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**INTERNATIONAL BOATBUILDERS' EXHIBITION & CONFERENCE IN TAMPA
HOSTS SPECIAL HURRICANE RELIEF SESSION**

Governor's Executive Relief Order for Florida Marinas Announced

TAMPA, FL, September 21, 2017 – Following the impact Hurricane Irma had on local marine businesses, The International BoatBuilders' Exhibition & Conference (IBEX) held a last-minute special session to assist marinas and yards affected by the hurricane.

The session began with the announcement that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection signed Governor Rick Scott's executive order to allow Florida residents or businesses to fix or replace existing authorized structures (i.e. piers, docks, seawalls) at single or multi-family homes or commercial marinas, without the need for a DEP permit or fee. The Army Corps has agreed to a 24 to 48-hour turnaround for permits. This order is currently written for 30 days, but it is expected to be extended.

Following the announcement, IBEX presenters offered their top advice on topics ranging from electrical systems, OSHA and employee concerns, repairing boats, insurance and legal considerations, and post-storm security, to lessons learned from post-Irma facility reviews conducted last week.

"We knew we had a pool of experts available at IBEX and we wanted to bring those professionals with their knowledge together to offer advice and tips to people who need it most," says marine consultant Margaret Podlich, session moderator. "IBEX was the most logical location to have this critical conversation. We had the assistance of our IBEX seminar speakers and input from NMMA, ABBRA, AMI, and *Professional BoatBuilder* magazine."

Speakers included: James Cote (Cote Marine), Nigel Calder (Calder Enterprises), Brian Kane (Global Ocean Security Technology), Robert Smith (MYMIC), Ed Maurer (Suncoast), Lori Sousa (SeaLand Insurance), Jay Frechette (Starkweather & Shepley), Carl Wolf (Robson Forensics), Steve D'Antonio (Steve D'Antonio Marine Consulting Inc.), JB Currell (Gibco/Flexmold), Ron Reisner (R. Reisner & Associates), John Sprague (JHSprague Consulting, LLC), and Jules Masee (Hamilton, Miller & Birthisel LLP).

Tips included thorough documentation including photographs with dates and recovery efforts and the importance of systems checks including electric, ventilation, and emergency equipment. Most of the tips have been captured on short videos, which will be available after IBEX, which is taking place through today at the Tampa Convention Center.

Some of the tips include:

- **You can't document too much.** Take photos and video of what you find. Put a current newspaper in the photo to show/prove what day you took it. Photo your recovery efforts too.

- **You pay them – now call them.** Call your insurance agent and let them know what's up. It's ok to not know the extent of the damage – some will take months to emerge. If you can't get through to your insurance, document each attempt to reach them, and try the broker, the company, and any other possible touchpoint.
- **Expect the unexpected.** Cleanup efforts may expose employees to hazardous materials such as harmful chemicals, raw sewage, damaged electrical, and even snakes. Assume the worst and take extra precautions.
- **Recognize the increased risk of hazards.** This is a marathon, not a sprint, so take pains to be extra careful while doing different tasks than normal. (Your bookkeeper may not be used to using a chainsaw.)
- **Electrical systems.** Both boats and marinas got a liberal dose of salt. Get a qualified electrician in to inspect equipment and systems for ground faults, water damage, corrosion/wind/collision damage.

For more details and more topics addressed during the workshop, visit www.ibexshow.com. Resources provided as handouts at the session are available [here](#).

About the International BoatBuilders' Exhibition & Conference (IBEX)

IBEX, Where Better Boats Begin (www.ibexshow.com), is the marine industry's largest technical trade event in North America and is powered globally by **METSTRADE**, the world's leading platform and community for professionals in the leisure marine equipment industry. IBEX is owned and produced by the **National Marine Manufacturers Association** (www.nmma.org) and **RAI Amsterdam** (www.rai.nl). The 2017 IBEX is scheduled to take place at the Tampa Convention Center, September 19 – 21, in Tampa, FL USA. For more information, please visit www.ibexshow.com.

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