

**U.S. Coast Guard
Marine Safety Unit Chicago**



2021 Year in Review



Letter from the Commanding Officer

Welcome to the U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit (MSU) Chicago 2021 Year in Review. Against the backdrop of a global pandemic, MSU Chicago personnel continued to lead with a bias for action and showcase their agility and adaptability in achieving mission success. Our Service and strength are defined by our Core Values of Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty. We are public servants and are deeply honored to serve the Nation, public, and our maritime stakeholders. Our strong partnerships with federal, state, local, and industry leaders ensure we can perform our missions safely with resolve and professionalism.



*CDR Randy Preston
Commanding Officer
MSU Chicago*

For Subchapter M implementation, MSU Chicago successfully achieved the national 75% phase-in goal. In 2021, we issued 12 Certificates of Inspection and are poised to meet or exceed the 100% implementation deadline of July 19, 2022.

In a return to normalcy, this past year saw a resumption of many annual marine events and fireworks displays, such as the Chicago Air and Water Show, Chicago Race to Mackinac, and the Corn Festival Fireworks show. MSU Chicago closely partnered with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), City of Chicago, Chicago Harbor Safety Committee, and local stakeholders on several initiatives to promote recreational boating safety on the Chicago River. Additionally, we coordinated with the USACE, Illinois River Carriers' Association (IRCA), and other government agencies on the pre-construction engineering and design of an Aquatic Nuisance Species Barrier at Brandon Road Lock and Dam.

MSU Chicago's Facilities Inspections and Incident Management, Investigations, and Auxiliary Divisions all made considerable advances to promote safety, security, and stewardship in the Nation's third largest metropolitan area.

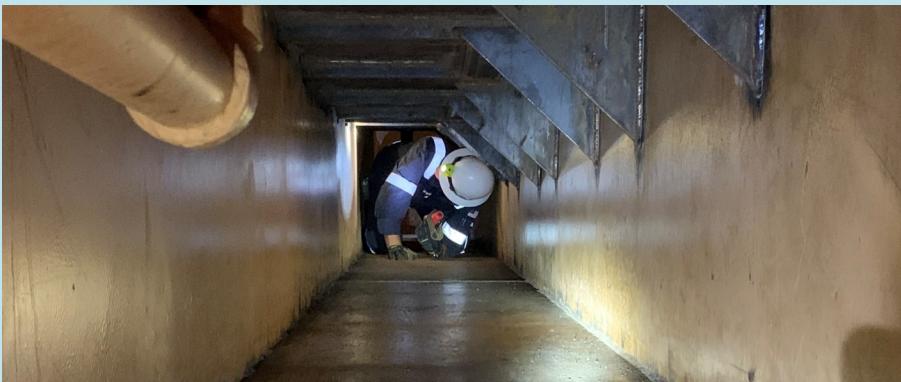
Overall, these initiatives demonstrate the importance and value of multi-agency and industry partnerships. Through open communications, collaboration, and cooperation, we are able to positively impact the Marine Transportation System. As we move forward, MSU Chicago will continue to be Ready, Relevant, and Responsive in service to the Nation.

Please enjoy reading some of the accomplishments and highlights from the past year. We look forward to working alongside you this upcoming year.

Sincerely,

Randy L. Preston
Commander, U.S. Coast Guard

Inspections Division



Division Statistics

Total Inspections:	462
<u>By Vessel Type:</u>	
Towing Vessel:	120
Barge:	86
Small Passenger Vessel:	200
Port State Control:	18
Laker:	38

Marine Inspector crawls through vessel spaces to ensure structural integrity

In 2021, the Inspections Division continued to support and safeguard commercial vessels operating within our unique area of responsibility. Covering the southern tip of Lake Michigan through the Illinois River system and located at the nexus of the Great Lakes and the Western Rivers, this area is a vital commercial hub for maritime industry.

2021 marked the third year of Subchapter M implementation, and the Inspections Division continued to work toward 100% inspection status with our inspected towing vessels. We issued 12 towing vessel Certificates of Inspection in 2021 and are poised to meet or exceed the 100% implementation deadline of July 19, 2022. We are proud of the strong relationships we have made throughout the inspected towing vessel fleet, and look forward to continuing to foster a culture of safety with the help of our maritime industry partners.

The Inspections Division successfully certificated two new small passenger vessels to our zone in 2021, bolstering the tourism industry which is so vital to the local economy. Looking forward into the 2022 calendar year, we should have three additional vessels coming online. The Coast Guard also implemented a new risk based inspection regime for small passenger vessels in 2021, which included additional in-service inspections for certain vessels throughout the United States jurisdiction. In line with this program, MSU Chicago conducted 16 additional spot checks on passenger vessels throughout our area.

We continue to assist Great Lakes and international shipping efforts by conducting inspections on both international ships calling on the both Port Districts of Illinois and Indiana as well as the ArcelorMittal port complex. In, 2021 we inspected 18 foreign vessels and 38 Lakers that called on these ports.

