



P R E S S R E L E A S E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – October 20, 2008

Contact: Lester Millet III

Phone: (985) 652-9278

Email: lmillet@portsl.com

Port of South Louisiana Hosts Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Assistant Secretary for Infrastructure Protection, Robert Stephan, met with security and operations officials of the Port of South Louisiana (PSL) and the Lower Mississippi River Port Wide Strategic Security Council (LMRPWSSC) --a consortium of the five Lower Mississippi River Deep-water ports, partnering together to establish a regional maritime security layer.

Assistant Secretary Stephan received a briefing by PSL Director of Operations Mitch Smith at the Globalplex Intermodal Terminal Guesthouse. The briefing focused on the economic significance of the lower Mississippi port system to the United States, along with the creation of the Lower Mississippi River Port Wide Strategic Security Committee (including recent and planned security upgrades/PSL specific). The briefing concluded with discussion on potential opportunities for enhanced cooperation between the Federal Government and the Private Sector, with Lester Millet III, PSL Policy and Planning Director, touching upon the Port of South Louisiana's Facility Security Officers Workgroup. The workgroup, composed of key members of both the government and private sectors, meets bi-monthly to network and share information pertaining to maritime security.

Assistant Secretary Stephan then joined Mitch Smith aboard the Port Security Vessel (PSV) *PSL Responder* for a short technology demonstration of vessel's capabilities, followed by a down-river tour of the port, identifying critical infrastructures along the way. A special note of thanks goes to Captain Dan Taillon and PSL's Marine Operations Division, for their excellence and professionalism in conducting the important demonstration.

The *PSL Responder* is an award-winning, state-of-the-art, 57-foot Dauntless class port security vessel, equipped with the latest in communications and surveillance equipment, and capable of speeds in excess of thirty knots. Dedicated in August 2007, the vessel serves as a multi-mission command/control center for the Port of South Louisiana's 24/7 security operations

within its 54 mile wide jurisdiction, and supports various Coast Guard marine safety/security missions along the lower Mississippi River's three hundred mile stretch. The Port of South Louisiana purchased the *PSL Responder* with funds from the Department of Homeland Security Port Security Grant Program (Round 5).



(L-R): Chris Krebs, DHS; Louie Dabdoub, DHS; Lester Millet III, Port of South Louisiana; Mitch Smith, Port of South Louisiana; Assistant Secretary Robert Stephan, DHS.

(Not Pictured): Henry Sullivan, Jr., Port of South Louisiana; Patrick Burns, DHS; Edward "Tootie" Nowell, Port of South Louisiana; John Pennison, Plaquemines Port Harbor & Terminal District; Dave Hunter, DHS; Phillip Constantin, DHS; and Max Fenn, DHS.

#####

Strategically located between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, and encompassing fifty-four miles along the Lower Mississippi, the Port of South Louisiana is "America's Largest tonnage Port". The Port of South Louisiana, comprising three parishes (St. Charles, St. John, and St. Charles), accounts for over fifty percent of all Louisiana's imports/exports.