MINUTES OF THE
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, April 6, 2000

The Port of Houston Authority
Executive Offices Board Room – 4th Floor
111 E. Loop North
Houston, TX

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 a.m. by Burt Kittleson, Chairman of the Information Technology Committee. The following individuals were present at the meeting:

Committee Members:
Burt Kittleson, Port of Portland, Committee Chairman
Tom Armstrong, Georgia Ports Authority
David Barber, Jacksonville Port Authority
Tracy Charity, Virginia International Terminals
Gustavo Espinosa, Port of Corpus Christi Authority
Eddie Fuller, Port of Houston Authority
Lisa Himber, Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay
Jerrol Larrieu, Port of New Orleans
Cris Mowrey, North Carolina State Ports Authority
Karen Ryan Tobia, Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
Susan Schaefer, Port of Los Angeles
Larry Sposi, Booz-Allen and Hamilton
Inigo Thomas, Port of Wilmington, DE

Guests:
Jim Eldridge, Port of Houston Authority
Orin Rehorst, Port of Houston Authority
Rudy Martens, COSMOS
John O'Brien, Maersk Data USA Inc.
Peter Van Voorem, COSMOS

Scott Brotemarkle - AAPA

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 A.M. by Burt Kittleson. The Port of Houston Authority was acknowledged and thanked for hosting the meeting. All present then introduced themselves and stated the organization which they were representing.

The first topic of discussion was eCommerce. Mr. Espinosa described the "Business to Business" information transfer that Port of Corpus Christi has been involved in. Ms. Charity also shared information about VIT's intranet containing downloadable internal H.R. and company broadcast information. Other internet-based communications discussed included inquiries on container activity, booking information and shipping schedules. Web camera uses, including operational activity monitoring and trucker traffic information from the gate, were also discussed. The security issues associated with eCommerce were also discussed. This included the handling of users through front-end database-driven password authentication and establishing a session with a secured database server through a firewall.

The next topic was EDI Vans vs. email and the fact that many shippers and receivers are not EDI-savvy and prefer to send data in various formats by attachment through e-mail. Several conversion options were discussed including a package by a company called Ornic (http://www.ornic.com/actions/casaveatt.shtml) which will convert e-mail attachments (Excel spreadsheets etc…) to x-12, by identifying the header, batch file processing and sending it to the database. CommerceQuest was another recommended company for the conversion service. It was resolved that a thread would be started on the Discussion Group for this topic (EDI Alternatives). The need for reverse EDI was also recognized, as some customers want data as attachments in non-EDI formats.

Scott Brotemarkle then briefed the committee on the Customs Automation Funding issue and AAPA's involvement with the *Coalition for Customs Automation (CCAF)*. Lisa Himber was recognized for giving testimony at a Capitol Hill briefing in March. Mr. Brotemarkle quickly summarized notes from the April 4, 2000 U.S. Customs Budget hearing which will be made available on the AAPA InfoTech website as well as the available testimony from that hearing. Lisa Himber and Jerrol Larrieu both reported on the working groups to which they belong concerning U.S. Customs. The AAPA Resolutions were also highlighted. It was decided that another discussion thread would be started for these in order to get feedback over the next few months. The resolutions were also to be posted on the committee web site.

Next, Maersk Data and COSMOS made a presentation on the "Visual Gate System". This technology allows trucks to efficiently pass through a gate by collecting much of the pertinent data through digitally photography, OCR and a database module.

Chassis tagging was the next topic discussed by the committee. Ms. Ryan Tobia briefed the committee on the federally-funded project with PAR Systems that uses RF, GPS and Cellular technology to track a chassis from the yard to anywhere within its destination radius. She also talked about ITS America's interest in intermodal freight movement and their desire to get ports involved in the project.

Trucker Issues were mentioned briefly. It was stated that in order to keep the trucking industry

happy ports could add more lanes to the gate areas and extend the gate hours. Along the same lines, "paperless" gate technology was also discussed. The Sea-Link card system in place at Maher Terminals has been a successful model. It was stated that it may take some time to make the labor transition to a system like this.

The committee then discussed "Portmaster", a product which the Navy is looking at for "visual vessel berthing". The internet-based product provides reports of port activity, weather, customs info, etc…to the incoming vessel. The discussion then turned to PDAs and their emergence in the port industry. Members discussed how they were using the devices, their pros and cons, and how they could be used at ports. The committee decided that this would be a good topic to revisit at the next committee meeting.

Lastly, the committee discussed the development of a template for sharing information pertaining to the technology setups at member ports. Discussion of the next meeting location was tabled until TOPAS had made recommendations for their next meeting location.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.