In 2021 we also supported two shipyards in our area of responsibility, and conducted oversight of multiple repairs and dry docks throughout the region on our own fleet of vessels, as well as barges and towing vessels that travel up through the Mississippi and Illinois River system.

We bid farewell this year to one of our Civilian Marine inspectors, Mr. Steve Wilkinson, as he retired from civil service in the Coast Guard with over 13 years of serving the public in the Chicago area. We wish him the best in his next chapter and are excited to welcome a new Civilian Marine Inspector into our office in spring 2022.



CWO Johnson issues a Certificate of Inspection

Investigations Division

Throughout 2021, the Investigations Division responded to a 34% increase in incident investigations from the previous year. These incidents followed a wave of increased commercial vessel activity and traffic through Lake Michigan and the Illinois River, which may be attributed to the reduction in local pandemic restrictions. This year, the Investigations Division bid farewell to its most seasoned investigator, Mr. Tim Drury. Despite losing one of its three members, the Investigations Division Officers conducted 81 incident investigation activities and responded to 40 reportable marine casualties. We also continued the investigation of two separate Serious Marine Incidents onboard an inspected towing vessel and a small passenger vessel, respectively.



Mr. Tim Drury receives his departure award



Illegal Commercial Passenger Vessel Workshop

June 2021
Illegal Commercial Passenger Vessel Workshop for CG Law Enforcement Officers

This year, the Investigations Division continued its extensive outreach efforts to educate operators and the public on the passenger vessel safety laws and enforcement on those intent to violate the law. The Investigations Division also provided subject matter expertise on a national Coast Guard workgroup, providing best practices on combating illegal passenger vessel operations.

Additionally, the Investigations Division collaborated with Sector Lake Michigan's Enforcement Division during vessel boardings and developed and facilitated an Illegal Commercial Passenger Vessel Workshop for all Sector Lake

Michigan Law Enforcement Officers. The enforcement support provided by the Investigations Division bolstered the effectiveness of Sector Lake Michigan enforcement teams, ensured regulatory compliance, strengthened state and federal partnerships, and enhanced the safety and security for passengers and vessels carrying passengers for hire.

Division Statistics

Incident Investigation	
Activities:	81
Preliminary Investigation	
Activities:	127
Suspension and Revocation (S&R) Enforcement	
Investigations:	17

Waterways Management Division

The MSU Chicago Waterways Management Division has been diligently working with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as well as state and local partners to add a second control point on the Illinois Waterway System at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam for the Aquatic Nuisance Species Control strategy/project. This project will utilize four structural deterrent methods (Flushing Lock, Electric Dispersal Barrier, Acoustic Fish Deterrent, and Fish Entrainment Deterrent) and act as the first of two access control points for Aquatic Nuisance Species on the Great Lakes. The Waterways Management Division has participated and provided valuable input in several USACE project and navigation meetings to properly address all associated waterways hazards, promote mariner and navigation safety, and ensure compliance with all required safety regulations.



(left to right) LT Fortin, Dr. Frederic Miller, and LCDR Zinn attend the USACE Brandon Road Interbasin Project Navigation Industry Workshop at the Rock Island District in Quad Cities, IL

After a nonexistent 2020 Marine Event season due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Waterways Management Division closely coordinated with the City of Chicago and the Chicago Harbor Safety Committee to facilitate 67 marine events across Lake Michigan and the Illinois Waterway System, including the annual Chicago to Mackinac Race and Chicago Air and Water Show, ensuring the safety and security of 2,200,000 people while further strengthening partnerships with the City Offices and the United States Navy.

Additionally, the Waterways Management Division has been involved in a combined campaign/initiative with the USACE, City of Chicago, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, and the Chicago Harbor Safety Committee to augment/re-direct several water outflows located on the main branch of the Chicago River. These outflows pose a significant hazard to vessel traffic and especially the paddle craft community with several near misses reported in 2021. Through agency outreach and public education, the outflow task force has increased awareness on the Chicago River and managed to re-direct the most problematic outflow located near the State St. Bridge.



Chicago to Mackinac Race Course

Facility Inspections and Incident Management Divisions



MTSA facility inspection

Division Statistics

Safety Exams	124
MTSA Exams	85
Security Checks	47
Pollution Cases	15



Members conducting container inspections

In 2021, the Facility Inspections Division coordinated with industry partners of 75 Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA)-regulated facilities to assess, document, and address cybersecurity risk. Following the implementation of new cybersecurity regulations in October, the Division continued to provide support in ensuring threats and vulnerabilities were documented on Facility Security Assessments and within Facility Security Plans. These efforts by the Division resulted in the first two Cybersecurity Amendment approvals in the Sector Lake Michigan Captain of the Port Zone.



Interagency team for TWIC verification

In October, Facility Inspectors planned and executed a multi-agency operation to conduct Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) verifications at a local MTSA-regulated facility. Alongside Coast Guard Investigative Service and Transportation Security Administration field officers and investigators, the team conducted TWIC verifications on all personnel entering a secure area and collected intelligence for background checks. This operation strengthened partnerships with industry and other federal agencies, and will serve as a stepping stone for larger operations in the future.

