with surveyors in your area. One of the best lures is the educational offerings as well as the WORLDWIDE recognition of SAMS® Surveyors. And, on the subject of education, everyone should consider expanding their education, by becoming a member of IAMI, ABYC, NFPA and a long list of other organizations that are germane to the surveying world. Side note: I was proud to see the large number of SAMS® surveyors at the recent IAMI® conference in Lexington, KY. They had a wide range of subjects, and of course, half the fun is seeing old comrades again!

So, mark your calendar (Sept. 9-12), to attend the upcoming IMEC in Baltimore. Looking forward to seeing you!



**Gary Frankovich, AMS®  
SAMS® Executive Vice President  
Ethics Chair**

**Food for Thought When You Survey a Vessel and Write the Report**

I recently had the Displeasure of reading a Pre-Purchase Survey Report prepared by a SAMS® surveyor. I felt the report so poor that I started thinking about how do Ethics come into play concerning both the act of surveying the vessel and the written report.

The report was on a 25 year old gasoline express cruiser. I'm going to list a few items of the report and I Ask that you read it, and see what you Think ...To begin, under Hull Construction: The hull was "reportedly made of FRP"? Seems to me if you are a marine surveyor selling yourself as an expert, you better be able to tell what the boat is made of. Deck: FRP with white gelcoat. No statement about coring, moisture, delamination, in fact almost nothing in the report deals with condition ( how can this be called a Condition & Value Survey?) Windshield: Multi paneled, Head: One. Faucets: Not tested. Air conditioning: One. Stereo: Yes. Remember, this is a gasoline powered boat, let's move to the Fuel System: Fuel type: Gas. Material: Aluminum. Number of tanks: Two. Capacity: Reportedly 180 gallons. That's It, nothing about the CFR's or ABYC, what and how old are the fuel lines, filters, are the fills and tanks grounded? 12v system: Nothing about are the batteries installed according to ABYC, nothing about over-current protection, Charging: ProMariner stainless steel 50amp, these engines must not have had any alternators. The report goes on and on the same way, absolutely no detail about anything, what's even worse, this report was written with one of the marine survey reporting software systems. So when I read the report, my questions is WHAT WAS THE SURVEY INSPECTION ITSELF LIKE? Did he really look at everything, did he test it but not report it, or did he just run through the motions as quick as he could, then go home and type a basically worthless report, deposit the check, and move on. As the client who wanted to purchase this vessel said, he could get more information from reading the listing. So, what I want everyone to think about. IS IT ETHICAL TO DO A SURVEY AND A REPORT LIKE THIS? Is this Conducting Business in a Professional Manner? How can an underwriter make a decision about coverage from this report, and what must he think of a SAMS® surveyor that would submit it? Remember the survey you write can have a very long shelf life, and may be read by numerous people over time. As Sam Walton used to say: A happy customer tells his friends, but an unhappy customer tells everyone.



**Randell Sharpe, AMS<sup>®</sup>**  
**Secretary/Treasurer**

I recently attended the Pacific Regional Meeting in Everett Washington. It was a great meeting and good to get together with 40+ surveyors. We had interesting informative presentations and lively discussions. I encourage everyone to review both their contract/work order for their surveys and review the SAMS<sup>®</sup> Recommended Survey Report Content guide to ensure they are up to date and following SAMS<sup>®</sup> policy and recommended practices. Even though I have been doing this for over 25 years now, I always find an item that I can improve in my contract or reports during discussions at the SAMS<sup>®</sup> education conferences. Thanks go to Michael Terminel, AMS<sup>®</sup> and local SAMS<sup>®</sup> members for putting this together.

If you have not paid your SAMS<sup>®</sup> annual dues you are now past due and you missed out on having your name in the membership registry which is published annually. Get that payment into SAMS<sup>®</sup> HQ so that you can continue to be a member in good standing. For those that paid on time, Thank you. For those that can't seem to remember to do this know that the reminder letters and phone calls place a heavy burden on our office staff. Set yourself a reminder to get this paid on time in January next year. Budget for it just like all your other expenses.

OK enough of the mundane business stuff. When doing a survey, when do you take your customer aside and discuss major findings? I am a firm believer that the customer makes the decision on whether to purchase the vessel I am surveying or not. I never say to a customer "walk away". Well almost never. There was that ferro cement 65 foot ketch with the running rust and cement spalling off the hull when it was hauled. I told him to walk away, and he did not listen. I think it is my job to provide accurate information on the condition of a vessel and have realistic discussion on what it will take to make a boat usable. I recently surveyed a 1950s 35 foot wood sailing vessel that had been owned by a family for 40 years. The owner passed away over a year ago and another member of the family was hoping to buy it and continue the legacy. He was attached to the vessel as a long-time family owned yacht. Unfortunately, after a couple hours it was clear that the vessel needed a major refit to make it safe to use. Most of the steam bent frames were cracked or deteriorated with almost every frame fitted with an improper sister. The improper sisters had created hard spots and plank seams were weeping. The iron floor frames were heavily corroded. The hull was fastened with copper rivets that had held up for almost 75 years but were showing signs of corrosion. There was plank deterioration at what appeared to be zinc anode attachment bolts inside the vessel. The wood spars had been painted and the rigger report indicated the mast needed to be removed for proper inspection as he was not willing to go up the rig. The vessel had an Atomic 4 gasoline auxiliary with exhaust leaks. Some photos are on the next page. I stopped and had a frank discussion with the potential buyer related to the size and cost of the project to put the vessel right. This would have been a major refit costing much more than the vessel could ever be worth and a labor of love to restore the family yacht. After discussing it with his family on the phone he decided to stop the survey and thanked me for preventing him from taking on a project that was out of his reach. So, I did not say "don't buy this boat" I explained the repairs needed and potential costs and what he expected and his ability to carry out major repairs. I also discussed the concern that an underwriter would likely not insure the vessel in the condition I found it after reviewing my report if I completed the survey.

Cont.

I charged him for my time on the boat and gave him the name of a local boat yard that specialized in restoring old wood vessels. I'm sure I will have a customer for his next purchase.



Have frank discussions on what you find during your surveys and let the client decide if they want a turn key vessel or a project. Be safe out there!

### Need CE Credits ???

**Newsletter Material Deadline:** Have an interesting topic? Send it in! If your article is published in the SAMS<sup>®</sup> NEWSLETTER, you not only contribute news and information, you may be eligible to receive (3) CE Credits\* for your article. The cutoff date for material to be submitted for publication in the next SAMS<sup>®</sup> Newsletter is November 15, 2024. The editor must receive all articles by this deadline or they MAY NOT be published in the next issue.

**If you are planning to write an article you should know the following:**

1. Your article should be technical in content, and of interest to the profession of marine surveying.
2. The article should be in MS Word.
3. Please use **Times New Roman, font size 12**
4. Length of the article should be 500 to 1000 words.
5. Articles that have been published before, **MUST** have a letter of permission letting SAMS<sup>®</sup> re-publish this article.



**Kenneth Weinbrecht, AMS<sup>®</sup>  
Education Vice President**

Joe Lobley has picked an excellent hotel in the inner harbor of Baltimore. We can expect to have some great speakers as usual and here is a brief rundown.

Chris Abel, Maritime Attorney - How To Be The Kind Of Surveyor Attorney's Love To Hire.

ITC, Robert Sniffen - E&O Explained - this will be your 2 CE's for ethics credit.

SAMS<sup>®</sup> Safety Committee - Good updates to keep us safe.

Sensor Marine - Remote Vessel Monitoring.

Corrosion, basics and advances as well as testing.

Annapolis Rigging - Jay Herman

Dry Boat

Marine Transmission Company - How They Work & Diagnosing Failures.

Volvo Penta - New developments in propulsion.

Lithium Ion Battery Updates.

Electric vessel manufacturer.

Mechanical Failure Analysis

This year the meeting is being held from Tuesday - Thursday for education and Friday for the Membership Meeting.

Hope to see you all there, don't delay in making your reservations when the announcement comes, rooms will go fast!

---

Hyatt Relaxation Time





**Joseph Lobley, AMS®  
Meeting / Conventions  
Vice President**

The calendar indicates that Spring is right around the corner however here in Maine, we're not even close. We are experiencing a real "Maine Wintah!". It will thaw out eventually. Here is the information for upcoming IMECs for your planning.

IMEC 2025 at the Hyatt Hotel Inner Harbor Baltimore, September 9-12, 2025. We were here in 2013 and had an excellent event. The room rate is \$180.00 per night. This will be our first departure from the typical week day format of starting Wednesday and ending on Saturday. We are moving the format to start on Tuesday and finish with the business meeting on Friday. This has been suggested by several hotel sales people in the past as a way lower the room rates since we are not occupying rooms on Friday night. The hotel has been remodeled and has all the usual amenities and is in a very good location with lots to do close by.

IMEC 2026 will be in Tampa at a beautiful Hyatt property September 1-4, 2026. The room rate is \$170/night with free parking and waived resorts fees. September seems to be the magic month in the lower states to get a decent room rate which is obviously risky. October is the earliest in the fall for North States. We try to work around other events like IBEX and the Ft Lauderdale Boat Show.

At the last General Membership meeting in New Orleans, it was voted on by a majority to have the IMEC 2027 in Las Vegas. The Board of Directors decided to have our winter meeting in Vegas as a test run. Off-strip hotel rooms are very affordable but hotels on the strip, not so much. I'll have a report for you all in the next Newsletter.

**Hyatt Hotel Rooms**







**Angel Zeno, AMS<sup>®</sup>  
Testing Vice President**

I hope that you all are enjoying the winter months and for those of us in the Great Lakes area what is normally considered the “off-season”. But for some reason somebody forgot to let the boating industry know that it’s the offseason because it’s been unusually active. Especially from a damage claim standpoint, it would appear that there are quite a few claims that occurred towards the end of last season that are just now being processed.

Over the past few months I’ve visited a few boatyards in my area and from the level of activity that I’ve encountered they are busy preparing and repairing vessels and I can tell that it’s going to be another busy year in the Great Lakes, so put those fresh batteries in your meters and hold on for another fun season.

Not every surveyor can be a SAMS<sup>®</sup> surveyor, so pat yourself on the back for being part of one of the most recognized professional marine organizations. And never lose sight that it’s our high ethical standards that sets us above the rest. As you go about your assignments keep an eye out for copycats and wannabes falsely claiming to be a member of SAMS<sup>®</sup>. If you encounter someone falsely claiming to be a member of SAMS<sup>®</sup> pick up a business card or survey report and send it in to the International Office. They’ll start the process to issue a cease-and-desist letter. We have all worked hard to build and maintain a reputation of professionalism and it would be sad to see that tarnished by someone that is not a member.

As the SAMS<sup>®</sup> Testing VP I always have so much that I would like to share with those preparing for the AMS<sup>®</sup> upgrade exam.

