

# **The American Waterways Operators Strategic Plan: 2010-2015**

## **Vision**

The American Waterways Operators is the national advocate for the U.S. tugboat, towboat and barge industry, which serves the nation as the safest, most environmentally friendly, and most economical mode of freight transportation.

## **Mission**

The American Waterways Operators represents the people who own and operate the tugboats, towboats and barges serving the rivers, coasts, Great Lakes and harbors of the United States. AWO promotes the industry's value to the nation as a driver of the U.S. economy with a positive impact on the American quality of life, moving vital commodities safely, providing family-wage jobs, reducing air and water pollution, relieving highway congestion, and protecting homeland security.

## **Values**

AWO Members:

- Operate their companies and vessels in an ethical manner.
- Care for their employees and the public by working to improve the safety of their operations and the professionalism of their people.
- Care for the environment by working to protect and improve the quality of our nation's air and water.
- Supply creative, practical, and economical solutions to their customers' and the nation's transportation needs.

- Provide value to the nation, moving cargoes vital to the U.S. economy as the safest, most environmentally friendly and most efficient mode of freight transportation.
- Value member diversity and engage in cooperative endeavors for the betterment of the industry.
- Work collaboratively with government and other stakeholders to find solutions to issues of safety, security, the environment and freight mobility.

## Goals

1. Promote positive public awareness of the tugboat, towboat, and barge industry.
2. Lead and support AWO members in continuously improving safety, security and environmental stewardship.
3. Promote the tugboat, towboat and barge industry with the U.S. Congress and advocate for legislation and policies that benefit the industry.
4. Promote the tugboat, towboat and barge industry with the Administration and federal agencies and advocate for regulatory policies that benefit the industry.
5. Influence priority state and federally-proposed regional initiatives that broadly affect industry interests.
6. Promptly inform and engage the membership on public policy issues.
7. Govern and manage the association effectively and efficiently.

# Five-Year Objectives: 2010-2015

## **Goal 1: Promote positive public awareness of the tugboat, towboat and barge industry.**

- 1.1 Develop a concise and effective value proposition to tell the industry's story to policymakers and targeted public audiences.
- 1.2 Develop and implement a strategy to raise awareness of the industry's value to the nation.
- 1.3 Engage members to act as ambassadors for the industry to policymakers, media, and targeted public audiences.
- 1.4 Use technology strategically to communicate the industry's message.
- 1.5 Build and maintain relationships with targeted trade and mainstream media.

## **Goal 2: Lead and support AWO members in continuously improving safety, security and environmental stewardship.**

- 2.1 Ensure AWO members continue to lead the marine transportation industry in safety and environmental stewardship.
- 2.2 Strengthen the Responsible Carrier Program and enhance its value to AWO members.
- 2.3 Establish safety and environmental goals and measure results.
- 2.4 Utilize and manage appropriate resources to ensure successful industry transition to Subchapter M and other federal regulations.

- 2.5 Convene forums and facilitate processes for improving vessel safety, protecting the environment and educating AWO members.
- 2.6 Manage and modernize vessel security plans.

**Goal 3: Promote the tugboat, towboat and barge industry with the U.S. Congress and advocate for legislation and policies that benefit the industry.**

- 3.1 Develop and implement an integrated strategy to achieve legislative objectives.
- 3.2 Build and maintain relationships with key Members of Congress and their staffs and establish AWO as the go-to organization on domestic maritime issues.
- 3.3 Integrate AWO members in legislative advocacy, building and leveraging grassroots relationships with Members of Congress.
- 3.4 Use coalitions to strengthen relationships and achieve legislative results.
- 3.5 Ensure a robust AWO PAC and political support program that is integrated into AWO's overall legislative strategy.
- 3.6 Establish performance measures for assessing legislative results and communicate them to members.

**Goal 4: Promote the tugboat, towboat and barge industry with the Administration and federal agencies and advocate for regulatory policies that benefit the industry.**

- 4.1 Develop and implement an integrated strategy to position the industry positively with the Administration, including targeted federal agencies, to achieve regulatory objectives.
- 4.2 Build and maintain relationships with Administration officials and regulators and establish AWO as the go-to organization on domestic maritime issues.
- 4.3 Integrate AWO members in Administration and regulatory advocacy, building and leveraging their relationships and technical expertise.
- 4.4 Establish performance measures for assessing regulatory results and communicate them to members.

**Goal 5: Influence priority state and federally-proposed regional initiatives that broadly affect industry interests.**

- 5.1 Systematically monitor state and federally-proposed regional initiatives and advocate on those broadly impacting the industry.
- 5.2 Provide information and advice to AWO members on advocacy challenges.
- 5.3 Utilize and activate AWO members, outside organizations and other resources to prosecute advocacy programs.
- 5.4 Proactively plan for increased or future state or federally-proposed activities.

**Goal 6. Promptly inform and engage the membership on public policy issues.**

- 6.1 Educate members about relevant public policy issues in a timely way.
- 6.2 Use technology effectively to engage members on issue developments.
- 6.3 Enhance AWO meetings to foster member engagement with and among AWO members.
- 6.4 Engage Board of Directors and Executive Committee members as leaders in AWO communications with members and prospective members.
- 6.5 Develop targeted messages and communication mechanisms aimed at educating vessel crews and shoreside personnel as appropriate to meet AWO's strategic objectives.

**Goal 7: Govern and manage the association effectively and efficiently.**

- 7.1 Maintain a financially strong organization with adequate reserves and financial flexibility consistent with trade association best practices.
- 7.2 Recruit, develop and retain a quality staff to execute AWO's mission.
- 7.3 Ensure high ethical standards and compliance with applicable law and regulation.
- 7.4 Define and communicate expectations and responsibilities of Board of Directors and Executive Committee members.

- 7.5 Maintain a governance structure and processes that balance effective oversight, efficient decision making, and diverse AWO member perspectives.
- 7.6 Ensure that the membership remains engaged in and committed to the association.
- 7.7 Provide a professional development program for AWO staff consistent with trade association best practices and the needs of the organization.
- 7.8 Utilize strategic alliances with other organizations to foster effective advocacy and efficient use of member resources.