



## Current Port Conditions // Central U.S. GOMEX

By John P. Kavanagh, Jr.

October 9, 2017

Burr & Forman's Mobile, Alabama office is located in the geographic center of the US Gulf of Mexico coastline (GOMEX). We service clients' needs in the ports in this area, including – from west to east – **Gulfport and Pascagoula, Mississippi; Mobile, Alabama; as well as Pensacola and Panama City, Florida.** The following is a brief summary of current port conditions and operations following Hurricane Nate.

Hurricane Nate made landfall 7-8 October 2017, first in Southeast Louisiana near the mouth of the Mississippi River, and later near Biloxi, Mississippi. Impacts and effects on maritime facilities, aids to navigation, etc., continue to be assessed.

The following information is current as of 1800 CST / 2300 Zulu yesterday (8 October 2017), and is taken from the USCG Sector Mobile's Marine Safety Information Bulletin (MSIB) [19-17](#), a copy of which is attached hereto. For ease of reference, [MSIB 18-17](#) (issued 7 October 2017) is also attached. The [USCG Sector Mobile's website](#) should be checked for most up-to-date information.

### PORT OF MOBILE, ALABAMA

- Port status NORMAL for the Mobile River, from Arlington Channel north.
- Port status remains ZULU (closed) for areas south of Arlington Channel.
- Per ZULU status -- set out in MSIB 18-17 -- facilities and vessel operations are suspended. Vessel movement and cargo handling operations can be conducted with permission on case-by-case basis.
- Website for Alabama State Port Authority: [www.ASDD.com](http://www.ASDD.com)

### PORT OF PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI

- Port status ZULU, per USCG Sector Mobile MSIB 19-17.
- Per ZULU status -- set out in MSIB 18-17 -- facilities and vessel operations are suspended. Vessel movement and cargo handling operations can be conducted with permission on case-by-case basis.
- Website for Port of Pascagoula: [www.Portofpascagoula.com](http://www.Portofpascagoula.com)

### PORT OF GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI

- Port status ZULU, per USCG Sector Mobile MSIB 19-17.
- However, Port's website reports that officials are assessing condition of facilities, and indicates that port operations should re-open Monday, 9 October 2017.

- Website for Port of Gulfport: [www.Shipmspa.com](http://www.Shipmspa.com)

#### PORT OF PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

- Port status ZULU, per USCG Sector Mobile MSIB 19-17.
- Per ZULU status -- set out in MSIB 18-17 -- facilities and vessel operations are suspended. Vessel movement and cargo handling operations can be conducted with permission on case-by-case basis.
- Website for Port of Pensacola: [www.Portofpensacola.com](http://www.Portofpensacola.com)

#### PORT OF PANAMA CITY, FLORIDA

- Port status NORMAL, per USCG Sector Mobile MSIB 19-17.
- Website for Port of Panama City: [www.Panamacityportauthority.com](http://www.Panamacityportauthority.com)

Again, refer to [USCG Sector Mobile's website](#) (or phone numbers listed in the MSIB's) for most current information.

We would welcome the opportunity to assist should any needs arise in the Central US GOMEX.

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**To discuss this further, please contact:**

[John P. Kavanagh, Jr.](#) at [jkavanagh@burr.com](mailto:jkavanagh@burr.com)

(251) 345 8246 (o) // (251) 423 0826 (c)

[Kasee Heisterhagen](#) at [ksparks@burr.com](mailto:ksparks@burr.com)

(251) 345 8244 (o) // (205) 534 9695 (c)

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# Marine Safety Information Bulletin

Commander (spw)  
U.S. Coast Guard  
Sector Mobile  
1500 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Mobile, AL 36615

MSIB Number: 18-17  
Date: October 7, 2017  
Contact: CDR Rob Compher  
Phone: (251) 441-5940  
E-Mail: robert.c.compher@uscg.mil



