

The American Waterways Operators Strategic Plan: 2004-2006

Vision

The American Waterways Operators is the leading national advocate for, and promoter of, a safe, secure, and environmentally responsible tugboat, towboat, and barge industry.

Mission

The American Waterways Operators is the national trade association representing the owners and operators of tugboats, towboats, and barges serving the waterborne commerce of the United States. Its mission is to promote continuous improvement in safety and environmental standards, the long-term economic soundness of the industry, and the importance of waterborne commerce in the national transportation system.

Values

AWO Members:

- Recognize the fundamental responsibility to operate their companies in an ethical, safe, secure, and environmentally responsible manner that benefits their employees, their customers, the public, and the environment.
- Embrace continuous improvement in safety and environmental performance and compliance with safety management systems such as the Responsible Carrier Program.

- Recognize that the waterways of the U.S. are a national asset and a shared resource requiring stewardship and improvement.
- Constructively engage the public policy process on matters that affect safety, security, the environment, the communities in which we operate, and the economic soundness of the industry.
- Continue the industry heritage of cooperation, draw strength from member diversity, and support initiatives that fortify the industry and foster achievement of its goals.

Goals

1. Be an effective and proactive advocate with the U.S. Congress.
2. Be an effective and proactive advocate with federal agencies.
3. Promote continuous improvement in industry safety, security, and environmental performance.
4. Promote positive public awareness of the industry.
5. Influence state and regional initiatives that affect industry interests.
6. Inform the membership on public policy issues.
7. Ensure effective and efficient management and governance of the association.

Three-Year Objectives: 2004-2006

Goal 1: Be an effective and proactive advocate with the U.S. Congress.

- 1.1. Set a clear strategy annually for achieving legislative objectives.
- 1.2. Develop and implement a proactive, positive Congressional Education Program to educate targeted Members of Congress.
- 1.3. Effectively integrate AWO members into the association's issue advocacy on Capitol Hill.
- 1.4. Develop and maintain face-to-face contact with key Members of Congress and congressional staff to ensure a strong AWO presence on Capitol Hill and timely AWO involvement on matters affecting the industry.
- 1.5. Build and strengthen a grassroots network of AWO members who can engage Members of Congress from the position of constituents and supporters.
- 1.6. Maintain the AWO-PAC at a level appropriate to meet association objectives.
- 1.7. Conduct an effective program of political support events for targeted Members of Congress.
- 1.8. Foster relationships with other organizations to deploy resources efficiently and effectively in pursuit of common priority goals.

- 1.9. Strengthen the capability to gather, analyze, and present facts, data, and statistics in support of AWO advocacy objectives.

Goal 2: Be an effective and proactive advocate with federal agencies.

- 2.1. Set a clear strategy annually for achieving regulatory objectives.
- 2.2. Develop and maintain good working relationships and, where appropriate, formal partnerships, with agencies/entities that have jurisdiction over industry operations.
- 2.3. Develop and maintain effective working relationships with key agency officials.
- 2.4. Effectively integrate AWO members into the association's issue advocacy with federal agencies.
- 2.5. Foster relationships with other organizations to deploy resources efficiently and effectively in pursuit of common priority goals.
- 2.6. Strengthen the capability to gather, analyze, and present facts, data, and statistics in support of AWO advocacy objectives.

Goal 3: Promote continuous improvement in industry safety, security, and environmental performance.

- 3.1. Set a clear strategy annually to promote and improve safety, security, and environmental protection.
- 3.2. Ensure and enhance the stature and integrity of the Responsible Carrier Program.
- 3.3. Promote shipper/customer acceptance of the Responsible Carrier Program as the standard of safety and environmental performance for the tugboat, towboat, and barge industry.
- 3.4. Track major industry safety performance indicators.
- 3.5. Maintain effective forums for managing and promoting safety and exchanging safety information.

Goal 4: Promote positive public awareness of the industry.

- 4.1. Set a clear strategy annually to promote positive public awareness of the industry.
- 4.2. Continue to implement a targeted public awareness campaign aimed at “Inside the Beltway” decision makers and evaluate its effectiveness regularly.
- 4.3. Promote and bring attention to AWO’s stated values.
- 4.4. Maintain a public communications strategy to be used in the event of a major crisis and educate AWO members on the importance of integrating themselves into the strategy.

- 4.5. Build positive relationships with the media.

- 4.6. Use facts, data, and statistics in support of AWO public affairs objectives.

Goal 5: Influence state and regional initiatives that affect industry interests.

- 5.1. Establish a mechanism for monitoring state and regional initiatives and responding to them in a timely manner.
- 5.2. Effectively integrate members into AWO’s state advocacy program.
- 5.3. Maintain flexibility to address emerging state issues and proactively represent industry interests.
- 5.4. Create and utilize a database of relevant state and regional facts that can be used in AWO’s state advocacy program.
- 5.5. Foster relationships with other organizations to deploy resources efficiently and effectively in pursuit of common priority goals.

Goal 6: Inform the membership on public policy issues.

- 6.1. Provide timely and critical information to the membership.
- 6.2. Provide materials and opportunities for member issue education and discussion.

Goal 7: Ensure effective and efficient management and governance of the association.

- 7.1. Maintain a financially strong organization.
- 7.2. Recruit 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. Ensure a governance structure and processes that properly balance effective oversight, efficient decision making, and the diverse perspectives of the AWO membership.
- 7.5. Ensure that the membership remains engaged in and committed to the association.
- 7.6. Maintain an ongoing training program to ensure that the AWO staff keeps pace with technology improvements that can increase efficiency, productivity, and communications in carrying out their job responsibilities.

- 7.7. Organize and manage the AWO staff to ensure accountability, efficiency, and focus on the goals of the strategic plan.
- 7.8. Foster and maintain administrative cost sharing arrangements with strategic partners to provide efficient and cost-effective administration and promote coordination among the organizations.