



## **NEWS** From -

### Conference of Professional Operators for Response Towing

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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#### **C-PORT Elects 2021 Board of Directors**

C-PORT (Conference of Professional Operators for Response Towing) held its 34th Membership Meeting on January 6, 2021. The meeting was held virtually out of the concern for the health and safety of the membership. Along with committee reports and industry issue discussions, the membership elected its 2021 C-PORT board of directors and named the 2021 C-PORT executive board.



Reelected to the board was Harold "Smitty" Smith of Miller's Towing & Salvage/TowBoatU.S. Sandy Hook. Smith, better known in the industry as Smitty, lives in Middletown, NJ with his wife Sissy of 35 years. They have 3 grown children, with their first grandchild born in April 2018. They are lucky enough to live on an 11 acre farm where they house their horses.

Smitty has been working on boats all of his adult life and has had his USCG credential for more than 30 years. He holds a 200 ton masters license and a master of towing credential. Smitty started right out of high school working on tug boats in NY Harbor. After starting a family, the schedule was tough. Smitty went to work for the Fast Ferry industry becoming a senior Captain, and stayed there for 10 years. In 1998, he joined Millers Launch, the largest oil spill response company in NY Harbor as a supervisor. When they acquired TowBoatU.S. Sandy Hook, Smitty took the management lead running the day to day operations.

Smitty brings vast amounts of experience in the towing and salvage business to C-PORT. He is a member of the American Salvage Association and has been involved with the incident command system for oil spills, as well as managing a marine assistance towing and salvage company in a busy port. Smitty feels his knowledge and understanding of the challenges we all face will help him be a positive force on the board, helping the industry to keep regulations in check. Smitty has served as C-PORT Secretary since 2019. He serves on a number of C-PORT committees including Government and Legislative Affairs, Programs and Training, and the C-PORT US Coast Guard Focus Group.



Also reelected to the C-PORT board was Richard Paul of Marine Towing & Salvage of SWFL/TowBoatU.S. Cape Coral. Rich's desire to work on the water is a dream come true. Growing up in Florida, and spending endless weekends on Little Gasperilla Island, he knew his love of the water would eventually lead to a career on the water. In 2005, Rich received his 50 ton Masters License with a Towing Endorsement. While attending the Captain school, he learned the local TowBoatUS company was for sale. After a 25 year career, Rich retired from Publix Supermarkets and bought TowBoatUS Cape Coral, where he began a new career on the water. For the last 15 years, Rich has been very dedicated and committed on working to change the perception of the marine towing and salvage profession. He said, "We are professional business owners, not a band of pirates." Rich serves on the C-PORT Government and Legislative Affairs Committee and the Programs and Training Committee.



Newly elected to serve on the C-PORT board of directors is Chris Day, Georgia Boat Safety and Training/TowBoatU.S. Lake Allatoona. Chris started his on the water career after spending 11 years in Law Enforcement Criminal Interdiction. He was looking for a change from the fast pace life of a narcotics officer. Chris remarked that little did he know, responding to an ad for a deckhand in Tybee Island, GA would turn into a new and exciting career. Chris started Georgia Boat Safety and Training in 2016 with a target audience of public safety professionals. They have trained several agencies in boat operations in and around Georgia. Shortly after starting his company, Chris was approached by the previous owner of the TowBoatU.S. Lake Allatoona area. Chris purchased the company in 2018 and began to build his brand in the area by giving back to the local community. Chris serves as the Water Safety Coordinator for SafeKids Barow/Cherokee County, hosts an annual fundraiser every year to support a



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local family on the lake, and participates on the Lake Allatoona Water Safety Task Force. It was no surprise when Chris volunteered to chair the C-PORT Programs and Training Committee this year. His boating experience expands from near coastal to inland waters, working in both the private and government sectors. "I have served on many committees and boards in my Law Enforcement career from city to federal government," Chris said. "I feel I can bring a much needed voice to C-PORT for Inland towing companies." Along with his duties as Programs and Training chair, Chris serves on the C-PORT Government and Legislative Affairs Committee, and the C-PORT US Coast Guard Focus Group.

In announcing the 2021 C-PORT board of directors, Tina Cardone, executive director remarked, "C-PORT continues to represent the professional marine assistance companies throughout the nation. These individuals bring decades of experience and vision to the board."

Serving on the 2021 C-PORT board of directors and executive committee are:

Robert Butler, Big Bay Marine/TowBoatU.S. San Diego  
Chris Day, Georgia Boat Safety and Training/TowBoatU.S. Lake Allatoona; appointed Treasurer  
Jake Dunfee, Rescue Marine/TowBoatU.S. Port Clinton  
Phil LeBlanc, Safe Sea/TowBoatU.S. Narragansett Bay; appointed Chairman  
Richard Paul, Marine Towing & Salvage of SWFL/TowBoatU.S. Cape Coral  
Dale Plummer, Baltimore Marine Recovery/TowBoatU.S. Baltimore; appointed Secretary  
Harold "Smitty" Smith, Miller's Towing & Salvage/TowBoatU.S. Sandy Hook; appointed Vice chairman

C-PORT was founded in 1986 to act as a liaison between the marine assistance industry and public agencies and organizations involved with boating safety, marine assistance, marine salvage and other marine-related operations. Our members are dedicated to providing prompt, professional and timely assistance to all boaters and to actively partner and cooperate with local law enforcement and U.S. Coast Guard. For more information, contact C-PORT at (954) 261-2012 or visit [www.cport.us](http://www.cport.us).