First, and this one sometimes comes as a surprise to some members, you have options when it comes to where you can take the exam. SAMS<sup>®</sup> preference is that the AMS<sup>®</sup> exams be proctored as part of IMEC or a Regional Meeting but the AMS<sup>®</sup> exam can also be proctored by a current AMS<sup>®</sup> member in your area. If this is an option for you, reach out to the AMS<sup>®</sup> member and discuss their willingness to proctor the exam, remember, the proctor is committed to the same four-hour exam time and some members may not be able to accommodate this. If you find an AMS<sup>®</sup> member that has agreed to proctor your AMS<sup>®</sup> exam, send an email to the SAMS<sup>®</sup> International Office and be sure to copy your Regional Director and myself for approval.

Once approved, work with the AMS<sup>®</sup> member to identify a location that is suitable for the exam. You’ll want a quiet location with no distractions or foot traffic, usually someone’s home, or a study room in a library, but avoid coffee shops or restaurants.

As you prepare to sit for the exam, remember that it may take the SAMS<sup>®</sup> International Office three to four weeks to process the request and get the AMS<sup>®</sup> exam in the proctor’s hands, so plan accordingly.

If you are sitting for the Y&SC AMS<sup>®</sup> exam there is a very helpful document titled “How to prepare for your AMS<sup>®</sup> exam for Y&SC”. This document helps shed some light on the exam, the types of questions

Cont.

and how to prepare. If you don't already have a copy you can email the SAMS® International office to get a copy.

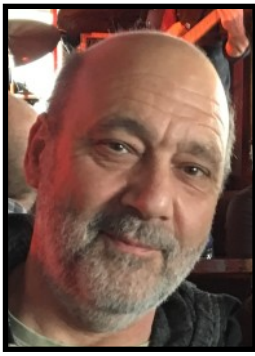
I'll also try to reach out to you personally to discuss how you are doing and offer suggestions to help you prepare, but if you don't hear from me within a few weeks before you are scheduled to test please reach out. I want to be able to calm your nerves and help you prepare.

In closing, remember to always let someone know when you head out on an assignment along with some information on where you are going and when you should be finished. And always tie up that ladder, remember, you are responsible for your own safety and should never take short cuts when it comes to your safety.



Baltimore Inner Harbor





**Eddy Assaf, AMS®  
Public Relations  
Vice President**

Good day all

Well spring is around the corner, and like most years we start getting ready for the new season coming up. It was a long winter but always have a little claim work to keep me busy, mind you a lot less last winter. That is mainly due to me, who is trimming down his workload as the years have gone by. Going on 69 soon, and I know that is not old for most of us, but I find that the body is not cooperating as well as it used to. I have been noticing this for the last couple of years after doing a let's say 40 foot MY, I would need the day after for my back to be able to move again, not to mention the knees. I did 15 surveys last year and will probably do 5 this year, and I must admit, I am not looking forward to doing them either. All the signs are there.

It would be a lot easier if there were some upcoming surveyors to take our places, in this area there are far too many boats compared to surveyors so the demand is high and even though I have been putting the word out several years ago that I would be retiring at 70, the phone still doesn't stop ringing and often it is because they simply can't find anyone else to do the survey. It hasn't been easy turning down this work when your mind has always been set to working mode, we usually don't refuse work, unless you know you can't do the job properly anymore which is pretty much where I am at with surveying, I know I can't do it as efficient as I use to, so before I get into trouble, I better just stop doing them. After 26 years of doing this without a problem, I don't need to "go out" with a stupid mistake or something that I wasn't able to properly check. I know I am not the only one out there living with this situation and even though it's not done yet, leaving this business will not be easy, I love this trade and I have always said that the only thing I regret about surveying was that I didn't start this sooner.

I have been lucky because I've had the pleasure of mentoring 6 surveyors in this province and now 4 of them are AMS's® and have a good business going and for some reason, still appears to be the one they call when they are not sure.

On the advertising side of things, all is going well, was on my budget of last year and will hopefully we will have the same budget to work with this year, will find out next week at the Board Meeting. The new web site has been going well, still working out some bugs, but seems to be easier to use and friendlier to the eyes. One advantage is that we can now get our CEs off the web site. We have also added Puerto Rico under the U. S. States.

As you all probably heard by now the loss of our good friend Jim Sepel , AMS® we lost at the end of February. When I was Canadian RD, Jim was the membership VP, so I got to work with him a lot as most of the Regional Director's did. Jim kept everyone close. Before Stu became president and while Jim was president, he was the only other President who ever came to a Canadian Regional. He took a lot of pride in his work with us and with what he did for SAMS®. He will be dearly missed.

Well that is about it for now, be safe and professional and we will see you all soon.



**Charles W. Solarek, AMS®**  
**Membership Vice President**

## Due Diligence!!

Something all marine surveyors have been told at one time or another, “Do your due diligence.” But what exactly does this mean. Like other words in dictionary, it can mean something different things to different people. If you were to do a search for the definition on the internet you would find: “careful and persistent work or effort.” Interesting.

Why am I writing about this? Because there has been a trend lately when I have been out conducting surveys, and not a positive one. It is always nice to get a compliment from your customer at the end of a hard day’s work looking through that 40-foot boat. Up and down ladders, steps. Crawling through an engine compartment. Turn this on. Turn this off. Plug this in. Go for an underway demonstration. Percussion testing the decks and house. Percussion testing the hull sides and bottom.

However, when that compliment is clarified with, “My last surveyor never tested that.” Or “The last survey did not take this long.” Well, something is not right. Each of us has our own specific area of expertise in surveying. One surveyor is an expert with electrical. Another is great with engines. Certain individuals are well-versed in all American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC) Standards currently established. We all understand that. And sometimes the customer is not onboard for part or all of the survey and has no idea what their surveyor has done or not done.

However, I am referring to basic surveying. I have had customers tell me that their last surveyor did not test the GFCI outlets. SERIOUSLY? Is this not a safety of personnel item? One vessel captain told me that in his twenty (20) plus years he has never had a marine surveyor conduct a neutral safety start test on the main engines. Bilge pumps not tested. Air conditioners not powered up. Refrigerators not tested. I have even heard of a surveyor that tells their customers to go to the U.S. Coast Guard website to find out what safety gear is required to be carried onboard!

There are reports of some surveyors conducting two or three surveys in one day! How is that even possible? (And yes, I realize there is always an exception, but as a rule? Maybe if you are inspecting twenty-foot center consoles with no systems.) I ask you, is this really “due diligence?”

Our role is to give customers the best information so they can decide whether to buy the boat, so they may make an educated decision. We are assessing the vessel, yes, for the owner, but also for that insurance underwriter. Is the vessel a risk?

Karma will eventually catch up with you. The problem is you will never know exactly when that will be. And it will not only affect you, but the other marine surveyors out there and our society.

Be safe out there and do your due diligence. You will sleep better at night!



**Michael A. Terminel, AMS®  
Pacific Regional Director**

Congratulations to Dan Habel out in Honolulu, Hawaii and Scott Heitman in Wrangel, Alaska for passing their AMS® exam. Since being appointed to Pacific Regional Director we have a 100% pass rate in the region. Good job to all that have passed in the last year. With proper study habits and the right study material this is a conquerable exam. If you're planning on testing, reach out to me as early as possible so I can assist you in making sure you're studying the right material and have enough time to plan your exam.

Winter of 2024 and 2025 has been extremely challenging. In Alaska, we have had barely any snow. I've used my snow blower once. I had 5 feet of snow in my yard last year at this time. This year we have grass growing. The spring CV's, new boat purchases and sales are happening in February and March three months early. However, everywhere else in the US we have snowstorms, blizzards and a foot of snow in New Orleans. Adjusting to the needs of your clients is imperative.

The photo to the side is of the Ole Lahaina Harbor on Maui that was wiped out by the Lahaina Fires. I took the photo last month with my drone. I worked out of this harbor as a charter captain for 14 years in the 1980's and early 1990's. Over 95 total constructive losses were salvaged from the harbor after the fire. The banyan tree survived but only about half of its glory. Looking to the left of the banyan tree looks like a bunch of streets. It was the King Kamehameha III Elementary School. I took my first USCG license exam at that school in the early 1980's.



The Pacific Region recently lost one of our members who traveled across the bar. Jim Sepel, AMS® one of our past SAMS® Presidents and who held many positions on the SAMS® Board, passed suddenly. Our deepest condolence to his family in this difficult time. Every time I surveyed in Juneau, Alaska I called Jim for lunch and a brew. He was my mentor and the first person that I talked to at SAMS® prior to joining. I remember the first thing he asked me even before introducing himself, “ why do you want to do something that you can be sued for” . In remembrance to Jim, this will be my topic for my newsletter. As I review AMS® and Surveyor Associate surveys, one of my regular comments is, “can you defend this in court”. Is everything in your boiler plate needed? If it's in there you will have to defend it in court.

If you're using AI for your report, this is troubling to me. You might give the generator all the information that you think it needs to produce a document. However, if the AI generator does not have all the data, or it does not completely understand the data, or it's missing a particular string of the data, it makes it up. Yes, it makes it up. Although 85% of the report is accurate, that leaves 15% that is not. The missing information is made up literally out of thin air. This has already been proven in court to be unsupported and fraudulent. Think long and hard before you use AI. You don't want to end up flooded to your gills and nowhere to turn.



The second item that has been discussed at every meeting that I have ever attended is the use of definitions in the report and how we state we inspected and tested a component on a vessel. If we say that you powered up and tested a component and refer back to the definition page to what powered up and tested is, that's fine. The caveat is it has to be the same definition of how you powered up and tested a component throughout the survey. Was the bilge pump powered up and tested the same way the plotter, stereo, wing stabilizer, motion gyro sphere or lithium battery bank house system was powered up and tested? Each one of the mentioned are powered up and tested differently with different tools. A catch all phrase to save time in your report writing process of the survey is not defensible in court. So before it gets too busy, let's all look at our survey reports and boiler plates and do some spring cleaning.

We just had our 2025 Pacific Regional Meeting in Everett, Washington. If you want to know how it went, you should have gone. The curriculum was reviewed and if you attended, you will receive 17 CE's and not 12 CE's as earlier reported, with an additional 1 CE for Ethic training for a total of 18 CE's. I bring up the meeting only because all Survey Associates are required to get a minimum 6 CE's a year and are required to take Ethics training during your Surveyor Associate journey. We have way too many AMS<sup>®</sup> and Surveyor Associate members that have not been taking the needed CE's to retain membership in good standing. I will be calling the delinquent Pacific Regional members to ensure that you meet the requirements of your membership.



SAMS<sup>®</sup> has recently required all Regional Directors to self-volunteer, appoint, pick or delegate an Assistant Regional Director. For the Pacific Regional that will be Matt Peebles, AMS<sup>®</sup> in Ketchikan. He will help assist in reviewing Surveyor Associate and AMS<sup>®</sup> applications and attend meetings when I am not available. Thank you Matt.

