



**National
Transportation
Safety Board**

Shared Waterway Safety

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August 29, 2016—Hudson River



From the NY Times-August 30, 2016

10 Kayakers Rescued From Hudson River After Collision With Ferry

From the NY Times-August 30, 2016

“Ten kayakers were rescued after five of them were injured in a collision with a ferry on the Hudson River near 39th Street on Tuesday, the authorities said. The kayakers, nine clients of Manhattan Kayak Company and one of the company’s employees, were headed south on the river when the collision occurred, Inspector David Driscoll, the commander of the New York Police Department’s Harbor Unit, said at a news conference on Tuesday night.”

From the NY Times-August 30, 2016

“At least two of the kayaks were struck by a NY Waterway ferry, the police said. The employee, whose name was not released, sustained the most serious injuries, with one arm appearing to be partially severed, Inspector Driscoll said.”

From the NY Times-August 30, 2016

“The episode, which occurred around 5:55 p.m. near Pier 79 at 12th Avenue and 39th Street, brought to light the conflicts that can arise between recreational and commercial users of the river.”

According to 2016 Coast Guard data:

- 4,158 recreational accidents occurred, involving 626 deaths, 2,613 injuries and approximately \$42 million dollars of property damage.
- The fatality rate was 5.3 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels.

According to 2016 Coast Guard data:

- This rate represents a 1.9% increase from last year's fatality rate of 5.2 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels.
- Compared to 2014, the number of accidents increased 2.3%, the number of deaths increased 2.6%, and the number of injuries decreased 2.4%.

Most of these accidents involve recreational vessel:

- Intoxication
- Inattention, or
- Insufficient marine knowledge and operating skills

But:

- The number of both commercial vessels and human-powered recreational vessels sharing waterways is increasing
- In some waterways the commercial vessels have little room to maneuver around recreational vessels

But:

- With increases in both types of traffic the risk to marine safety is increasing
- The number of inexperienced and untrained recreational vessel operators is expected to increase

The future—more stand up paddle boarders



The future:

- The potential risk from encounters between these vessels and commercial vessels on shared waterways is expected to increase
- On some waterways this may pose a considerable risk to marine safety

Therefore,

- The NTSB undertook a study of shared waterway safety

The intent of the study was to:

- Understand the potential problem of mixed vessel interactions on shared waterways, and
- Suggest ways to mitigate the risk

The study is still ongoing

- Premature to discuss conclusions at this point
- But general trends can be mentioned

The Marine Transportation System



How we studied the issue-NTSB investigators:

- Undertook weekend observation rides in Chicago, San Diego, LA/Long Beach, and San Francisco
- Interviewed stakeholders in Chicago; San Diego; LA/Long Beach; San Francisco, Portland, OR; Louisville, and Nashville, and from Coast Guard headquarters
- Examined data and literature on shared waterway safety

We worked through the HSCs



NTSB

What we saw







What we found:

- The number of powered recreational vessels is decreasing
- Requirements for training and proficiency demonstration in operating powered vessels varies across the states



What we found:

- The number of human-powered vessels is increasing
- Rental companies in various ports rent human-powered vessels to most adults who want to rent
- The companies provide little if any knowledge regarding navigational safety

What we found:

- The number and size of commercial vessels is increasing as the economy improves
- Commercial vessel maneuverability around recreational vessels is determined by their size and by waterway geography

What we found:

- Some waterways, e.g., Chicago, provide little room for commercial vessels to maneuver around recreational vessels
- Nearly every commercial vessel operator with experience has had personal experiences of close encounters with recreational vessels

What we found:

- Responses to the safety risk varied from port to port
- Many of the responses were innovative and unique
- Responses also varied by local harbor safety committee

What we found—Innovative responses include:

- Portland, OR, pilots buying air time to inform fishing vessel operators of hazards operating in shipping lanes
- San Francisco HSC developing material and videos to inform recreational vessel operators of basic vessel operating rules

What we found—Innovative responses include:

- Chicago HSC members jointly developing multi-point program to enforce rules and educate operators

But, risks on shared waterways continue

- Decreasing costs of non-motorized recreational vessels will increase their presence on shared waterways
- Few jurisdictions require education of non-motorized vessel operators

But, risks on shared waterways continue

- USCG and local agency objectives call for higher priority to other safety issues, e.g., operator intoxication
- Some waterways do not have HSCs or other vehicles to allow stakeholders to jointly address safety issues

What we like:

- Harbor Safety Committees where stakeholders share common objective of enhancing port operational safety
- USCG and law enforcement enforcing rules pertaining to recreational vessel operators

What we like:

- States that require recreational vessel operator education and skill demonstration

What we hope to see

- Skilled and knowledgeable recreational boaters enjoying waterways and sharing them safely with commercial vessels

Happy recreational and commercial vessel operators



Happy pets of recreational and commercial vessel operators



And of course, a happy Coast Guard



Thank you.





National Transportation Safety Board