## PORT CONDITION ZULU FOR CAPTAIN OF THE PORT MOBILE AREA OF OPERATIONS (Gale force winds are predicted within 12 hrs)

1. Information for the Marine Industry: Due to the possibility of hurricane force winds (73+ mph) associated with Hurricane Nate entering Sector Mobile's area of responsibility within 12 hours, the Captain of the Port (COTP) is ordering **Port Condition ZULU for the entire Mobile Captain of the Port Zone.**
  
2. Current port and waterway status: Effective 0800, 07 October, 2017
  - a. GICWW east of MM 207 (Navarre Bridge): ZULU
  - b. Port of Panama City: ZULU
  - c. GICWW MM45 to MM 207 (Navarre Bridge): ZULU
  - d. Port of Pensacola: ZULU
  - e. Port of Mobile: ZULU
  - f. Port of Pascagoula: ZULU
  - g. Port of Gulfport: ZULU
  
  - h. As of 0800 CDT, all waterways with the Ports of Gulfport, Pascagoula, Mobile, and Pensacola as well as the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway from the mile marker 45 to mile marker 207 are closed to ALL traffic with the below mariner guidelines (see paragraph 3). All facility and vessel operations are suspended.
  
  - i. The COTP may issue additional MSIBs as the weather system approaches and Port Conditions change. Mariners throughout the COTP Mobile AOR are encouraged to use all means available to monitor the path of Tropical Storm Nate and remain prepared to take actions if the storm path changes.
  
  - j. Current information may be obtained from the COTP Mobile Voice Mail Announcement system at phone number (251) 441-5080.
  
3. Mariner Guidelines: The following guidelines are provided in order to make preparations for the onset weather system.

**Port Condition Zulu is set at this time and the following actions are required:****U.S. Coast Guard COTP Mobile:**

- (1) The Coast Guard will conduct a final survey of all ports, vessels, facilities, and waterways to determine their present state of readiness and to ensure the port is secured and ready for hurricane force winds.
- (2) The COTP has suspended all facility and vessel operations.

**All Oceangoing Commercial Vessels and CG Regulated Barges Over 300 GT:**

- (1) All vessel movements and cargo handling operations are suspended unless permission is request and approval granted. Approval will be given on a case-by-case basis. This approval provision does not apply to operation involving Cargo of Particular Hazard or Certain Dangerous Cargoes, which in every case must be suspended.
- (2) If the vessel is authorized by the COTP to remain in port, ensure the vessel is securely moored and prepared for severe weather conditions.
- (3) Report hazardous conditions or breakaway of vessels directly to the COTP Mobile via the **Sector Mobile Command Center (251-441-5976)** immediately.
- (4) Complete the pre-sort preparations for Port Condition **ZULU** outlined in the *Storm Preparation Checklist for Vessels* (Annex B).

**Waterfront Facilities:**

- (1) All waterfront facility cargo-handling operations are suspended unless permission is requested and an approval granted. Approval will be given on a case-by-case basis. This approval provision does not apply to operations involving Cargo of Particular Hazard or Certain Dangerous Cargoes, which in every case must be suspended.
  - (2) Complete the action items for Port Condition **ZULU** outlined in the *Storm Preparation Checklist for Waterfront Facilities* (Annex C).
4. Mariners are advised that movable bridges may close at the discretion of the bridge operator as weather conditions deteriorate within the COTP Mobile AOR at port condition Zulu.
  5. Port Coordination Team conference calls will be held daily per the following schedule:  

1300	Port of Gulfport
1330	Port of Pascagoula
1400	Port of Mobile
1430	Ports of Pensacola and Panama City

Conference line number: (877) 716-9133, Participant Code: 6913296

6. Further questions may be addressed by contacting Sector Mobile Command Center at (251) 441-5976.



M. R. MCLELLAN  
Captain, U. S. Coast Guard  
Commander, Coast Guard Sector Mobile  
Captain of the Port Mobile

Please visit us on the internet at <http://homeport.uscg.mil/mobile>

- Annexes:** Annex A – Remaining in Port Checklists for Oceangoing Vessels  
Annex B – Storm Preparation Checklist  
    Appendix 1 – Recommended Precautionary Measures for Ships  
    Appendix 2 – Recommended Precautionary Measures for Barges  
Annex C – Storm Preparation Checklist for Waterfront Facilities