Our next Regional will be in Alameda, California for 2026. The schedule is pending but we're looking at the third week in February. What's different in 2026 is if you present an approved topic at the meeting, your SAMS<sup>®</sup> registration fee at the meeting will be free. We are only accepting two SAMS<sup>®</sup> members to present; AMS<sup>®</sup> or Surveyor Associates (one each day). I encourage the Surveyor Associates to step out of your comfort zone and bring a topic that may not have been done before. If you want to present, send me an email with your topic and Matt and I will pick the two presenters. We will choose the lucky presenter after IMEC so let me know before that for consideration.

I was able to talk to several underwriters at MIAS conference this year. MIAS is the Marine Insurance Association of Seattle. The underwriters I spoke to said that the SAMS<sup>®</sup> surveys they are getting are improving and have great content. We need to keep up the good work. I did hear that there is some use of black and white photos. They will not accept black and white photos, period, in their surveys. I've actually had one of my surveys sent back to me in black and white, I sent the underwriter the color survey, so I think they may have been scanned black and white, then emailed from the client. Tell your client or end user to email the color copy, not a scanned copy to their insurance company.

In closing, any questions, issues or problems that you may have, please do not hesitate to call. I've been getting a lot of calls from surveyors that are expanding out in different areas which is great. One of my clients had cargo warranty work for me in Canada, California, Washington, Virginia and Alaska in just the last two weeks. I've had to reach out to several SAMS<sup>®</sup> surveyors for help. I recently worked with a SAMS<sup>®</sup> surveyor in Seattle introducing them to cargo warranty work. This will help my business but will also help another surveyor develop new skill sets and learn a new aspect of the industry, increase their capabilities and everyone makes a couple bucks. Networking is important.

And the winner of the new Protometer Reachmaster Pro is???? Well, more on that later.

For this article I want to touch base on a few of my go to tools that I use when inspecting a boat. The number one tools in my tool bag are cameras and note pad. I don't think you can take enough photos of a boat. I will take multiple photos of everything, from different angles as well as distances (not all these photos need to go into your report). Having a camera with a good macro setting is a must especially if you are inspecting rigging. After that my next go to tools are my flashlight, hammers and meters. With all of these, you can get a pretty good idea of the structural integrity of the boat by look (camera), feel (hammer) and sense (meters). When looking at the electrical side of things, having a good voltmeter as well as circuit analyzers are a must. An AC circuit analyzer will tell you everything you need to know about the AC system.



**Richard Reichelsdorfer, AMS®  
Great Lakes Regional Director**

Beyond that I have a variety of hand tools, tape measurers, awls, Scotch Brite pads, PPE's and a case of spare batteries for everything. Etc. If you follow along on Boatpokers you will have heard of the tool. It is a Protometer Reachmaster Pro that is installed on a telescoping pole. I have been using this for a while now and I find it to be a back and knee saver. Due to a error by FedEx, I found myself with an extra one of these and had offered it up for some help. I am still waiting to give this away.

---

### Greeting from the Gulf Coast

As some of you know, I am fairly new to being in service regarding being a Regional Director. Two weeks ago I attended our Winter Board Meeting (my first) and was impressed with the thoroughness of the topics discussed and the business at hand. The meeting left a positive impression. For most of my years as a member, I didn't give credence to how much work is involved running the organization and managing and addressing the various matters of the membership.



**Ryan Uhlich, AMS®  
Gulf Regional Director**

While at the meeting, we discussed where this years Regional Meeting will be held. We'd like to coincide with the Work Boat show. Dates for the show are Dec 3-5, 2025 so perhaps Dec 1-2 could be our dates. Also, there is correspondence with the Work Boat show to have a SAMS® booth. If that happens, we may need some of our members to assist in manning the booth. For those who remember, the last Regional Meeting in New Orleans was held at the Hotel Provincial. We may do that again as it seemed to work. Hang on, as no decisions have been made as of yet, but we will let everyone know soon enough.

Just a side note, I attended the NAMS national conference last week in Biloxi and it was very good. It was aimed a little more towards commercial vessels but the content was informative. I'm a little biased, but I think our IMEC last year here in New Orleans was better overall. (educational content, facilities, and events outside the presentations)

Question or comments to this address:  
seesharp@yahoo.com

Reminder that on May 17<sup>th</sup> 2025 I will be hosting the South Florida Regional Meeting at the Lake Placid Moose Lodge located in Lake Placid, FL.. For next year I have been discussing with Christopher Day the possibility of hosting ONE Regional Meeting that will span (2) days and allow for different locations and resources. Its an open and active discussion and as always both he and I are open to input.



**Rolando Santos, AMS®  
South Florida Regional Director**

For this newsletter, I would like to address the following subject: “Titles” I have been working as a Marine Engineer, Marine Surveyor, and Marine Consultant since 1982. The title of “Captain” was interchangeable with “Master,” and for the vast majority of my interactions, it was in reference to the one person who was in charge of the vessel that I was involved with. It represented that this person held a valid Unlimited tonnage Merchant Mariner License. I frequently see some of our members use the title of Captain.

So who should use this title?

It really depends on the individual but I am of the opinion that it should be used with discretion. Does a person who held a 50-ton limited license, restricted to near-coastal navigation, who allowed his license to expire, deserve to be called Captain? Or, as a professional organization, should this title be reserved for individuals with active licenses? I know of several members who are Master Mariners Unlimited Tonnage, and I know exactly what they had to go through to obtain that license. The same applies to other persons that I know who came “Up through the Hawse Pipe”. A lengthier process is required to achieve the highest designation of Master Mariner Unlimited.

This is my personal opinion, and I base this on many years working as an Expert in the Maritime industry:

All persons responsible for the safe operation of a vessel (large or small) that holds a valid Merchant Mariner license (limited or unlimited) should be treated with respect and always addressed as “Captain”

1. Regardless of which license you hold, my opinion is that you clearly identify your license as follows, using the below example:

2. John Doe, Marine Surveyor

Licensed Captain (or ex-Licensed Captain), limited (50) ton, near coastal

SAMS® – AMS® or SA

Professionally, you will not mislead the individual or the party that is using your services. At the same time, you will identify yourself to all who know you and may have to use your report, providing a short narrative of your background.

In our world of the maritime industry, if you have it, then I do encourage you to flaunt it.

Consider this subject and how it may potentially apply to you. Try to be as professional about yourself and do not misrepresent yourself.

As I have previously stated, I encourage training, certifications, and basically investing in yourself. But you need to be careful that you do not go out on a limb because someone will be there to cut that limb off, and it won't be pleasant.

Just make sure you can walk the talk and that everything about you is accurate.



# The Following Member Has



**William Robinson, AMS<sup>®</sup>**  
**Mid - Atlantic Regional Director**

**Will Return For The Next Issue**



**Christopher Day, AMS®  
North Florida Regional Director**

Hello from Sunny North Florida. . . Just before the season really kicks off, I decided to take a bit of a road trip out to Las Vegas for the SAMS® Board of Directors meeting. My wife and I took a few extra days and stopped a few different times and got to enjoy a few places along the way: Antelope Canyon, AZ; Brian Head, UT; Grand Canyon, AZ; and A LOT of windshield time. *Don't worry, these extra stops were on MY dime.* This gave me time to reflect on things from this past year and what may come in the future. Also, to keep my mind off the cold weather encountered skiing in Utah and walking through a very snowy Grand Canyon.

My first thought was: “What is SAMS® and What does it do for me as a surveyor?” SAMS® is a professional society who strives to increase its membership by accepting quality surveyors who ethically conduct their business as SURVEYORS. SAMS® is not looking for mediocre surveyors who can write as many surveys as possible OR who are a top money earner in a given region. YES, the quantity of surveys done does lead to more money in one's pocket, BUT at what cost? Typically, what suffers is Quality, Quality is what SAMS® is looking for, Quality in the member, Quality of the inspections performed, Quality in the surveys written. This is why SAMS® has a “Recommended Survey Content” Guide and members are expected to upgrade from a Surveyor Associate to an AMS® in the allotted amount of time as depicted through the application process. In return, SAMS® does provide a “Legal Liability” policy as part of the membership dues and the ability to buy into an “Error and Omissions” policy. It also places your information within a Directory and on the SAMS® Web Site. I know that I have stated some VERY obvious things here, but looking at what SAMS® expects and what they give back in return . . . Why would you not want to be the best surveyor that you could be? ? ?

My second thought was: “Who is my client when I do a survey?” This is where the complexity of the survey comes in. I have heard many answers to this question: “It's the Buyer . . .”, “ It's the Insurance Company. . . .”, “It's the Insured. . . .”, “ It's the person who is paying you. . . “. Ultimately, IT'S THE BOAT. Remember, you are there to be objective and the BOAT will tell the story. As surveyors, IF we do not accurately describe what we have inspected (and have not inspected) within our survey reports, we have not done our jobs. IF we do not accurately described the condition or working (or non-working) order of items or systems on the boat, we have not done our jobs. So, IF you are inspecting an older boat and the Buyer or Insured is looking to get full coverage on the vessel, you may want to have them go back to the insurance company and ask some questions prior to the survey. This may help alleviate the call back to you from the client complaining that they could not get full coverage on the boat based on the inspection that you just performed and they want a refund for the cost of the survey because they feel that you did not do your job. *YES, it happens.* What they failed to see is that you honestly and knowingly did your job to the best of your ability because the boat was your client and you accurately depicted the vessel so that the Insurance Company could make the proper underwriting decision.

Remember that SAMS® is looking for that quality surveyor and in return giving you back some quality membership benefits. Also remember, the BOAT is your ultimate client when you do your surveys. Be objective and thorough with your surveys and the BOAT will tell you its story.

Its about time for the recreational season to kick in and get busy. So, keep answering those phone calls. Stay safe out there . . .

## Greetings

2025 started with a bang. I mean thunder & lightning, and that weather in the great white north has not changed much so far.

As your new Canadian Regional Director the learning curve has, and is, a steep one but again, what a team we have to support us at HQ!

We have received a few applications, a few new Associates and a few AMS<sup>®</sup> for my region, I tried to welcome them. I also try to remain available in case I can be of assistance.

Now for the business end, I am working on Regional meetings, hopefully one on the Atlantic side and one of the Pacific side. Also a better way to coordinate them and organise them, so the work does not have to start back from ground zero before every meeting.

I am still interested in creating an Assistant Director position and hopefully that person would be on one side of the country while the director is at the other.

I didn't attend our last board meeting in Las Vegas, USA in March but I am certain other members will have an article about it.

As surveyors we can get a rough time in the yards and if I haven't heard all the comments (some less flattering than others), I heard a few.

