

that there are qualitative as well as quantitative data is a critical issue. Jerry, that is one of the key points that I think you were trying to make. Until we start learning to use some of that qualitative understanding of the people who use risk-based decision making in their day-to-day activities and integrate that into our shaping of the framework for risk management decision making, we won't be able to do the job effectively and well.

Group three made clear something that jumped out, and that is that it all has to be done in the real-world context. The decision making, as Tony pointed out to us from his standpoint, is not a problem as long as he can count to three on his five-member board; everything else seems to work. The issue of integrating risk management into the whole decision-making train of thought for every phase is critical and something that comes across all the way through.

Decision making and risk-based use of the decision making are integrated in a multiple series of things: in-

dividual decisions made by shipping companies, individual decisions made on a decision to cite something at a port or not accept it, the larger process of using a vessel traffic information service or other method of adjusting waterways management, and the larger picture of the overall marine transportation system all revolve with a degree of risk and risk tradeoffs that get made every single day. Understanding that and putting it into context, pulling out, building on some of the things that came out of this conference, is a lesson that made sense.

The fourth group talked about the federal agencies' roles—my view was that they are the poor folks who get stuck figuring out how to integrate and use some of this stuff. We hope each of you got something positive from this and that the proceedings that you get later will be useful to you. So, those were the issues that jumped out at me, and I think they build on what Tom gave you.

COMPILING THE EFFORTS

Jeffrey P. High

I want to use my time to tell you the context in which this information will be used for the marine transportation system initiative. First, the marine transportation system effort has been a series of events. We started with regional listening sessions last spring. There was a national conference in November. Since then, a task force has been formed at the direction of Congress. The first meeting of the task force was March 12, 1999, and there will be one more meeting. From that effort, we expect that a national advisory council will be established. Certainly we are going to build on the success of various harbor safety committees and the other local committees that can and do use risk-based decision making.

So, what is going to happen here? Here is the time line: the report to Congress is due from the national marine transportation system task force on July 1, 1999. That is fairly soon. To prepare for that, the final meeting of the task force is the middle of May. Basically, at that time, the task force, which includes about 70 public and private sector (two-thirds are private sector) members,

will get together and look at a draft report, bless it (we hope), and then send it forward. Then we will try to get it through all the various stages of administrative review.

This report is going to deal with dredging. It is going to deal with the future condition of the marine transportation system, the current condition, and the strategic plan. How do you write a report like that in just a few weeks? The answer is that this is not all new work. It is really a compilation of all the effort that has been invested up to this point. What I'm telling you is that what I heard coming out of this conference and what we wrote down as the summary statements here—certainly the things that came out of each of those working groups—I'm going to take back with me. I will bring these ideas back to the working groups that are putting the marine transportation system report together and say, "Here are some good ideas, find a way to fold these in."

NOTE

The report of the task force, *An Assessment of the U.S. Marine Transportation System: A Report to Congress* is available on the Internet at <http://www.dot.gov/mts/report>.