## ANNEX A

### REMAINING IN PORT CHECKLIST FOR OCEANGOING VESSELS (SELF-PROPELLED VESSELS OVER 200 GROSS TONS)

The person in charge of the vessel must submit in writing a mooring plan for approval by the Captain of the Port. Vessels remaining in port must have their decks clear of missile hazards, potential pollution hazards, and flammable materials. All persons in charge must ensure that hatches are secured for heavy weather. These conditions are subject to verification by Coast Guard personnel.

The following information must be included in the mooring plan submission:

1. Name, call sign, official number, and nationality of vessel.
2. Vessel particulars, as applicable (length, breadth, draft, air draft, gross tonnage, hull type, horsepower, single or twin screw).
3. Name of the master.
4. Name, address and phone number of the agent, charterer or operator, and owner.
5. Reason why the vessel is not leaving port.
6. Provide full vessel characteristics that would be needed to affect salvage.
7. Provide a full stowage plan and manifest to determine particular cargo and pollution hazards.
8. Provide 24-hour contact information on qualified individuals (QI) who have been empowered in writing by the owners to make on-site decisions and authorize expenditures for any required pollution response or salvage.
9. Provide a full insurance disclosure to the Captain of the Port. If the vessel is moored to a facility, provide the insurance information to the facility.
10. Number of personnel to remain on the vessel and their qualifications.
11. Amount of ballast the vessel may hold.
12. Amount of bunkers, lube oil and diesel oil on board. Provide estimated draft with the vessel in ballast.
13. Name of the berth and location.
14. Depth of water in the vessel's berth at mean low water.
15. Availability of the vessel's main propulsion.
16. Describe how the vessel will be secured to the berth. Submit a diagram showing the mooring arrangements with the size, length and lead of mooring lines or wire.
17. Operational status of machinery on board (i.e., engines, generators, fire fighting pumps, bilge pumps, anchors, mooring machinery, etc.).
18. Any unusual conditions affecting the vessel's seaworthiness.

## ANNEX A

### REMAINING IN PORT CHECKLIST FOR OCEANGOING VESSELS (OCEAN GOING BARGES AND SUPPORTING TUGS)

The person in charge of the barge(s) and assist tug(s) must submit in writing a mooring plan for approval by the Captain of the Port. Tugs and barges remaining in port must have their decks clear of missile hazards, potential pollution hazards and flammable materials. All persons in charge must ensure that hatches are secured for heavy weather. These conditions are subject to verification by Coast Guard personnel.

The following information must be included in the mooring plan submission.

1. Name, call sign and official number of tug and barge.
2. Nationality of the tug and barge.
3. Name of the master of the tug.
4. Name, address and phone number of the owner / operator, charterer, and/or agent.
5. Reason why the tug and barge is remaining in port.
6. Provide full barge characteristics that would be needed to affect salvage.
7. Provide a full stowage plan and manifest to determine particular cargo and pollution hazards.
8. Provide 24-hour contact information on qualified individuals (QI) who have been empowered in writing by the owners to make on-site decisions and authorize expenditures for any required pollution response or salvage.
9. Provide a full insurance disclosure to the Captain of the Port. If the barge is moored to a facility, provide the insurance information to the facility.
10. Tug and barge particulars for each vessel, as applicable (length, breadth, draft, air draft, gross tonnage, hull type, horsepower, single or twin screw).
11. Ballast capabilities.
12. Will the tug be tending the barge(s) while in port?
13. Name and rating of personnel to remain on the tug.
14. Amount of lube oil and diesel oil on board the tug and barge(s).
15. Name of the berth and location. Describe how the vessel will be secured to the berth. Submit a diagram showing the mooring arrangements with the size, length and lead of mooring lines or wire.
16. Operational status of machinery on board the tug and barge(s) (i.e., engines, generators, fire fighting pumps, bilge pumps, anchors, mooring machinery, etc.)
17. Any unusual conditions affecting either the tug's or barges(s)' seaworthiness.

