



16519
June 29, 2017

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM MIAMI MAIN CHANNEL FOCUSED WATERWAY ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REVIEW

In response to public interest in the marking and safety of the jetties leading through Government Cut into Miami Harbor following a September 25th 2016 fatal collision, I directed Sector Miami to conduct a Focused Waterway Analysis and Management System (FWAMS) review.

Sector Miami performed a thorough and detailed study of the area, ensured extensive public outreach was conducted, and consulted state and federal agency reports relevant to the area of concern. Additionally, Sector Miami analyzed the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) investigation, released in March 2017. The investigation concluded that external factors, not related to the waterway, contributed to the accident. Sector Miami concurred with FWC's findings.

An online survey was created which provided the boating public the opportunity to comment on the status of the aids to navigation used to mark the channel. The survey was widely advertised via local news stations, a Public Affairs press release, Local Notice to Mariners and emailed to multiple different waterway user groups. The Coast Guard received 87 comments.

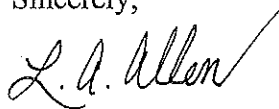
After analyzing all available information, Sector Miami concluded the current buoys and ranges marking the Miami Main Channel are sufficient. Adding additional aids to navigation for the jetties would not conform to navigation standards and could possibly confuse mariners due to existing lighted buoys. The jetties are properly charted and described in the Coast Pilot as "unmarked jetties". The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) reported that the Government Cut jetties were constructed over one hundred years ago and were last modified in the 1920's. Prior to this FWAMS, the last aids to navigation analysis of Port Miami was in 2015, when the port dredging project was completed. This 2015 Waterway Analysis and Management System (WAMS) recommended Red Buoy 12, which is in vicinity of the North jetty and has always been lit, be changed from a 4 second flashing buoy to a quick flashing light characteristic to coincide with the quick flashing green buoy 11 to assist larger vessels' operation and alignment in the channel.

In support of the Miami Main Channel Focused WAMS, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) provided accident data occurring in the vicinity of the Government Cut jetties dating back to 2010. Their data report, covering six years, did not show any major accidents in the area of the jetties, except for the September 25, 2016 multiple fatality accident. Sector Miami reviewed the investigation for this multiple fatality accident completed by FWC and their report concludes that Mr. Fernandez "operated V-1 with his normal faculties impaired, in a reckless manner, at an extremely high rate of speed, in the darkness of night, in an

area with known navigational hazards such as the rock jetties and channel markers.” Additionally, the FWC investigation reports that a review completed of “accidents in Miami-Dade County that occurred in the geographical area of Government Cut since January 1, 1998 found 107 reportable boating accidents, not including this accident. After reviewing each of those 107 accidents, we identified nine that involved a vessel striking the jetty or underwater rocks/objects that may have been the jetty. Those nine accidents resulted in five injured persons and zero fatalities.” FWC investigations did not find navigation aids a factor in any of these accidents.

District Seven finds Sector Miami’s analysis and recommendation sufficient. The District Commander directed Sector Miami to continue with their outreach and boating safety education efforts in coordination with our interagency partners who all have a deep interest and commitment to the safety of life at sea.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "L. A. Allen". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

L. A. ALLEN
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Chief, Prevention Division
by direction