**Boat broker:** "Hey Alain, what do you need to do to become a surveyor?"

*... Well, first you should be a SAMS<sup>®</sup> surveyor and then ... As a generalist you should have knowledge of plumbing, fiberglass, certainly marine electrical and know that there is no ground once you leave the dock. Now if CO is the silent killer, you should know why inverters are certainly the silent shocker, so... Also, some certifications for petrol and diesel engines... If you plan on going to the dark side and touch wood, a book on witchcraft, some spell incantations, and studying the life of mushroom. You should be able to explain why, if someone is talking about finding osmosis on a boat, it is likely too late. You should also be familiar with...*

**Boat broker:** "naw, naw, naw, none of that. You just need to buy a HAMMER!" says he, with a grin.

Talking with other surveyors, it has come up that it could be useful to talk or write about how to combat the grey cloud that is sometimes found above a surveyor's heads. My take is to give value, and more value, to our clients (someone should write something about that someday) and to give value, we need tools!

We all have a hammer (or two), but after that, not all tool bags are created equal.

Here is a short list of some of the tools that found their way in my bag(s) and others that didn't. Ideas for the newer or seasoned surveyors.

- A hammer, I have many. Plastic soft, hard, steel and if you do metal boats, a welder's pick hammer, 9-12-20 oz- and heavier. A small tac hammer to ring the props. The owner who just had the top sides buffed & waxed might not like to see your big dirty hammer used for the under-water section making its way up, so I carry a few custom made fancy gentle ones with hickory handles and clear heads (you know who you are). You will also need some more serious persuaders to challenge knee, keel, garboard-strake and other timber. You can also use it on the head of that boat broker...



**Alain Pascal Routhier, AMS<sup>®</sup>  
Canadian Regional Director**

Cont.

- A stethoscope, it is amazing the resonance you can hear with one of those. Useful on an engine crankcase or planking on a woody.
  - A vernier (“caliper” in Shakespeare’s language?), I measure prop shafts with these. I carry a few cheap plastic ones. Keep in mind that shafts can be tapered.
  - Wire brushes, I carry different ones from toothbrush size and bigger, with the brass strands not to scratch anything with a steel type one.
  - An awl, I carry a Stanley 69-122.
  - Small binoculars.
  - A butane “torch” lighter. Fishing shop often have nice robust ones, get some quality tiple filtered butane, nothing more frustrating than the lighter “sputtering”!
  - Multimeter, I carry two Fluke RMS, the clamp type somewhat delicate that goes down to mV with a memory. And a robust one that can see much higher loads. I yearn for a portable scope, I even know the model # just because I have an inclination for electrical things. Alas I am not allowed this electron peeper indulgence.
  - Battery tester, since I saw the damage from an exploded LA battery, I do not do load testing anymore. I carry a FoxWell BT-705. It is... sufficient. LiFo and other exotic batteries usually have a monitoring panel somewhere to read the BMS.
  - A land surveyor measuring tape, those long ones on a spool. Mine is 40M.
  - Blue mechanic single-use towels. A nice clean roll always sits proudly on top of my bag, in full prominent view for my client, with Nitril gloves.
  - Technician slippers, mine are big, rubberized plastic ones that slip over my shoes, because no I will not take my shoes off. Sorry.
  - Small pair of insulated longnose bent pliers & electrical tape.
  - Magnifying glass, I carry a cheap West Marine chart magnifier, a piece of plastic the shape of a ½ egg.
  - A Zip-Lock bag (aspirin, Ozonol, peroxide, plasters...) nothing worse than bleeding over a white Ultra-leather sofa.
  - Large flat screwdriver.
  - A reverse polarity tester, mine is an Ideal 61-035. Be mindful that this cannot be used like you would on a land-lubber system.
  - Moisture meter, mine is the Photometer survey master, with the prongs for wood testing. The team at Photometer often will give you a small discount if you are SAMS®.
  - In my pockets, a seamstress measuring tape, a pocketknife, a small laser pointer, ear plugs. A small tub of Vicks-VapoRub (if you know, you know).
  - Extra batteries. Business cards (yes I still carry those).
- Now we get to the “general tools section”.

I officially, carry none.

“Alain do you have xyz tool? I need to tighten-up abc hose clamp.” Sorry no.

As a surveyor you are not there to fix boats but to inspect and report on them. You are not providing value by fixing something “in passing”, resist the temptation! Not even thinking about the liability issues. That being said, drifting helplessly in Juan de Fucas, cranking a non-starter, I might pullout a set of spanners and a set of screw drivers from the very bottom of my bag.

Note that if I am going for a plastic, a woody, an aluminum or steel hull, some tools will jump-in or jump-out of the bag for that day.

Ha! Yes. My main bag is a Husky soft bag with wheels and a hip-height retractable handle. My secondary bags are Husky 17-inch soft-side contractor bags. I rarely need more than my main bag, the small ones keep everything else nice and tidy in the truck. I have the shoulder strap on the small bags as tight/short as they go and slip it over the retractable handle of the main bag, so it does not go swimming when I walk down the docks. That’s all folks.

Happy surveying from the PNW everyone and, bring a hammer!



**Brian Williams, AMS®  
Northeast Regional Director**

Safety is no accident. I know this sounds cliché but just want to stress to take care of yourself in the spring rush. I was out to a survey last week in early March, it was an unusually nice day with temperatures touching the 60's not bad for New York in March.

One of the things I do out of habit on every survey is make sure the required USCG items are on board and if they are not, I notify the captain, seller or salesman and tell them I refuse to attend the sea trial if the required safety equipment is not on board, especially life preservers. I can't comment on the other 49 states but in New York the law requires anyone underway in a boat less than 21 feet in length anytime between November 1st and May 1st must wear a securely fastened life jacket. This includes canoes, kayaks, rowboats and motorboats. Twenty one feet being the law, but common sense tells me with water temperatures still in the 40's you don't have long in the water before hypothermia sets in regardless of the size of the vessel. I personally keep in my car a Mustang survival jacket during the fall, winter and spring months and wear it on every sea trial regardless of the size of the vessel in addition to being a USCG approved type III flotation device, it is warm and will delay the onset of hypothermia should I find myself in the water. Sometimes the salespeople make a snide remark but it's my life and my safety. All I'm saying is take care of yourself, be sure to dress in layers and be prepared for anything that you think could possibly go wrong.

Consider adding a PFD to your equipment bag if you don't already have one, even the self-inflating Type II or V vests. This way you are not dependent on the vessel's equipment or the salesperson's ready coast guard bag. Be smart and safe out there, I know it's about to get busy. Try to enjoy some Downtime.

## AN OPINION FROM A SEASONED CHARTER MEMBER

**KEN WEINBRECHT, SAMS<sup>®</sup> AMS<sup>®</sup>, NAMS- CMS, ASA, CMI STILL HAVING FUN  
AND LOVING WHAT I DO.**

### THE MOST IMPORTANT TOOL IN A SURVEYORS TOOL BAG

So what's the answer?

Some would say it's the moisture meter.

Some would say it's your hammer / hammers.

Some would say it's your voltage tester / GFCI tester.

Some would say it's common sense, doesn't look or feel right, gut feeling.

And some would say it's your library of reference books, i.e. electrical books, fiberglass books, CFR's, USCG NAVIC's or USCG Boat Builders Handbook, etc. The costs of all the reference materials start to add up because we need them to justify safety standards, condition of vessel, safety concerns and valuation of the vessel as well as "What is the "Law".

Ah yes.....the "Law".....did you know that CFR's are considered the "Law" and if you don't know what they pertain to and what they state, then what you put in your report, can be a really big problem for you especially if called into court or having to defend your report or valuation with the current law? You don't have to memorize them, no one can, it's impossible, but should know where to find them and what they apply to. It's like being the captain of a ship, you can't know everything about the operation of the vessel, but you sure can know enough about the different departments (a little about everything) and who on the ship to consult, i.e. ops, electrical or machinery, and or deck officers, where to find the standard operation procedure and the basic damage control procedures.

Over the years I've had the opportunity to browse emails from members, listened to conversations at meetings and general conversations at the bar, and have always wondered why someone would ask; "Does anyone know what ABYC standard this applies to if any? Can someone look it up for me please"?

My initial impression is that the person posting or asking this question cannot find it in the standards or is not a member of ABYC which is most likely the reason they are asking.

I wonder how many surveyors joined ABYC two, three or five years ago or more just to get the current standard at that time, and not renew their membership the following year because they didn't think it was necessary? Those standards of two to five years ago could have and most likely have been changed and the standard you are quoting in your report has been updated. I've had the pleasure over the years meeting a number of attorneys that know about ABYC/NFPA and CFR's, and they know where to find the information they need to try their case. Some of their law clerks are pretty savvy when it comes finding information about standards and are responsible for letting their boss know about them. By the way, the CFR's are incorporated into the ABYC standards as well as ICOMIA.

Are you aware that ABYC has a "Standards Week" every year with many people **volunteering** their time on Project Technical Committee's, reviewing the current standards and making changes to them if necessary. These volunteers are surveyors, electrical engineers, manufactures reps, naval architects, USCG just to name a few. The electrical and fuel standards being the ones that seem to get the most attention, but that's not all.

Many other standards are reviewed after a few years to see if there are any changes that need to be made, i.e. helm visibility, CO, fuel lines etc..

Cont.

Can you imagine a naval architect not having the **basic knowledge** of stability, or an electrical engineer not knowing the NEC code, a structural engineer not knowing strength of materials or a marine mechanic not knowing how to do an engine download or leak down or compression test? Every good technician has a library full of books and repair manuals and refers to them often as I'm sure most of us have. These standards are all updated to keep up with safety and protecting the general public which is part of your practice as a good marine surveyor.

Our industry is changing on a daily basis. I'm sure you will all agree with me that we cannot keep up with all the new products that are being installed on vessels today. If you have the opportunity, attend an IBEX show, you will be overwhelmed with all the new products that we must deal with when surveying or doing a damage claim. Even the best marine technicians in our industry will admit this, that's why many of them will attend school each year to get updated on product changes.

I started in the business before we had moisture meters or infrared cameras, the only tools we used at the time was a hammer, voltmeter, flashlight, clipboard and the ABYC manual. It seemed a little easier back then, but times change and change is good. I joined ABYC in 1986 after leaving the Brunswick Maine marine surveyors meeting which was the start of SAMS<sup>®</sup> to some extent, and have been a member ever since.

At the time their office was located on Long Island and when I went to the office and paid my dues (I think it was less than \$50 at the time) I was given my ABYC loose leaf binder which I thought was pretty big then. When I got back to my office I couldn't believe what was in it, and at that time it was about 1/3 the size of what it is now. I carried it with me all the time in my truck and many times would bring it on the vessel I was inspecting to verify my suspicions about something I observed or wasn't sure of. We can't know everything. There have been a number of times that I've called the ABYC office, asked a question about a standard from the field and the verse and chapter were quoted to me by a technical staff member, and most importantly if there wasn't a standard it was duly noted in my report.

Many of us pay a hefty fee each year for reference tools, websites, i.e. BucValue Pro, Soldboats, advertising, local marine group, etc. just to name a few. Below are some of the costs associated with them.