This year, the Incident Management Division (IMD) was hard at work responding to spills across the Chicagoland area. During the summer months, members of the Division responded to numerous pollution events involving recreational vessels that ran aground or sank, safeguarding the pristine waters of Lake Michigan.

The IMD coordinated four Government Initiated Unannounced Exercises (GIUEs) alongside Sector Lake Michigan and local Environmental Protection Agency representatives. These joint GIUE operations improved interagency relations, enhanced industry readiness and capability, provided training opportunities to the Division, and reduced the industry burden to conduct exercises with each individual organization.



MST2 Vance conducts GIUE with facility

Chicago Auxiliary—Division 35



PWC operator on patrol

Auxiliary Division 35 had an active year supporting the Coast Guard in 2021, totaling over 13,000 hours. Over a very short boating season, Division crews certified two Qualified Examiners, two Coxswains, and one Boat Crew Member, and recertified five Coxswains and nine Boat Crew Members. Division crews also provided over 90 patrols and assisted with search and rescue cases. Division Personal Water Craft (PWC) operators provided a multitude of patrols and saved or assisted over 20 individuals in 2021. These operators won the American Federation for Rescue At Sea (AFRAS) Silver Award for a PWC-related save in 2020.



Auxiliarists provide support to U.S. Navy Blue Angels at Gary Airport



Auxiliarists supporting CGC MACKINAW in the galley

Division 35 participated in Public Affairs augmentation roles for Coast Guard personnel at the Grand Haven Coast Guard Festival, Chicago Christmas Tree Ship event, and Chicago State University Memorandum of Agreement signing ceremony. Auxiliarists also provided event support at the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) AirVenture Event in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and the Chicago Air and Water Show. While supporting the Chicago Christmas Tree Ship event, Division 35 Auxiliarists served hundreds of meals in the galleys at Station Chicago and USCGC MACKINAW, providing relief for duty personnel and 100 hours as watchstanders at Station Wilmette Harbor.



Auxiliarist patrolling at Hammond Marina



Division Commander (J.R. Kulik, on right) and Division Vice Commander (John Saran, on left) on CGC MACKINAW

Chicago Auxiliary—Division 37

Auxiliary Division 37 began offering free virtual Paddle Craft Safety classes in 2021, reaching approximately 1,350 people attending from the Ninth District region to Guam, Canada, and Ireland. Flotilla 37-25



members conducted Vessel Safety Checks (VSCs) and interacted with the public by speaking about boating safety and providing them with applicable literature. Auxiliarist Kevin Osgood (left) was interviewed by a news crew from Green Bay, Wisconsin, about the importance of safety measures related to paddle craft, to coincide with National Safe Boating Week. He spoke about required equipment for paddle craft and additional safety equipment that will aid a paddler, should they have an unfortunate incident on the water.

In the summer, Flotillas 37-03 and 37-25 coordinated together, for the first time in two years, with the Will County Forest Preserve District. Flotilla 37-03 engaged in providing free VSCs for paddlers at the Rock Run Preserve. To the right, Auxiliarist Rick Hockinson provides a copy of a "Sammy the Sea Otter" coloring book to "Willy the Woodchuck", the mascot for the Will County Forest Preserve District.



To the left, Auxiliarist Terry Paggi receives the Auxiliary Commandant's Letter of Commendation from the Marine Safety Unit Chicago Commanding Officer.

Over the course of twelve weeks, Flotilla 35-06 contributed over 45 hours teaching virtual boating and paddle craft safety courses to over 125 students, plus more than 40 hours in preparations. Some of the training tools/equipment used are pictured below.



Chicago Auxiliary—Division 39

Auxiliary Division 39 had an extremely busy boating season in 2021, despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. They conducted 370 vessel exams and amassed 514 underway/patrol hours in support of the Coast Guard's Recreational Safe Boating initiative. They also provided over 230 hours of much needed watchstanding relief to Station Kenosha and Wilmette Harbor.

Division Statistics

Vessel Exams:	370
Underway Hours Surface:	191.69
Total Patrol Hours:	514.89
Station Watchstanding Hours:	231.80
Instructor Hours:	240.37
Marine Safety Hours:	682.42

Division 39 member Mr. Jay Katzman, earned his Auxiliary Assistant T-Boat Examiner qualification this past year. Mr. Katzman is one of only a few members in the entire Coast Guard Auxiliary to hold this qualification. He assists the Inspections Division at Marine Safety Unit (MSU) Chicago on a weekly basis, typically supporting the unit several times a week. Since the start of his pursuit to qualify as a small passenger vessel (SPV) examiner, he has assisted MSU Chicago with 122 inspections.



Jay Katzman, one of only a few Auxiliarists in the Coast Guard to hold the Auxiliary Assistant T-Boat Examiner Qualification

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Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty

