

Pasadena Citizens' Advisory Council

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Summary of Thursday, August 27, 2015 Meeting

HOUSTON SHIP CHANNEL SECURITY DISTRICT

Cap't. Bill Diehl, a retired 31-year veteran of the US Coast Guard, President of the Greater Houston Port Bureau, and former Captain of the Port of Houston-Galveston, described the work of the Houston Ship Channel Security District, its role in security, its achievements, and its plans. Joining Diehl to meet PCAC members was Houston Ship Channel Security District industry board member Lewis Brown of Enterprise Products. Diehl said the Greater Houston Port Bureau is a maritime trade organization that supplies its 200 Houston-area members with "detailed vessel traffic information, market analysis, and maritime expertise in safety, security, and environmental issues." It also provides management for the Houston Ship Channel Security District (HSCSD).

The Houston Ship Channel Security District (HSCSD) is a public-private partnership developed after the 9-11 terrorist attacks to bring together industry and government agencies to increase security and safety for both industrial facilities and the communities that surround them. The district was authorized by the Texas Legislature and approved by Harris County Commissioners Court, but plants within its borders needed to approve its creation because they pay an to cover its operating costs and the match usually need to obtain federal grants.

The district is divided into 4 zones like Channel Industries Mutual Aid (CIMA). The 11-member board is comprised of two industry representatives from each zone and one representative each from Harris County, the Port of Houston Authority, and Harris County Mayors and Councils Association. To date, the board has reviewed existing security programs and contracted with security consultants to assess needs and help them determine how to improve security and safety. The district's long range plan focuses on improving awareness, capabilities, and partnerships. Their philosophy may be found in the slides as well as lists of achievements. These include the Ring of Steel surveillance system and waterside, landside, and air assets the district has provided to local law enforcement, for example. The district also offers training for the Facility Security Officers required by law for certain plants. Bringing professionals together to talk about security improvements is one of the biggest benefits that board member Lewis Brown has seen.

Diehl opened his remarks by saying that companies need predictability and reliability to move cargo. Terrorism would disrupt them. He ended by saying that HSCSD helps "protect the regional supply chain by developing and maintaining partnerships, preventing terrorism and enhancing security, and ensuring regional resilience." Additional details about the district may be found at www.hscsd.net.