Moisture meter cost	\$655.00 general have more than one.
A quality electrical meter	\$500.00
Annual Dues for societies	\$700.00 / society
Buc value pro	\$375.00 / year
Soldboats	\$700.00 / year
Cable / internet	\$1000 - \$1200 / year
ABYC	\$225.00 / year
NFPA	\$225.00 / year

Is the cost really that expensive to renew ABYC every year? You can justify the cost per year which breaks down to about \$20 / month, \$5 / week by adding that to a survey once per week. This is not a sales pitch for ABYC, *it's a practical pitch for common sense and protecting your butt from an E&O claim.*

Cont.

By the way, I mention NFPA above because having been a member of NFPA 302, Motor Craft Safety Standard for over 30 years has really rounded out my practice especially when doing marine fires on vessels or marinas. NFPA is a FIRE safety standard and is recognized by the courts for fire investigations internationally. NFPA has several marine fire standard publications that are reviewed every 5 years to see if there are any changes that need to be considered. Fire investigators will turn to NFPA standards as the bible for marine fires and use ABYC as a secondary source of reference.

So, next time you receive your dues invoice, don't think twice about paying it and getting the new standards. For the last several years you can go online, open the standard, cut and paste the standard right into your report. How great is that !

One last sentence if you will.

**IF YOU THINK EDUCATION IS EXPENSIVE TRY IGNORANCE.**

**KEN WEINBRECHT, SAMS<sup>®</sup> AMS<sup>®</sup>, NAMS- CMS, ASA, CMI STILL HAVING FUN AND LOVING WHAT I DO.**





**Joseph A. Derie, AMS<sup>®</sup>**  
**SAMS<sup>®</sup> Commercial Workboat Chair**  
**SAMS<sup>®</sup> Tug & Barge Chair**  
**Safety Committee**



## OSHA AND CONFINED SPACES – ONLINE TRAINING

There are a number of courses available online to provide OSHA one day confined space training.

From the OSHA website: ““OSHA one day confined space training refers to a single-day course designed to educate workers on the safety procedures required when entering confined spaces, adhering to OSHA regulations (specifically 29 CFR 1910.146), covering topics like identifying confined spaces, assessing hazards, using proper atmospheric monitoring equipment, rescue procedures, and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) needed for safe entry into confined spaces.”

Key points about a one-day OSHA confined space training:

### **Focus on essential knowledge:**

This course aims to provide the basic understanding needed to work safely in confined spaces, including recognizing potential hazards, understanding permit-required confined space procedures, and knowing when to call for assistance.

### **Target audience:**

Workers who may be required to enter confined spaces in their job, including those in industries like construction, manufacturing, and maintenance.

### **Course content:**

- Definition of a confined space.
- Identifying hazards within confined spaces (atmospheric, physical, etc..).
- Proper use of atmospheric monitoring equipment.
- Confined space entry permit procedures.
- Rescue planning and procedures.
- Appropriate PPE for confined space entry.

### **Certification:**

Upon completion, participants typically receive a certificate indicating they have completed the required OSHA confined space training.

The below are a partial list of online one-day OSHA confined space training courses with their provider and some comments.

Oregon State OSHA:

<https://osha.oregon.gov/edu/courses/pages/confined-spaces-online-course.aspx> There is no cost for this course. A user can download ppt for instructors and a guidebook. I took this course, and it was very well done and worth your time. Although, focused on Oregon specific OSHA rules, the basic OSHA requirements are included. I googled several states (Washington, California, Louisiana and Florida) and this was the only free course I found. The online state specific courses in these states can be taken for \$25.

Cont.

The Hazmat School:

<https://www.hazmatschool.com/osha-confined-space-safety-training-1289/> The cost of this course is \$59,

OSHA Education Center:

<https://www.oshaeducationcenter.com/compliance-training/permit-required-confined-spaces-certificate/> The education center is not affiliated with federal OSHA. This course is applicable to construction rather than general OSHA. The cost of this course is \$24.95.

<https://www.nationaloshafoundation.com>. The cost of this course is \$49.

<https://www.clicksafety.com>. The cost of this course is \$25.

OSHA.com:

<https://www.osha.com/courses/confined-space.html> The education center is not affiliated with federal OSHA. This offers the 8-hour general industry course for \$159.

## Congratulations to SAMS® New AMS® Retirees

Arthur (Art) Whiting

Jerry Schmitt

Stan Walker

Jeff McDaniel

John (Jack) Morman

Alan Gaidelis

Troy Tirrell

James Curry

Frederick (Rick) Rose



**Wishing you lots of enjoyment and relaxation in whatever you decide to spend your time doing !!!**



# Termites of The Caribbean

Yikes! dry-wood termites could be eating your beautiful boat!

By Tony Gagliardo  
[www.GlobalYachtSurveyor.com](http://www.GlobalYachtSurveyor.com)

Imagine you are the owner of a gorgeous, modern classic sailing yacht. You take amazing care of her; you spare no expense or effort in maintaining her condition. From the tip of her bow, suspended over the water, sweeping back to her glistening varnished taffrail—everything is kept perfect. You are vigilant in protecting her. You are known for harassing your guests to only touch your deck with their bare feet and to leave no chemical trace of repellent, sunscreen, or anything aerosol that might deposit a residue that could scar her teak or dissolve her perfect varnish. You take no cardboard or other insect life-supporting objects aboard her. You've never had roaches (okay, just one) and nothing more than the occasional fly or mosquito.

The pandemic hit while you stored her on the hard for nearly three years and eventually began to work on your boat, starting with a marine survey. Then the bad news: Your surveyor says you've got TERMITES, and your immediate thought is they're eating your beloved wooden yacht!

It's all hands-on deck, with no time to waste getting rid of them!

Treatment depends on several factors, starting with determining the type of termites you have. In the Caribbean and southern United States, there are two types of these wood-eating pests: Subterranean and Dry Wood Termites.

Subterranean termites are what visitors to the Caribbean are likely more familiar with since they affect buildings and structures back home that are on *terra firma*, where the pests move from the soil and into wood structures near or on the ground. They build mud tubes from the soil to their food source, which includes cellulose-based materials like wood. They rapidly destroy the structures they invade. Since boats are either in the water or stored well above ground, subterranean termites can be hindered from entering your vessel due to the open-air distance they would need to travel to enter your boat. Since a stored boat will sit on her keel and have shoring stands supporting her, pathways are well-defined, easily seen, and can be kept clear. Many owners coat their keel blocks and shoring stand screws in heavy grease that creates a barrier for any bugs like roaches, ants, and even subterranean termites that insects would avoid crawling over.

Drywood termites are another matter. They are termite species that infest and feed on dry, sound wood. Unlike subterranean termites that require contact with soil, drywood termites do not rely on the ground for survival and moisture. Instead, they infest dry wood found in structures, furniture, and other wooden items. In the Caribbean and tropics, boats stored in yards where there are forests and infected structures nearby are at great risk since dry wood termites spread by flying over to your boat, landing on it, and finding their way inside.

Here are some key characteristics and behaviors of dry wood termites:

1. **Habitat:** Drywood termites typically live within the wood they infest, creating their colonies and galleries directly inside the timber. They do not require contact with soil or moisture sources.
2. **Feeding Patterns:** Drywood termites consume cellulose found in dry wood, including furniture, structural wood, flooring, and wooden fixtures. They extract moisture from the wood and can cause significant damage over time.
3. **Infestation Signs:** Common signs of dry wood termite infestation include the presence of fecal pellets (tiny, granular pellets that resemble sawdust), discarded wings near windows or light sources, small kick-out holes on the surface of infested wood, and hollow or papery sound-when tapping infested wood.
4. **Geographic Distribution:** Drywood termites are found in various regions worldwide, but they are more prevalent in warmer climates. In the United States, they are commonly found in coastal areas of the southern states.

It's important to note that dry wood termites differ from subterranean termites in their habitat, behavior, and treatment methods. Understanding the specific type of termite infestation is crucial for implementing appropriate control measures and protecting wooden structures and items from damage.

Cont.

When it comes to boats, termites can infest and damage wooden components such as the hull, decking, and structural supports. They can weaken the wood, compromising the integrity and safety of the vessel over time if left untreated. Once inside a boat, they typically target areas that have high moisture content, as it provides a suitable environment for their survival.

Not all boats are susceptible to termite damage, especially those made from materials other than wood, such as fiberglass or aluminum. However, for wooden boats or boats with wooden elements, proper preventive measures and regular inspections are essential to detect and address any termite infestation promptly.

Preventing dry wood termites: sealing up any entrance points, no exposed damp structural wood (exterior teak is fine). Frequent inspections for frass (termite poop), wings, and active termites flying and landing on your boat.

Signs of termite infestation may include:

1. Presence of termite 'swarmers' (winged reproductive termites) around the boat or near wooden structures.
2. Mud tubes or tunnels on the boat's exterior, especially on wooden supports, hull, or decking.
3. Hollow or damaged wooden components, such as beams, frames, or flooring.
4. Presence of termite droppings or frass (small, pellet-like excrement) near infested areas.
5. Weakened or sagging sections of the boat's structure.



Wood Termite Frass (poop)  
Dry Wood Termite Infested Wood  
(larvae and frass)



Treatment options:

Addressing drywood termite infestations typically involves localized treatments, such as spot treatments, fumigation, or heat treatments, depending on the extent of the infestation and accessibility to the affected areas. Professional pest control

services are usually required to eliminate dry wood termites effectively. In most boat cases that I have been involved with, fumigation is the best option. It penetrates every crevice and permeates deep into wood structures where the termites are

active, killing them all outright, and has the benefit of ridding of other pests that may have taken up residence in your boat. Fumigation also leaves no lingering residue; once ventilated away, there is no risk to humans or pets. Since boats are

mostly weather-tight, sealing them up is relatively easy when done with masking tape and plastic. Only on open boats that can't be sealed to contain the fumigation gas will "tenting" be necessary.

If a termite infestation is suspected, it is crucial to contact a professional pest control or marine surveyor specializing in termite inspections. They can assess the extent of the infestation and provide appropriate treatment options to eliminate the termites and repair any damage caused.

Here are a few references for more detail about dry wood termites:

[https://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/URBAN/TERMITES/Cryptotermes\\_brevis\\_west\\_indian\\_drywood\\_termite.HTM](https://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/URBAN/TERMITES/Cryptotermes_brevis_west_indian_drywood_termite.HTM)

<https://www.termitediversity.org>



**Steve Heinrich, AMS<sup>®</sup>  
Safety Committee Chair**

Protecting the Marine Surveyor from Mold and Bilge Water Hazards

Marine surveyors often face hazardous conditions when inspecting vessels. Understanding mold and bilge water risks ensures safety and minimizes exposure to harmful contaminants.

**Anticipating Risks.** Marine environments create ideal conditions for mold growth and bilge water contamination. Poor ventilation, confined spaces, and stagnant water can harbor toxins, bacteria, and dangerous gases. Surveyors should recognize high-risk areas, including bilges, cabins, and storage spaces.

