

CAPTAIN SENTENCED FOR LEAVING OPERATION OF TUGBOAT WITH UNLICENSED PILOT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 13, 2011

TERRY CARVER, age 40, resident of Glasford, Illinois, was sentenced today in federal court by U. S. District Judge Helen G. Berrigan to three (3) years probation for creating a hazardous condition on board the M/V Mel Oliver in violation of the Ports and Waterways Safety Act, announced U. S. Attorney Jim Letten.

According to court documents, at approximately 7:00 P.M. on July 20, 2008, **CARVER** removed himself from the M/V Mel Oliver to travel to Illinois for personal reasons leaving the M/V Mel Oliver under the direction and control of an underlicensed employee. There were no other properly licensed employees to operate the Mel Oliver at the time **CARVER** left the Mel Oliver.

In a related case, **DRD TOWING COMPANY, LLC.**, a marine company located in Harvey, Louisiana, which operated the M/V Mel Oliver was sentenced in January, 2011 to two years probation and a \$200,000 fine for violation of Ports and Waterways Safety Act and a misdemeanor violation of the Clean Water Act. In addition, **RANDALL DANTIN**, a resident of co-owner of **DRD TOWING**, was sentenced to twenty-one (21) months imprisonment and a \$50,000 fine in a separate charge of obstruction of justice.

In another related case, John Bavaret, a licensed apprentice-mate aboard the M/V Mel Oliver, previously pled guilty admitting that from approximately July 20, 2008 through July 23, 2008, he steered the M/V Mel Oliver without a properly-licensed captain present, for DRD Towing, L.L.C., a marine company that operated tugboats. Further, he admitted that at 1:30 A.M. on July 23, 2008, the M/V Mel Oliver collided with the M/V Tintomara, a 600-foot tanker ship, causing the release of approximately 282,828 gallons of fuel oil in the lower Mississippi River near downtown New Orleans. Bavaret is awaiting sentencing.

"The Coast Guard is dedicated to the protection of America's waterways and those who sail upon them. One of the fundamental tenets of safe navigation is having a properly licensed mariner in charge of the vessel. When this principle is broken, the lives of all mariners and the marine environment are at risk. I am grateful to the Department of Justice for their hard work on this case and appreciate the synergy between our two agencies," said Rear Adm. Mary E. Landry, Eighth District Coast Guard commander.

This case was investigated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Criminal Investigation and the United States Coast Guard Criminal Investigative Service and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Dorothy Manning Taylor and Matthew Chester.