## ANNEX B

### STORM PREPARATION CHECKLIST FOR VESSELS

Appendices 1 and 2 to this Annex contain detailed precautionary measures appropriate to ships and barges, respectively, which intend to remain in port during the severe weather event.

#### I. PORT STATUS WHISKEY (GALE FORCE WINDS EXPECTED WITHIN 72 HRS)

##### DATE/INITIALS

##### TASK REQUIREMENT

- (a) Review vessel's operational schedule.
  - (b) Review vessel heavy weather plan and take appropriate action.
  - (c) All oceangoing commercial vessels and Coast Guard regulated barges over 300 GT that intend to remain in port are required to submit a *Remaining in Port Checklist for Oceangoing Vessels* (Annex X) and a detailed mooring plan to the Commercial Vessel Ops Group. The request must be faxed to (251) 441-6746 or emailed to [secmobarrivals@uscg.mil](mailto:secmobarrivals@uscg.mil).
  - (d) Waterfront facilities & vessels required to depart port shall ensure cargo operations are secured to meet sail times. Determine when shipping and cargo handling interests plan to suspend cargo operations in preparation for storm arrival.
  - (e) If unable to get underway, or if approved by the COTP Mobile to remain in port, evaluate the safety of the present berth. If necessary, develop plans to shift to an alternate location or berth. Coordinate with waterfront facility and/or If determine a plan of action if vessel will remain in port during heavy weather.
- NOTE: This recommendation primarily applies to vessels at local repair facilities, or vessels in lay berths (moored or at anchor).
- (f) Set a continuous Channel 16 VHF-FM radio watch.
  - (g) Prepare to activate vessel's Automatic Information System (AIS) prior to Port Status **X-RAY**.



## ANNEX B

### II. PORT STATUS X-RAY (GALE FORCE WINDS EXPECTED WITHIN 48 HRS)

#### DATE/INITIALS

#### TASK REQUIREMENT

- (a) Any oceangoing commercial vessel and Coast Guard regulated barges greater than 300 GT permitted to remain in port during the hurricane should obtain the permission of the owner, operator, or person-in-charge of the waterfront facility and determine the conditions the facility will require.
- (b) Any oceangoing commercial vessel and Coast Guard regulated barges greater than 300 GT permitted to remain in port should have the outboard anchor at short stay, adequate mooring lines out, have a navigation watch set and maintain a listening watch on Channel 16 VHF-FM. Vessels allowed to remain in port must have the decks clear of any missile hazards, potential pollution hazards, and flammable materials. All persons in charge must ensure hatches are secured for heavy weather.
- (c) All waterfront facilities & vessels should start securing cargo operations in preparation for storm arrival. Vessels required to depart port shall ensure cargo operations are secured to meet sail times.
- (d) Oceangoing commercial vessels and Coast Guard regulated barges greater than 300 GT not approved to remain in port should start departing the port immediately.
- (e) All commercial vessels with installed Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) - regardless of tonnage, length, or service – either in transit or in port, must activate its AIS. The AIS shall remain activated through Post-Storm ZULU (following landfall). Vessel operators must contact the COTP Mobile if, for any reason, the installed AIS is not activated.

### III. PORT STATUS YANKEE (GALE FORCE WINDS EXPECTED WITHIN 24 HRS)

#### DATE/INITIALS

#### TASK REQUIREMENT

- (a) All oceangoing vessels and CG regulated barges over 300 GT, unless authorized by the COTP to remain in port, must depart their respective ports for open ocean immediately.
- (b) Oceangoing vessels and Coast Guard regulated barges over 300 GT allowed to remain in port should consider the adequacy of vessel moorings and double up or change mooring line arrangements where needed. The mooring plans submitted to the COTP Mobile must be strictly followed during all phases of the severe weather event.

