

Contact: John Grubb
Bay Area Council
Office: 415-981-6600
Cell: 415-847-6320
jgrubb@bayareacouncil.org



**As 100 Anniversary of Earthquake Nears, “Blue Ribbon Task Force”
Urgently Calls for Disaster Recovery Water Transportation System
To Be Implemented
That Can Save the Bay Area Following a Major Disaster**

Experts Contend That Transbay Transportation Network Will be Disabled By Earthquake

*Network of 30 Portable and Permanent Terminals and Fleet of 88 Passenger Ferries,
Hovercraft, Barges and Ambulance Ships Required*

SAN FRANCISCO, April 12, 2006 – Today the Bay Area Council announced the release of recommendations to create a disaster recovery water transportation system to be financed through state disaster recovery bonds, federal homeland security funding and other financing mechanisms. The recommendations would create a network of 30 portable and permanent terminals and 88 vessels at an estimated cost of \$1.6 billion. The recommendations were developed by a “Blue Ribbon Task Force” after extensive consultation with agencies responsible for planning and coordinating emergency response transportation; with experts on earthquake risk and vulnerability; and with vessel suppliers and operators.

Experts advised the Task Force that earthquake risks facing the Bay Area are real and staggeringly large and that the regional transportation system will not survive intact and the only way to cross the Bay will be on the water. The recommendations and accompanying analysis are summarized in the report “The Bay – The Transportation Spine for Disaster,” which was requested by Senator Don Perata, President pro Tempore.

The Blue Ribbon Task Force was co-chaired by Ron Cowan, the Chairman and CEO of the Doric Group, and Bruce Spaulding, the Vice Chancellor of the University of California at San Francisco. The other members of the Task Force were: Jerry Bridges, Executive Director, Port of Oakland; Carney Campion, General Manager (retired), Golden Gate Transit; Russell Hancock, President and CEO, Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network; John Martin, Airport Director, San Francisco International Airport; Jim Wunderman, President and CEO, Bay Area Council (ex officio).

“Simply put, we learned that a major earthquake will come, it will knock out the transbay transportation network, and the only way to cross the Bay will be by water,” said Ron Cowan, co-chair of the Blue Ribbon Task Force. “It’s stark but must be said that the lack of a transportation network for the 6.8 million people in our region after a major earthquake, will result in many otherwise preventable deaths in the short term and make the recovery of this region questionable. The good news is the Bay that divides us everyday, can unite us in such a disaster. If implemented this disaster recovery water transportation system could be seen as the equivalent of strengthening the levees in New Orleans before the hurricane struck.”

If implemented, the plan presented by the Task Force will elevate water transportation to an appropriately prominent level in regional emergency preparedness and response plans, so that

emergency response coordinators will know that backup water transportation will be available when bridges, highways, and tunnels are out of service. The Task Force plan will:

- Provide a comprehensive system of permanent and portable terminals and vessels that can serve any corner of the Bay.
- Streamline the coordination of response by public and private water vessels, as well as the built out of the new system, by designating the Water Transit Authority as the responsible planning and coordination agency.
- Provide a large fleet of vessels of various types that can evacuate the stranded and injured, transport first responders to their duty stations, carry ambulances and fire trucks to where they are most needed, and move cargo and emergency relief supplies and equipment. The same fleet can later help move people and goods as the region struggles to recover and return to life.

“Implementing this plan and creating the robust emergency water transportation system that it envisions quite literally can save the Bay Area—the lives of its people, and the life of its economy,” said Jim Wunderman, President and CEO of the Bay Area Council.

The Bay Area faces an earthquake threat equal in magnitude to Hurricane Katrina, and just as well documented. The U.S. Geological Survey says that the Bay Area faces high risk of a massive and deadly earthquake in the near future: 29 percent chance of magnitude 6.7 or greater in 10 years, 62 percent in 30 years. FEMA says that the very possible repeat of the 1906 San Andreas Fault earthquake would kill 5,000 people, hospitalize 18,000, make 165,000 families homeless, and cause \$70 billion to \$90 billion of property damage.

The Association of Bay Area Governments says that over 1,700 roads would be closed by a major earthquake on the Hayward Fault. Notwithstanding all of the efforts made and underway to improve transportation system safety, ABAG and USGS warn that Bay Area transportation faces risks that cannot be avoided:

- Toll bridges will likely be closed by a major earthquake, either by bridge damage or by access road failure.
- Soil liquefaction will cause roads near the Bay—such as bridge approaches, US 101 and Interstate 80 and 880—to buckle and subside, leaving them impassable.
- Violent ground movement and fault slip of five to 25 feet will cause large fractures to open in roadways.
- Landslides will block roadways.
- The BART Berkeley hills tunnel, which passes directly through the Hayward Fault, will be badly damaged and potentially closed for years.

The California Health and Human Services Agency reports that 61 Bay Area hospitals have at least one building that will not survive a major earthquake intact, creating a need to transport patients and victims across the Bay to functioning hospitals. With the regional transportation system disabled, first-responders will be unable to help tens of thousands of homeless, injured, and starving victims. A failure of transportation will be particularly devastating to the most vulnerable of our population, the elderly, children, and the poor.

Current infrastructure and equipment capabilities are grossly inadequate to the physical task. Ferry terminals exist in only a few spots on the Bay, and the vessel fleet lacks the capacity to make up for even one out-of-service bridge. The few vessels that exist are in the hands of many different public and private owners and operators, and there is no detailed plan or identified leader to activate and coordinate them. The Task Force has developed an emergency water transit plan that fills this void. The proposed system is robust and flexible, with clear leadership.

It can meet the most important transbay emergency response and recovery transportation needs to protect the Bay Area and its residents.

Emergency recovery needs cannot be precisely predicted, so the proposed system is inherently flexible and will meet needs of many types, in any location on the Bay. Existing ferry terminals cover only a narrow range of the Bay and leave large swaths—particularly in the North Bay and South Bay—with no emergency water transit capability.

“The emergency response and recovery transportation system must be fully implemented as quickly as possible, as if the lives of Bay Area residents depend on it—because they do,” said Bruce Spaulding, co-chair of the Task Force.

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Bay Area Council

Founded in 1945, the Bay Area Council (www.bayareacouncil.org) is an advocate for a strong economy, a vital business environment, and a better quality of life for everyone who lives here. Led by CEOs, the Bay Area Council presents a strong, united voice for hundreds of major employers throughout the Bay Area region who employ more than 495,000 workers, or 1 of every six private sector employees in the Bay Area.