**Hazard Identification**

Confined spaces can present life-threatening dangers, including:

- Carbon monoxide poisoning
- Oxygen depletion
- Hydrogen sulfide exposure
- Explosive vapors

**Safety Measures:**

- Take a confined space safety course.
- Use a 4-gas monitor to detect airborne hazards.
- Always wear detection equipment during inspections.

**Bilge Water Hazards**

Bilge water may contain oil, fuel, sewage, and disease-causing microorganisms. Exposure can lead to severe infections, particularly if surveyors have open wounds. Pathogens like *Vibrio vulnificus*, MRSA, and *Clostridium tetani* pose significant health threats.

**Preventive Steps:**

- Wear waterproof gloves and boots.
- Avoid direct contact with contaminated water.
- Be cautious of chemical burns and slip hazards.

**Mold Hazards**

Mold thrives in damp, poorly ventilated areas and can trigger respiratory issues, allergic reactions, and toxic exposure. Surveyors should watch for indications that mold growth may be present, such as discoloration, musty odors, and visible mold growth.

**Personal Protection and Hygiene:**

- **PPE:** Wear nitrile gloves and safety glasses. Wear waterproof boots and disposable coveralls if necessary.
- **Respiratory Protection:** Use N95 masks or P100 respirators in high-risk areas.
- **Vaccinations:** Keep tetanus shots up to date.
- **Safe Work Practices:** Limit disturbance of mold, use moisture meters, and follow proper ventilation protocols.

Hygiene and Decontamination:

- Wash hands thoroughly with antibacterial soap after inspections.
- Sanitize tools and reusable PPE after each job.
- Dispose of contaminated materials properly.

Emergency Response:

- Mold Exposure: Seek fresh air if respiratory symptoms develop.
- Chemical Exposure: Flush skin or eyes with water for 15 minutes.
- Severe Symptoms: Seek medical attention immediately.

By taking proactive measures, marine surveyors can mitigate risks and ensure a safe working environment while conducting vessel inspections.



**Attention All AMS® Members**

The SAMS® Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for the upcoming election of officers at the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, September 12, 2025, in Baltimore, MD. Any AMS® members interested in running for an elective office should apply in writing with accompanying documentation to show the Nominating Committee your qualifications, knowledge and understanding of SAMS® Policies and By-laws. The letters should be addressed to the SAMS® International Office. To the attention of the Chairman/Nominating Committee. Must be received by April 15th. Nominations can also be made from the floor during the Annual Business Meeting, per SAMS® Policy.



# UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

## MARINE SAFETY ALERT

### Inspections and Compliance Directorate

February 6, 2025  
Washington DC

Safety Alert 06-25

## BOW SEATING EJECTION HAZARD

This Safety Alert addresses the dangers identified for passengers seated at the bow of bow rider style vessels, while the vessels are on plane or in rough sea conditions. A 23-foot Cobalt bow rider style recreational vessel was underway with 12 passengers onboard on the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway when it encountered a large wake created by another vessel ahead. The wake caused the Cobalt to roll severely and pitch forward, swamping the bow. Nine of the occupants were ejected. The passenger seated at the forwardmost bow seat was subsequently struck by the vessel's propeller and killed. A similar fatal accident occurred in July of 2022, when an overloaded 24-foot boat capsized while traveling at high speeds in the Hudson River off Manhattan with passengers seated in the bow area.



Swamping of the bow can happen quickly and without warning, even when a boat is loaded in compliance with the manufacturer's capacity plate, as in the scenario described above. The operator's judgment is crucial in considering securing access to the bow area when the vessel is operating in less than ideal sea conditions. The likelihood of the vessel experiencing unstable or erratic motion will increase with greater sea state, speed, and vessel loading conditions with passengers and gear at the bow. These circumstances, as well as individual passenger capabilities, should be considered when determining if the closure of the bow area is necessary.

The U.S. Coast Guard **strongly recommends** that operators of bow rider style vessels adhere to manufacturer's recommended occupant positions as applicable. If no manufacturer recommendations are available, operators should relocate passengers from the bow seating area to aft seats while their vessels are operating on plane, above 5 mph, or in rough conditions.

The U.S. Coast Guard **strongly recommends** that manufacturers of bow rider style vessels take the following measures:

- Designate occupant positions and weight allowances for vessels operating on plane, above 5 mph, or in rough conditions. The occupant positions should be illustrated on a label aboard the boats, as well as in the owner's manual. Placards and updated owner's manuals should be distributed to existing boats.

- Establish an advisory of the hazards of using bow seats while the vessel is on plane, above 5 mph, or in rough conditions. This advisory should be posted on a label aboard the boats, as well as in the owner's manual. Placards and updated owner's manuals should be distributed to existing boats.

This Safety Alert is provided for informational purposes only and does not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirement. Developed by Sector Charleston and distributed by the Office of Investigations and Analysis. Questions may be sent to [HQS-SMB-CG-INV@uscg.mil](mailto:HQS-SMB-CG-INV@uscg.mil).





**UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

**MARINE SAFETY ALERT**

**Inspections and Compliance Directorate**

March 10, 2025  
Washington, DC

Safety Alert 08-25

**RECALLED DEFECTIVE MECHANICAL HEAT DETECTORS**

The Coast Guard recently investigated an engine room fire on board an inspected towing vessel which led to the discovery of issues with the maintenance and installation of fire detection systems on board multiple towing vessels. During the investigation, several towing vessels were discovered to have defective heat detectors installed in their engine rooms. These detectors had been recalled by the manufacturer in 2019 for failure to activate within their listed temperature range. Though the defective heat detectors identified on board these vessels were Edwards branded 280 series 135° F heat detectors, the Coast Guard wants to advise the entire marine industry that the safety recall also includes heat detectors sold under several different brandings. Below is the full list of mechanical heat detectors affected by this manufacturer safety recall:

Table 1: Affected models

Catalog Number	Description
104-13	Heat Detector, 135F, Rate of Rise and Fixed temperature, sold by Interlogix, NAPCO
104-15	Heat Detector, 135F, Fixed temperature, sold by Interlogix
1EYC2	Heat detector, 135F, Rate of Rise and Fixed temperature, Edwards, Grainger P/N
1EYC4	Heat Detector, 135F, Fixed temperature, Edwards, Grainger P/N
281A	Heat detector 135F, Fixed temperature and rate of rise, Edwards
281B-20pkg-OEM-UTC01	Heat Detector, 135F, Rate of Rise and Fixed temperature, Honeywell Security
281B-20pkg-OEM-UTC20	Heat Detector, 135F, Rate of Rise and Fixed temperature, Interlogix
281B-OEM-UTC01	Heat Detector, 135F, Rate of Rise and Fixed temperature, Honeywell Security
281B-PL	Heat detector, 135F, Rate of Rise and Fixed temperature, Edwards branded, Honeywell, JCI/Tyco, NAPCO
283B-20pkg-OEM-UTC01	Heat Detector, 135F, Fixed temperature, Honeywell Security
283B-PL	Heat Detector, 135F, Fixed temperature, Edwards branded, Honeywell, JCI/Tyco
73340U	Heat Detector, 135F, Fixed temperature and Rate of Rise, Mirtone
73342U	Heat Detector, 135F, Fixed temperature, Mirtone
AJ281B	Heat Detector, 135F, Fixed temperature and rate of rise, Edwards
AJ283B	Heat Detector, 135F, Fixed temperature, Edwards

The below photos show the affected Edwards branded 280 series heat detectors which were installed in the engine rooms of the affected towing vessels. These detectors can easily be identified by the collector disk mounted on the face of the detector and the 135° F temperature rating printed in large font on the side edge of the detector.



**Edwards 280 Series 135° F, non-restorable fixed-temperature (spot-type) heat detector**



**135° F temperature rating printed on side edge**

The Coast Guard **strongly recommends** that vessel owners, inspectors, fire alarm servicing personnel, and third-party surveyors:

- Identify any vessels with heat detectors affected by this safety recall and notify the cognizant Coast Guard Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection and Third-Party Organization (if applicable) so that a plan can be developed for their replacement. Companies should also lookout for any recalled detectors that may be kept in stock as replacement parts to ensure they are properly discarded.
- Companies should register their fire alarm system components with the component manufacturers, and sign-up to be on the manufacturer's electronic notification or mailing list. This will help to ensure that companies are notified by fire alarm system component manufacturers whenever a device is discovered to be defective or has a safety recall issued.
- Be aware that manufacturers often produce several detector models which look identical to one another. Often the only way to discern what detector is installed and what testing/maintenance is required, is to verify the make and model number that is printed or labeled on the detector against manufacturer documentation.

This Safety Alert is provided for informational purposes only and does not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirement. Developed by Marine Safety Unit Chicago and distributed by the Office of Investigations and Casualty Analysis. Questions may be sent to [HQS-SMB-CG-INV@uscg.mil](mailto:HQS-SMB-CG-INV@uscg.mil).

# THANK YOU FROM A GREATFUL CANADA

## How Jimmy Carter Saved a Canadian Nuclear Reactor After a Meltdown !!

America's 39th president has held a lot of jobs in his time. Apart from being president of the United States (and sometimes while serving as president), Jimmy Carter has been a peanut farmer, preacher, professor and even a parole officer. But he started his adult life as a U.S. Navy officer, most famously working with Adm. Hyman Rickover, the "Father of the Nuclear Navy."

Though he started his naval career aboard diesel electric submarines, Lt. Carter began working with the Naval Reactors Branch of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission -- the Navy's nuclear submarine program -- in 1952.



Jimmy Carter started his adult life as a young U.S. naval officer. (U.S. Navy) Rickover was infamous in the Navy for demanding near-absolute perfection from those working under his command. His expectations of the then-28-year-old Carter were no different. The young lieutenant was being groomed as the engineering officer for the nuclear plant aboard the USS Seawolf, the Navy's second nuclear sub, and was designing the training program for its nuclear enlisted personnel. The Navy's work in developing the first nuclear submarine, the USS Nautilus, meant that Rickover and Carter had access to the latest and greatest in top-secret nuclear energy technology. So when Canada's Chalk River nuclear research facility experienced a power surge that damaged its reactor, the U.S. sent Carter and his team. He was one of a few people in the world who could do it.

Fuel rods at the research reactor experienced a partial meltdown after the power surge. It ruptured the reactor and flooded the facility's basement with radioactive water, rendering the reactor core unusable. In his 2015 autobiography, "A Full Life: Reflections At Ninety," Carter described the incident and his preparations for repairing the reactor. They built an exact replica of the reactor, true to the last detail (except the actual nuclear material) on a nearby tennis court to practice and track their progress.

Carter and his 22 other team members were separated into teams of three and lowered into the reactor for 90-second intervals to clean the site. It was estimated that a minute-and-a-half was the maximum time humans could be exposed to the levels of radiation present in the area. It was still too much, especially by today's standards. The future president had radioactive urine for months after the cleanup.