ANNEX B

**IV. PORT STATUS ZULU  
(GALE FORCE WINDS EXPECTED WITHIN 12 HRS)**

**DATE/INITIALS**

**TASK REQUIREMENT**

- (a) If vessel is authorized by COTP to remain in port, ensure the vessel is securely moored and prepared for severe weather conditions.
- (b) Suspend cargo-handling operations as required by COTP Mobile.
- (c) Discontinue all vessel movements within the port as required by COTP Mobile.
- (d) Report and hazardous conditions or breakaways of vessels directly to the COTP Mobile via the **Sector Mobile Command Center (251-441-5976)** immediately.

## ANNEX B

### APPENDIX 1 - RECOMMENDED PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES FOR VESSELS

<b>Moored</b>		
X	1.	Mooring lines doubled up with due consideration given to the effects of predicted storm surge.
X	2.	Outboard anchor rigged at short stay.
X	3.	Sufficient number of officers and crew onboard to tend mooring lines, and/or get underway.
X	4.	Vessel ballasted to ensure maximum safety.
X	5.	All side ports, hatches, portholes, and other openings are closed and secured.
X	6.	Bilge pumps and manifolds are ready for immediate use.
X	7.	All fire fighting equipment is ready for immediate use.
X	8.	At least one (1) pilot ladder is rigged on each side of the vessel.
X	9.	A gangway, or other suitable means of accessing the vessel from the pier, is rigged.
X	10.	At least one (1) fire warp is rigged on the bow and another on the stern. In order to expedite the establishment of an emergency tow, a portion of each fire warp should be draped overboard and allowed to hang no more than six (6) feet above the waterline.
X	11.	Spare mooring lines and/or wires should be readily available.
X	12.	A continuous radio watch should be maintained on Channel 16 VHF-FM (156.8 MHZ) by a person who speaks English fluently.

### APPENDIX 2 - RECOMMENDED PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES FOR BARGES

<b>Moored</b>		
X	1.	Mooring lines doubled up with due consideration given to the effects of predicted storm surge. Special attention should be paid to barges moored in the proximity of bridges.
X	2.	Sufficient personnel are available ashore to respond to emergencies.
X	3.	All hatches, portholes and other openings are closed and secured.
X	4.	Fire fighting equipment is available and ready for immediate use.
X	5.	Spare mooring lines and/or wires should be readily available.

## ANNEX C

### STORM PREPARATION CHECKLIST FOR WATERFRONT FACILITIES

#### I. PORT CONDITION WHISKEY (72 HOURS BEFORE ANTICIPATED LANDFALL)

##### DATE/INITIALS

##### TASK REQUIREMENT

(a) Review facility severe weather contingency plans. The contingency plans for barge fleeing facilities should contain procedures for recovering breakaway barges and specifically include the location or availability of tugs/towboats. Barge fleeing facilities should also evaluate measures to reduce the size of their fleets.

NOTE: Plans to nest barges with other vessels or to anchor barges must be approved by the COTP.

(b) Determine the intentions of vessels moored at the facility. Review vessel arrival schedules.

(c) Review operational schedules to identify shipments of Cargoes of Particular Hazard, Hazardous Material, and/or Dangerous Cargoes arriving via highway or rail vehicles.

#### II. PORT CONDITION X-RAY (48 HOURS BEFORE ANTICIPATED LANDFALL)

##### DATE/INITIALS

##### TASK REQUIREMENT

(a) Determine whether vessels desiring to remain moored to the facility during the hurricane will be allowed to do so. Notify the vessel master, vessel agent, and the COTP of the facility's decision. If the vessel is permitted to stay at its current berth, ensure vessel has taken necessary steps to gain authorization from the COTP Mobile to remain in port.

NOTE: The COTP may direct the vessel or facility to take certain precautions to correct conditions that threaten the port or the environment, one of which may be to direct the vessels to proceed to sea or anchor.

