

I am Captain Thomas Hand, a San Francisco Bar Pilot. Thank you for inviting a San Francisco Bar Pilot to speak today. I hold a U.S. Coast Guard Master's License. I have been a professional mariner for forty-five years, including eighteen years as a Panama Canal pilot and seventeen years as a San Francisco Bar Pilot.

The San Francisco Bar Pilots have navigated vessels in San Francisco Bay and tributaries for over 155 years. They service an area that includes the entire San Francisco Bay, and the Ports of Stockton, Sacramento and Monterey Bay. The waters of the San Francisco, Monterey, San Pablo and Suisun Bays from the Gulf of the Farrallones to the Sacramento Delta include nine bridges, twenty ports, two hundred miles of shipping lanes, and countless hidden dangers. It is the job of the San Francisco Bar Pilots to know every fathom and every nautical mile.

By California law, every vessel in excess of 300 gross tons moving within waters under the jurisdiction of the Board of Pilot Commissioners is required to use the services of a San Francisco Bar Pilot. Last year the San Francisco Bar Pilots handled approximately 10,000 vessel transits.

Since 1986, a comprehensive training program lasting approximately two years geared specifically to the exceptional demands of Bay Area waterways has been a condition to becoming a San Francisco Bar Pilot. After apprenticeship and licensing, every pilot continues professional training to stay current in all vital areas. An applicant for the training program must at minimum hold a valid U.S. Coast Guard Master's License with Radar Endorsement. He or

she must have at least two years' command or piloting experience and a Federal Pilotage Endorsement.

As a state-licensed San Francisco Bar Pilot, I am subject to the oversight, including disciplinary oversight, of the Board of Pilot Commissioners for the Bays of San Francisco, San Pablo and Suisun. The Board selects among applicants for available pilot positions; establishes and administers the training requirements, both initial and continuing, for the pilots; issues licenses; oversees the operations of the Bar Pilots, investigates incidents on the vessels piloted by Bar Pilots and takes remedial and punitive action against pilots when appropriate. This is a thorough, comprehensive, and active regulatory system.

The pilots take their professional responsibilities to vessel owners they serve and the communities in which they work very seriously. We are proud of our long history of safe navigation. Up to last week the last major accident on the Bay was when two tankers collided near the Golden Gate Bridge in 1971. Neither vessel in that incident had a San Francisco Bar Pilot on board.

I am here to answer your questions about pilots, piloting and the pilotage system in San Francisco Bay and tributaries.