Cont.



Lt. James Earl (Jimmy) Carter Jr. in main control room of USS K-1. (U.S. Navy) "We were fairly well-instructed then on what nuclear power was, but for about six months after that, I had radioactivity in my urine," Carter told CNN in 2008. "They let us get probably a thousand times more radiation than they would now. It was in the early stages, and they didn't know." The exposure was especially dangerous for Carter, whose family medical history is full of cancer deaths. His father died of pancreatic cancer in 1953, which led to Carter leaving the Navy that year. Cancerous tumors were found on the former president's liver and brain in 2015 as he turned 91, but quick diagnosis and treatment led to a cancer-free bill of health a year later. His extensive knowledge of nuclear reactors and energy would come in handy when Carter became president in 1977, as other world leaders respected his knowledge on the subject.

## DALI Drama: Baltimore Bridge To Nowhere

By JAMES E. MERCANTE

March 25, 2025

It has been one year since the massive cargo ship DALI knocked down the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Maryland on March 26, 2024. It was shocking to see a shoreside video of the iconic bridge collapse like bowling pins with one solid strike.

On impact just after 1:00 a.m., six construction workers on the bridge went airborne into the river below to their deaths, two others were injured, one crewmember on the bow of the ship was injured from falling wreckage. The Port of Baltimore was shut down for months as salvage crews worked to remove the ship from the Patapsco River along with thousands of tons of bridge wreckage off the ship and out of the water.

The early conspiracy theory fuses have fizzled like duds, but litigation has exploded. Billions in claims have been filed against the ship owner Grace Ocean Private Limited and its management company Synergy Marine Pte, Ltd. in United States District Court of Maryland, Northern Division. The court's docket alone in just one-year totals 162 pages with 493 entries.

### SHIP FIRES FIRST-TO LIMIT LIABILITY

The first litigation shot was fired within one week of the casualty (April 1) but not by a claimant. Rather, the ship owners and managers (Petitioners) filed a federal admiralty limitation of liability action pursuant to 46 USC §30501, *et seq*,



Credit: NTSB.gov via Wikimedia Commons

in the district of Maryland seeking exoneration from liability or to limit liability to the ship's post-casualty value alleged to total less than \$44 million (known in admiralty as the "limitation fund"). FRCP *Rule F*, Supplemental Rules for Admiralty or Maritime claims.

This valuation is being disputed by claimants. The claimants' mission will be to defeat the limitation action as the replacement of the Key Bridge alone is estimated to cost over \$1.0 billion. A limitation action was not unexpected.

This is standard procedure in any marine casualty, no matter the size of vessel or nature of the incident. Soon after the ship owner filed its limitation action, Senior District Judge James K. Bredar, with substantial admiralty case experience, took charge of the litigation.

A limitation action serves to streamline the litigation because settlements will follow if the court determines Petitioners are entitled to limit their liability to the less than alleged \$44 million ship value. Petitioners in admiralty often settle claims outside of the limitation action.

This does not impact the limitation fund which remains available to other claimants still in the litigation. Indeed, the vessel owner already settled the federal government's claim for wreck removal and response costs for \$100 million in October 2024. The settlement also extinguished the government's claim for punitive damages.

The filing of the limitation action also prompted a California congressman to introduce an Amendment to the Limitation Act on Aug. 13, 2024 (H.R. 9348) to make the limitation 'ten times' the value of the ship and to apply retroactive to the casualty date. That proposal, named the *Justice for Victims of Foreign Vessel Accidents Act*, has picked up little to no steam in congress.

#### **CLAIMS AND DEFENSES-FULL SPEED AHEAD**

Nearly every claim imaginable in maritime law is evident. The claims include rebuilding the bridge, hull and machinery loss to the ship, wreck removal, salvage, cargo loss and damage, shipping container damage claims, pollution cleanup, vessel charter party disputes in the UK, ship owner's admiralty claim in New York for a "general average" contribution from cargo interests, personal injury, wrongful death, and an FBI investigation that may result in criminal charges under the Seaman's Manslaughter Statute.

The closure of the river and destruction of the bridge implicates a substantial business interruption claim by the Port of Baltimore and state of Maryland. Since 1927, business interruption losses are not recoverable in admiralty without proof of physical damage. *Robins Dry Dock & Repair Co. v. Flint*, 275 U.S. 303 (1927). Thus, while the bridge owner, state of Maryland, will have a viable business interruption claim, the hundreds of businesses that filed a class action lawsuit may not.

These claims face an uphill battle under the *Robins Dry Dock* rationale, but the class action claimants are attempting an end around the *Robins* damages restriction by relying upon certain exceptions to *Robins* that courts have recognized such as public nuisance, criminal, intentional or reckless acts.

However, under the court's multiple case management orders, none of the damages claims will see the light of day (or any dispositive motions to dismiss same) before the vessel owner's petition for exoneration from or limitation of liability is determined in the first instance.

This makes good procedural sense in handling a complex admiralty litigation. Thus, the scope of discovery is for the most part being bifurcated to obtain a ruling first on exoneration or limitation, and if neither succeed, to move into the numerous claims for damages and dispositive motions. Judge Bedar's rationale is to resolve the limitation question first, and only then turn to the merits of the individual claims. *Lewis v. Lewis & Clark Marine, Inc.*, 531 U.S. 438, 448 (2001); Case Management Order No. 3; Document 438; 11/07/24.

The judge noted that "even if certain claims were dismissed early in the life of this case, there would be no appreciable difference in the complexity of the Phase 1 trial, which would focus on the exact same issues regardless of which claimants participated". Citing *In re Oil Spill by the Oil Rig Deepwater Horizon*, 808 F. Supp.2d 943, 964-65 (E.D.La. 2011). The limitation action in Phase 1 will focus first on the DALI's seaworthiness and/or negligence which is claimants' burden to prove.

If claimants prove fault of the ship or its crew, the burden then shifts to petitioners (as the ship owners ashore) to prove that they were without privity or knowledge of the condition of the ship or onboard negligence that was responsible for the collision.

Other damage issues to be decided after phase I will likely include the defense of 'betterment' to the bridge as well as any deduction for

'depreciation'. Reduction in damages for 'betterment' or 'upgrades' to the newly constructed bridge is typically within the judge's discretion. Such evidence of upgrades could include a better reinforced bridge and pilings, adding more lanes and tolls, greater vehicle capacity, and higher elevation to accommodate larger ships.

Another issue on the radar will be the state of Maryland allegedly having ignored warnings as early as 1983 in a bridge study that the Key Bridge was in need of strengthening and protection in light of the larger and heavier ships calling on the port.

### CAUSE AND EFFECT

The NTSB concluded that a primary electrical breaker that feeds most of the DALI's equipment and lighting tripped. This caused a complete blackout (loss of electrical power) and shut down the main propulsion diesel engine.

The NTSB also determined during its investigation that the ship had two power outages (complete blackouts) on March 25th, just 10 hours prior to its scheduled departure from Baltimore. Power was restored and the crew switched to a different breaker panel and transformer for departure on March 26th. See NTSB Reports on DALI crash, May 14, 2024; June 24, 2024.

No part of an NTSB's final accident report "may be submitted into evidence or used in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report". 49 USC §1154(b). The NTSB's investigatory procedures are not designed to facilitate litigation. See, James Mercante and Kristin Poling, *Soup to Nuts: Navigating Marine Casualty Investigations*, 43 Tulane Maritime Law Journal, p. 359. Similarly, coast guard reports are not admissible in civil action.

Interestingly, on March 18, 2025, the NTSB issued a report concluding that had the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) "conducted a vulnerability assessment of the bridge based on

recent vessel traffic, as recommended by a 1991 and 2009 American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) *Guide Specifications*, the MDTA would have been aware that this bridge was well above the threshold of risk for catastrophic collapse from a vessel collision when the DALI collision occurred". It remains to be seen how this finding will impact litigation.

### CREW DETAINED

The key deck and engine crew members of the DALI (mostly from India or Singapore) have been detained by the U.S. Department of Justice pending not only the FBI and DOJ criminal investigation but also until testimony in the multiple civil suits could be taken before the crew departs the jurisdiction.

The crew depositions are underway with ten or so crew depositions completed as of this writing, including the ship captain, deck officers, engineers and the independent Maryland State Pilot. For the Maryland State Pilot, this was a routine bridge transit; one likely that he had performed a thousand times with ships of all sizes.

The pilot's heroic actions including immediately radioing a mayday to alert local authorities, other marine traffic on VHF radio, and the bridge tender when the collision became inevitable, provided time for the bridge to be evacuated, thus saving lives.

A bench trial is set for June 1, 2026 to resolve the Phase 1 issues. By comparison, the 1989 EXXON VALDEZ grounding and oil spill in Prince William Sound, Alaska, took 20 years to reach finality. With Judge Bedard at the helm, this voyage should reach its destination much faster.

**JAMES E. MERCANTE** is a partner at Gallo Vitucci Klar LLP (in merger with his former firm Rubin, Fiorella, Friedman & Mercante LLP) and President of the Board of Commissioners of Pilots of the State of New York. **RICHARD GONZALEZ**, of counsel, assisted in the preparation of this article.

# BAD BOAT PICS







## IMPORTANT MEMBER INFORMATION



### **2025 SAMS<sup>®</sup> International Meeting & Educational Conference (IMEC) September 9 - 12 Hyatt Regency, Baltimore, MD**

#### CE Credits:

Don't forget to check the website under "Education" for ideas to obtain CE's.

### **Legal Liability Insurance from the International Office**

One of the important benefits that you receive from being a SAMS<sup>®</sup> member is the Legal Liability insurance. I felt a little clarity would be helpful especially for our newer members. It is important that you understand what this in-surance covers and more importantly, what it does not cover. The simplified description comes from a more detailed explanation provided by our insurance agent Roanoke Brokerage Services, Inc. This pol-icy covers your legal liability for physical damage to property or bodily injury to per-sons, as a direct result of your actions while you are actually in the act of performing a survey. Examples of such incidents might be:

- the vessel catches fire or sinks during or immediately after your survey, which is the direct result of something you damaged;
- you accidentally spilled something onto the deck or in the bilge that results in an expensive repair or clean-up;
- you break an engine part while climbing around the engine room;
- or your client trips over your tool bag resulting in serious injury.

These are a few examples, but the policy is not limited to these types of incidents. Now, the policy does not cover incident's which are considered "Errors and Omissions" in nature or in other words, incidents where you are held responsible for overlooking, misjudging, or mistaking something during your survey. Several examples would be: a client sues you because he or she purchases a boat on your advice and later discovers the vessel needs significant repair or a vessel sinks because you missed a bad sea water hose.

There will be times that a marina will ask to be named as a "certificate holder". All requests must go through the International Office and not directly to Roanoke. All you need to do is send us their company name, address and requester's email. We in turn send Roanoke proof that you are a current member, and they usually complete it within a few hours. They will send the "Accord" certificate to the requester with a copy to you. Due to unforeseen circumstances, we kindly ask that you do not wait until the day of the survey to request an insurance certificate.