(b) Set a time for the suspension of cargo handling operations. In doing so, ensure that vessels have ample time to hire and schedule labor, arrange pilots, contract tugs/towboats, and safely complete the transit to sea prior to the setting of Port Condition **ZULU**. Notify the COTP Mobile of the time established.

## ANNEX C

### III. PORT CONDITION YANKEE (24 HOURS BEFORE ANTICIPATED LANDFALL)

#### DATE/INITIALS

#### TASK REQUIREMENT

- (a) Secure missile hazards and clear nonessential equipment and loose gear from all wharves and piers.
- (b) Secure or move hazardous material and dangerous cargo to a safe location. Individual drums of hazardous material should be palletized and banded.
- (c) Advise the COTP of any dangerous cargo that cannot be secured or moved to a safe location.
- (d) Prepare to secure cargo operations involving liquid bulk dangerous cargoes in advance of the COTP setting Port Status **ZULU**, unless permission is requested and approval is received from the COTP. All cargo operations must be secured, without exception, at Port Status **ZULU**.
- (e) Ensure all self-propelled oceangoing vessels over 300 GT and all oceangoing barges have departed moorings (unless permission has been granted by the COTP or such vessels will remain in port at the facility moorings).

### IV. PORT CONDITION ZULU (12 HOURS BEFORE ANTICIPATED LANDFALL)

#### DATE/INITIALS

#### TASK REQUIREMENT

- (a) All cargo operations are secured.
- (b) Bulk oil transfer terminals should drain all loading arms and transfer hoses of product, blank off hoses, empty and clean small discharge containment.
- (c) All small craft owned by the facility that can be hauled out or trailered should be removed from the water and secured well away from the effects of possible storm surge and high winds.



# Marine Safety Information Bulletin

Commander (spw)  
U.S. Coast Guard  
Sector Mobile  
1500 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Mobile, AL 36615

MSIB Number: 19-17  
Date: October 08, 2017  
Contact: CDR Rob Compber  
Phone: (251) 441-5940  
E-Mail: Robert.C.Compber@uscg.mil



## POST-STORM PORT CONDITION CHANGES FOR CAPTAIN OF THE PORT MOBILE AREA OF OPERATIONS

1. Information for the Marine Industry:
  - a. The Captain of the Port (COTP) Mobile has returned the Port of Panama City to Port Condition **NORMAL** on October 8, 2017. This area is open to all marine traffic.
  - b. The Captain of the Port (COTP) Mobile has returned the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway from GICWW east of MM 207 (Navarre Bridge) to Port Status **NORMAL** on October 8, 2017. This area is open to all marine traffic.
  - c. The Captain of the Port (COTP) Mobile has returned the Black Warrior / Tombigbee / Mobile River to Port Status **NORMAL** from the Arlington Channel, North. The Port of Mobile South of the Arlington Ship Channel remains in **ZULU**.
  - d. The COTP will order hurricane port conditions in accordance with Sector Mobile's Maritime Severe Weather Contingency Port Plan. The plan is available at <http://homeport.uscg.mil/mobile>. You are encouraged to review this plan. It describes what actions the COTP will take during a hurricane and outlines requirements for each port condition.
2. Current port and waterway status: Effective 1800, 08 October, 2017
  - a. GICWW east of MM 207 (Navarre Bridge):           NORMAL
  - b. Port of Panama City:                                    NORMAL
  - c. GICWW west of MM 207 (Navarre Bridge):       ZULU
  - d. Port of Pensacola:                                     ZULU
  - e. Port of Mobile South of Arlington Channel:     ZULU
  - f. Port of Pascagoula:                                  ZULU
  - g. Port of Gulfport:                                     ZULU
  - h. Mobile River from Arlington Channel North:    NORMAL
3. Current information may be obtained from the COTP Mobile Voice Mail Announcement system at (251)-441-5080.
4. Further questions may be addressed by contacting Sector Mobile Command Center at (251) 441-5976.

M. R. MCLELLAN  
Captain, U. S. Coast Guard  
Commander, Coast Guard Sector Mobile  
Captain of the Port Mobile