

Memorandum



Date: June 12, 2017

To: Honorable Chairman Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor

A blue ink signature of Carlos A. Gimenez, Mayor of Miami-Dade County, written over the name.

Subject: Report on Improving Boater Safety and Preventing Boating Accidents – Directive 162282

The following information is provided in response to Resolution No. R-921-16, adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on October 5, 2016, requesting a report regarding measures that can be taken to improve boater safety and prevent boating accidents at the North Jetty at Government Cut and other similar waterways in Miami-Dade County (County).

The Miami-Dade Police Department's Marine Patrol Unit (MPU) provides enhanced patrols throughout the year along 84 miles of coastline, 22 miles of beaches, 67 miles of inland waterways, and 5.5 miles of the Miami River. The MPU conducts daytime routine patrols throughout the waterways of the County, enforcing maritime laws on a daily basis and during special marine festivities such as Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Columbus Day/weekend events, and lobster fishing mini-season.

Government Cut and Bakers Haulover Jetties pose a serious threat to boaters, especially during nighttime operations. The United States Coast Guard's Waterways Management Section is responsible for, and has the sole authority to approve, lighting for all Aids to Navigation, (Title 33). After the death of Miami Marlins Pitcher Jose Fernandez, along with the other two victims aboard his vessel, the United States Coast Guard Sector Miami began a study of the area in question and forwarded a survey to all local marine law enforcement agencies, civilians, and commercial businesses that navigate the waters of the County. The MPU participated in the survey and provided recommendations to add lighting to both jetties along Government Cut to better serve boating traffic during nighttime operations. Additional recommendations were made to add lighting to the Haulover Inlet jetties as well.

Throughout the summer season, the MPU will be preparing several educational videos to share with the public via social media outlets on boating and diving safety. Additionally, the MPU continues to participate in the Mayor's sponsored Boating Under the Influence Task Force, and will conduct several Boating Under the Influence operations throughout the 2017 boating season, during which educational brochures will be distributed.

The Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department (PROS) has safe boating information on display for marina patrons at its six marina offices, and PROS will maintain a sufficient stock of boating safety brochures at all marina offices. Additionally, on June 10, 2017, all six PROS marinas will have the Coast Guard Auxiliary performing safety checks at the boat ramps.

Implementing the above actions while continuing to work together with our federal, state, and local partners will assist in promoting a safe boating environment and enhance awareness throughout the boating community.

Honorable Chairman Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.
And Member, Board of County Commissioners
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Should you need additional information, please contact Director Juan J. Perez, Miami-Dade Police Department, at 305-471-3372.

Per Ordinance 14-65, this report shall be placed on the next available Board of County Commissioner's meeting agenda.

c: Abigail Price-Williams, County Attorney
Geri Bonzon-Keenan, First Assistant County Attorney
Russell Benford, Deputy Mayor, Office of the Mayor
Michael Spring, Senior Advisor, Office of the Mayor
Juan J. Perez, Director, Miami-Dade Police Department
Maria Nardi, Director Designee, Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department
Neil R. Singh, Interim Commission Auditor
Christopher Agrippa, Clerk of the Board
Eugene Love, Agenda Coordinator