



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **PORT OF MOBILE FARES WELL FOLLOWING HURRICANE GUSTAV**

**Mobile, Ala. – September 2, 2008.** HURRICANE GUSTAV delivered high winds and seas and dumped nearly eight inches of rain along Alabama's coastal region and the Port of Mobile over the weekend. "We've really dodged a bullet," said Jimmy Lyons, Director and CEO of the Alabama State Port Authority. "We did not have any damage at our facilities and we're fully operational at all terminals. We're just waiting for the green light to bring ships in and out of the port."

The post-GUSTAV navigation assessments have already begun. The US Coast Guard and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are conducting side scan and sonar inspections of regional channels and aids to navigation serving the Port of Mobile. Full inspections of the Mobile River to Theodore Ship Channel will be completed today, and Theodore Ship, the lower Mobile Ship, and Dixey Bar inspections will be completed by tomorrow, weather permitting. "The Port Authority began earlier today releasing vessels with up to 15 foot draft. Our inner harbor and river transits have been moving all day and we now understand the Intracoastal Waterway is now open all the way to Gulfport," said Smitty Thorne, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the Port Authority. "If all goes well, we should be open to 35 foot draft vessel traffic by tomorrow, and then to 45 foot draft shortly thereafter."

The U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port closed the Port of Mobile this past Saturday afternoon anticipating the storm's impact along the Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama coastlines. GUSTAV's imminent tract sent port officials into storm preparation mode as early as August 25<sup>th</sup>. The Port Authority locked down equipment, moved cargo and materials into sheds, and shuttled its rail and automotive fleets to higher ground. "We were just about as ready as we could get come Saturday mid-day," said Thorne. "These storms, while unwanted, are a fact of life that allows us to exercise our emergency plans and communication networks in real time. It's always good to see these preparations come together not only for the protection of our employees and operations, but that of our customers."

The Alabama State Port Authority, headquartered in Mobile, Alabama, owns and operates the State of Alabama's deepwater port facilities in Mobile, Alabama. The Authority directly employs 700 workers and its public facilities handled 27 million tons of cargo last year. The Authority's container, general cargo and bulk facilities have immediate access to two interstate systems, five Class 1 railroads, and nearly 15,000 miles of inland waterway connections. Learn more at [www.asdd.com](http://www.asdd.com).

###

Contact:  
Judith Adams  
Vice President, Marketing  
Alabama State Port Authority  
(251) 441-7003 Office  
(251) 751-3497 Cell  
[jadams@asdd.com](mailto:jadams@asdd.com)