Also, there has also been some confusion lately with a few marinas asking to be listed as an "Additional Insured". Please note, this is usually for "General Liability" which we do not offer at SAMS<sup>®</sup> and Roanoke cannot provide that for you. As always, please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have.



## MEMBER'S CORNER DECEMBER 2024 - MARCH 2025

The following members are now  
Accredited Marine Surveyors with the  
earned designator:

### “YACHTS & SMALL CRAFT”

*Posse, Mario, Miami, FL\*  
*Behring, Norman, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, Canada*  
*Habel, Dan, Honolulu, HI*

### “HULL & MACHINERY”

NONE

The following people have been  
accepted into SAMS® as:

### “ SURVEYOR ASSOCIATES”

*Kenneth W. Baughman, Falmouth, MA*  
*Derek Bottles, Seattle, WA*  
*David Butler, York, ME*  
*Andrew Carlson, Seattle, WA*  
*Cory Collier, Marathon, FL*  
*Charles J. Faulk, Pensacola, FL*  
*Jean-Pierry Ferreira, Brazil*  
*Michael Drouillard, Howell, MI*  
*Andrew Gallant, New Bern, NC*  
*Parker Hackett, Camden, ME*  
*Owen P. Harren, Norton, MA*  
*Shaun Keating, Charlestown, RI*  
*Nelson Martinez, Hialeah, FL*  
*Michael Midgley, San Diego, CA*  
*Pierry Ferreira, Itajai/SC, Brazil*  
*Anthony P. DiLorenzo, Syracuse, NY*  
*Dave Seagrim, Ontario Canada*  
*Mitchell Manders, Arnold, MD*  
*Denis Serov, Quebec, Canada*  
*Eric Takakjian, Fairhaven, MA*  
*Kevin Tear, Fort Lauderdale, FL*  
*Christopher Walsh, Croton on Hudson, NY*  
*Zac Zipperian, North Bend, OH*

### APPLICANTS SEEKING SAMS® MEMBERSHIP:

*Furat Abraham, Pheonix, AZ*  
*Shaun Ashton, Somerset, MA*  
*Christopher J. Aubut,, Duxbury, MA*  
*Griffin Bartlett, Freedom, ME*  
*Michael C. Berg-Hansen, Jensen Beach, FL*  
*Joseph C. Buser, Great River, NY*  
*Luis Cacciaguerra, Miami, FL*  
*Jason L. Caple, Victoria, Canada*  
*Alberto Carranza, Ft. Lauderdale, FL*  
*Douglas S. Carroll, Cordova, AK*  
*Mark Cartret, Shallotte, NC*  
*Jack R. Clayton, Miami, FL*  
*Nicholas Cote, Nanaimo, BC, Canada*  
*Richard D'Argento, North Palm Beach, FL*  
*John DiFilippo, Salisbury, MA*  
*Anthony C. Ebnet, Virginia, MN*  
*Craig English, Easton, MD*  
*Scott Felegy, West Barnstable, MA*  
*Michael J. Foster, Coventry, RI*  
*Peter Gulick Fort Lauderdale, FL*  
*John “Scott” Kost, Sparta, TN*  
*Kyle Majka, Freehold, NJ*  
*David McCurdy, Newport, RI*  
*Kelly Gene O'Day, Nayarit, Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico*  
*Jason Parker, Berlin, MD*  
*Ryan, Poplaski Epping, NH*  
*Kevin Brian Quinn, Fort Lauderdale, FL*  
*James P. Rakoczy, Davie, FL*  
*Hugh Ritchie Toronto, ON, Canada*  
*Jason Scott-Douglas Watford, ON Canada*  
*Paul Michael Szejek, Mt. Pleasant, SC*  
*Robert Thornton, Sooke, BC Canada*  
*William Walter Williams, Decatur, AL*



# Society of Accredited of Marine Surveyors®

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### President

Kristoffer A. Diel, AMS®  
[oceansurveys@msn.com](mailto:oceansurveys@msn.com)  
 504-236-8151

### Immediate Past President

John Lowe, AMS®  
[captursa@aol.com](mailto:captursa@aol.com)  
 516-359-0806

### Public Relations Vice President

Eddy J. Assaf, Jr., AMS®  
[info@avtechmarine.com](mailto:info@avtechmarine.com)  
 514-248-0756

### Meetings/Conventions

**Vice President**  
 Joe B. Lobley, AMS®  
[jblmarine@roadrunner.com](mailto:jblmarine@roadrunner.com)  
 207-557-5300

### Executive Vice President

Gary Frankovich, AMS®  
[garyfrankovich@gmail.com](mailto:garyfrankovich@gmail.com)  
 904-377-0475

### Membership Vice President

Chuck Solarek, AMS®  
[cws659@outlook.com](mailto:cws659@outlook.com)  
 206-225-3045

### Testing Vice President

Angel Zeno, AMS®  
[vptesting@aamarinesurvey.com](mailto:vptesting@aamarinesurvey.com)  
 616-826-9121

### Secretary/Treasurer

Randell B. Sharpe, AMS®  
[rsharpe@sharpesurveying.com](mailto:rsharpe@sharpesurveying.com)  
 510-337-0706

### Education Vice President

Kenneth Weinbrecht, AMS®  
[oceanbaymarine@yahoo.com](mailto:oceanbaymarine@yahoo.com)  
 631-924-4362

### International Office

Executive Director.....	<a href="#">Rhea P. Shea</a>
Admin. Asst./Membership.....	<a href="#">Cheryl Roach</a>
Admin. Asst./Support.....	<a href="#">Jessica Mancheno</a>
Admin. Asst./Education .....	<a href="#">Mark Shea</a>

## REGIONAL DIRECTORS

North East Region.....	Brian Williams, AMS®	<a href="mailto:williamsmarineservices@yahoo.com">williamsmarineservices@yahoo.com</a>	631-873-6800
Mid - Atlantic Region.....	William Robinson, AMS®	<a href="mailto:onslowbaymarine@gmail.com">onslowbaymarine@gmail.com</a>	910-547-8077
North Florida Region.....	Christopher B. Day, AMS®	<a href="mailto:cdayrad@gmail.com">cdayrad@gmail.com</a>	772-643-7300
South Florida Region.....	Rolando R. Santos, AMS®	<a href="mailto:sflrd@alphamarine.com">sflrd@alphamarine.com</a>	305-324-1555
Gulf Region.....	Ryan F. Uhlich, AMS®	<a href="mailto:seesharp@yahoo.com">seesharp@yahoo.com</a>	504-756-1610
Great Lakes Region .....	Richard Reichelsdorfer, AMS®	<a href="mailto:rich@marineproservice.com">rich@marineproservice.com</a>	920-889-0758
Pacific Region.....	Michael A Terminel, AMS®	<a href="mailto:survey@alaskasurvey.com">survey@alaskasurvey.com</a>	907-360-2145
Canadian Region.....	Alain P. Routhier	<a href="mailto:alain@discoverymarinesurveys.com">alain@discoverymarinesurveys.com</a>	604-318-1402
Asia Pacific Region.....	Ruchin C. Dayal, AMS®	<a href="mailto:ruchin@edot-solutions.com">ruchin@edot-solutions.com</a>	+91-832-2501715
European Region.....	Roberto Scalvini, AMS®	<a href="mailto:robby@msb-palma.com">robby@msb-palma.com</a>	+34-971-403-370

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Cargo Chair.....	Dan McDonald, AMS®	<a href="mailto:dan.mcdonald@mcdonaldmarinesurveys.com">dan.mcdonald@mcdonaldmarinesurveys.com</a>	416-670-1160
Diesel Engine Chair.....	Dennis Guthrie, AMS®	<a href="mailto:gutmarinc@bellsouth.net">gutmarinc@bellsouth.net</a>	954-294-4481
Gas Engine Chair.....	Reinier Van Der Herp, AMS®	<a href="mailto:rvmarinesurveying@gmail.com">rvmarinesurveying@gmail.com</a>	609-618-8511
Ethics Chair.....	Gary Frankovich, AMS®	<a href="mailto:garyfrankovich@gmail.com">garyfrankovich@gmail.com</a>	904-377-0475
Fishing Vessel Chair.....	Michael Andrews, AMS®	<a href="mailto:obxmarinesurvey@gmail.com">obxmarinesurvey@gmail.com</a>	252-202-3121
Hull & Machinery Chair.....	Rolando R. Santos, AMS®	<a href="mailto:sflrd@alphamarine.com">sflrd@alphamarine.com</a>	305-324-1555
Newsletter Chair/Editor.....	John Lowe, AMS®	<a href="mailto:captursa@aol.com">captursa@aol.com</a>	516-359-0806
Insurance Chair.....	Stuart McLea, AMS®	<a href="mailto:stuart@marinesurveys.ca">stuart@marinesurveys.ca</a>	902-789-1619
Commercial Workboat Chair.....	Joseph A. Derie, AMS®	<a href="mailto:joederie@comcast.net">joederie@comcast.net</a>	503-236-6818
Tug & Barge Chair.....	Joseph A. Derie, AMS®	<a href="mailto:joederie@comcast.net">joederie@comcast.net</a>	503-236-6818
Safety Committee Chair .....	Steve Heinrich, AMS®	<a href="mailto:steve@flagshipmarinesurvey.com">steve@flagshipmarinesurvey.com</a>	715-255-0515

## LIAISON

American Boat & Yacht Council .....	Kenneth Weinbrecht, AMS®	<a href="mailto:oceanbaymarine@yahoo.com">oceanbaymarine@yahoo.com</a>	631-924-4362
National Fire Protection Association.....	Kenneth Weinbrecht, AMS®	<a href="mailto:oceanbaymarine@yahoo.com">oceanbaymarine@yahoo.com</a>	631-924-4362

### "Disclaimer"

The material contained in this newsletter is for informational purposes only and the Society of Accredited Marine Surveyors® disclaims any warranty of any kind, whether expressed or implied, as to any matter whatsoever relating to this Newsletter. In no event shall the Society of Accredited Marine Surveyors® be liable for any indirect, special, incidental or consequential damages arising out of any use of or reliance on any content or materials contained herein.

***SAMS<sup>®</sup> 2025***  
***International Meeting***  
***&***  
***Educational Conference (IMEC)***  
***September 9<sup>th</sup> - September 12<sup>th</sup>***



Baltimore Inner Harbor

***Hyatt Regency***  
***300 Light Street***  
***Baltimore, Maryland 21202***

***For More Information Contact:***  
***Society of Accredited Marine Surveyors<sup>®</sup>, Inc.***  
***800-344-9077 / 904-384-1494***  
***[samshq@marinesurvey.org](mailto:samshq@marinesurvey.org) / [www.marinesurvey.org](http://www.marinesurvey.org)***