

## **WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF**

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### **BEFORE THE UNITED STATE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE SUBCOMMITTEE ON COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION**

#### **USING NEW OCEAN TECHNOLOGIES: PROMOTING EFFICIENT MARITIME TRANSPORTATION AND IMPROVING MARITIME DOMAIN AWARENESS AND RESPONSE CAPABILITY**

May 21, 2014  
Washington, D.C.

Good morning and thank you Chairman Hunter, Ranking Member Garamendi, and members of the Subcommittee.

My name is Dean Rosenberg and I am the CEO of AIRSIS, a software technology company focused on the energy and transportation industries. Our PortVision division provides patented tools and technologies to increase maritime domain awareness and improve waterway safety, security, and efficiency. PortVision maintains a global network of VHF receivers that detect the collision-avoidance signals, also known as “Automatic Identification System” or AIS signals, transmitted by vessels around the world.

AIS transponder use by vessels larger than 300 gross tons, or 65 feet in the US, has been mandated by the US Coast Guard and the International Maritime Organization since 2005. Its original purpose was collision-avoidance at sea. However, shortly after AIS went into widespread use, we realized that the same data used aboard vessels could also provide significant value to shore-side personnel who needed to solve business problems. So, in 2006, PortVision was born, leveraging federally mandated technology and repurposing it to drive additional benefits across the maritime industry.

Now, in 2014, our PortVision AIS network processes over 50 million real-time vessel position reports each day, and we maintain a data warehouse of over 40 billion arrival, departure, and individual vessel movements dating back to 2006. To put this another way, during every second of my testimony today, PortVision is processing another 500 real-time vessel positions from around the world. Our commercial and government customers use this data to improve many types of operations, whether it be scheduling of vessels at an oil refinery, supporting an incident response operation, providing post-mortem compliance, legal, or training support, or supporting homeland security and law enforcement activities. There are over 3,000 PortVision users leveraging AIS for these and other valuable purposes, including vessel operators, marine terminals, government agencies, and every major oil company.

You can think of our network as a commercial version of the Coast Guard’s National AIS (“NAIS”) initiative. However, while the NAIS initiative is focused primarily on aggregating AIS data around the United States and its territories, we have extended real-time vessel detection globally through both terrestrial and satellite AIS receivers. Additionally, the NAIS initiative is primarily focused on AIS

data acquisition for use in VTS and related operational environments, whereas PortVision is focused on analysis and harvesting of that data to drive business intelligence that improves visibility, efficiency and decision-making in the maritime domain. In general, our observation is that current government systems appear to be good at collecting and displaying real-time data, but not aggregating and making it broadly accessible to field personnel who must clearly understand waterway utilization in order to carry out their mission objectives.

AIS continues to grow in value. We participate in numerous maritime industry groups around the country that rely on our data and expertise, and we are regularly called upon to provide AIS data and testimony associated with key incidents such as the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, major hurricane and weather events, and numerous compliance and law enforcement activities.

AIS is also helping the maritime industry accommodate today's surge of Gulf traffic, including vessels transporting crude oil shipments from new finds in the Dakotas, West Texas, and other locations. PortVision is a key enabler in this new and evolving chapter in our nation's energy evolution.

Another promising development is the use of AIS in pipeline, bridge, and offshore asset protection. PortVision partnered with CAMO – an industry trade association of Coastal and Marine Operators on a system to proactively notify vessels and pipeline operators when there is imminent risk that a vessel might damage pipeline infrastructure. Over the last two decades there has been over \$100 million in property damage and over 25 fatalities associated with coastal and marine pipeline incidents. Our project with CAMO has received Coast Guard approval, and FCC approval is pending.

Still another AIS application is identifying bad actors and driving regulatory compliance. For example, PortVision has participated with the Offshore Marine Service Association to identify and report Jones Act violators, while individual port authorities use PortVision to enforce speed and emission reduction initiatives. Other federal government customers use PortVision data and services to support homeland security and intelligence operations.

These value-added AIS benefits are only possible if carriers transmit a persistent AIS signal with accurate data. We know of no uniform enforcement or educational campaign by the US Coast Guard to ensure that carriers comply. Some regional VTS offices are vigilant about compliance, while other regions have less active oversight. I urge the Subcommittee to ensure that all vessels required to transmit AIS maintain a consistent, uninterrupted, and accurate AIS transmission to ensure that these valuable AIS technology initiatives can continue.

Finally, I seek the Subcommittee's support in encouraging federal agencies to look to the commercial sector and small business to help execute their maritime domain awareness initiatives. Companies like ours provide proven, valuable services at very low cost, and yet less than 10 percent of our customer base is government users. Commercial offerings like PortVision are often overlooked in favor of "re-inventing the wheel" through government-funded "build-versus-buy" initiatives. This "not invented here" culture can put up barriers to government adoption of proven and widely deployed commercial technology. It also prevents many Coast Guard and other government field personnel from operating as effectively as industry partners who have access to these tools.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share our story today. We believe that "blue economy" companies like PortVision are key enablers of enhanced maritime domain awareness and increased safety, security and efficiency across the marine transportation system. I look forward to your feedback and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.