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## AWO Testifies on Government Action Needed to Alleviate Vessel Personnel Shortage

On October 17, Cathy Hammond, CEO of Inland Marine Service, testified on behalf of AWO before the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure at a hearing on the vessel personnel shortage, entitled "Mariner Education and the Workforce." The focus of the hearing was to consider how the maritime personnel shortage will affect the industry as waterborne commerce continues to grow. Also testifying was AWO member Capt. Jeff Slesinger,

Western Towboat Company, on behalf of the Washington State Skills Panel.

Ms. Hammond explained to the committee the importance of the maritime industry, and the mariners who crew its vessels, in keeping the nation's economy running. She noted that, despite the opportunities that a career on a tugboat or towboat offers for advancement, excellent pay and benefits, the industry still has trouble recruiting and retaining mariners due to factors such as long periods away

*(continued on page 2)*



*Cathy Shantz-Hammond, Inland Marine Service, testifies on behalf of AWO to the House Coast Guard and Marine Transportation Subcommittee's hearing on "Mariner Education and the Workforce."*



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## AWO Testifies on Government Action Needed to Alleviate Vessel Personnel Shortage

(continued from page 1)

from home and the physical nature of the labor. Acknowledging that companies bear the primary responsibility for making the industry attractive to employees, Ms. Hammond asserted that keeping vessels crewed must be a shared industry-government effort and highlighted several ways in which government policies contribute to the personnel shortage.

Ms. Hammond made six recommendations for government action:

1. The government should modify policies and regulations that establish barriers to entry for new hires, such as the lack of a workable interim work authority provision in the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC).
2. The Coast Guard should carefully review its protocols for interacting with vessel personnel and ensure that its stated objective of “honoring the mariner” is reflected in its dealings with the professionals who crew vessels.
3. The Coast Guard should make changes to its licensing system that eliminate obstacles to advancement while ensuring high standards of safety.
4. The Maritime Administration (MarAd) should recognize changes in the domestic merchant marine and ensure that its publications recognize that the majority of onboard jobs today are on “small vessels” such as tugboats and towboats.
5. Congress and MarAd should ensure that the United States Merchant Marine Academy modernizes its focus to reflect today’s domestic fleet and help prepare graduates for careers in the towing industry.
6. MarAd should help companies and mariners understand and utilize existing governmental resources or public-private partnerships for purposes of training and education.

Capt. Jeff Slesinger also testified, citing the Washington State Skill Panel as a successful model of partnership between business, education, labor and local workforce and economic development councils. He described the panel’s support for a workboat mate vocational apprenticeship program that provides a defined career path for hawsepipers seeking a

position as mate. Noting that this model is readily adaptable to other regions and could be expanded to all seagoing positions on tugs, Capt. Slesinger cautioned that funding for the skills panel will soon run out unless new government resources are made available.

Also testifying were RADM Joel Whitehead, U.S. Coast Guard; Maritime Administrator Sean Connaughton; Michael Rodriguez, International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots; Carl Anessa, Offshore Marine Service Association; ADM John Craine, Jr. USN (Ret), SUNY Maritime College; Captain William Beacom, professional mariner; Augustin Tellez, Seafarers International Union; CAPT Arthur Sulzer, USN (Ret), Maritime Academy High School; and, Berit Eriksson, Pacific Coast Maritime Consortium.☪

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The U.S. Coast Guard-AWO Safety Partnership, the first industry-Coast Guard partnership of its kind, has launched more than 20 quality action teams that are improving safety and training throughout the tug and barge industry's operations.

[www.americanwaterways.com](http://www.americanwaterways.com)

**AWO**  
THE AMERICAN WATERWAYS OPERATORS  
AMERICA'S TUG & BARGE INDUSTRY

**OUR COMPASS ALWAYS POINTS TO SAFETY.**

The advertisement features a large graphic of a question mark and a photograph of a Coast Guard crew member in a life vest looking out at a tugboat and barge on the water. The background includes a compass rose and the AWO logo.

## AWO Members Launch “Mini Barge-In” to Capitol Hill on TWIC and Ballast Water

AWO members will be engaged in a grassroots lobbying effort on Capitol Hill this week and next week to educate members of Congress about legislation awaiting floor consideration that will affect two major issues, the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) and the regulation of vessel ballast water discharges. The visits will focus on members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee and the leadership of the House Homeland Security Committee.

With regard to TWIC, AWO members will be urging support for an amendment to the Coast Guard Authorization Act (H.R. 2830), introduced by Congressman Richard Baker (R-LA), which provides a practical interim work authority provision. AWO members will be asking members of Congress to contact House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Jim Oberstar (D-MN) and Ranking Republican John Mica (R-FL) to urge them to include the Baker amendment in the manager’s amendment when H.R. 2830 is brought to the House floor. AWO members will be asking senators to contact Commerce Committee Chairman Daniel Inouye (D-HI) and Ranking Republican Ted Stevens (R-AK) to urge their support for including a similar provision in the Senate version of the bill (S. 1892). To read a one-page summary of the background and details of AWO’s TWIC requests, please click [here](#).

On the ballast water issue, AWO members will be discussing with members of Congress the importance of enacting comprehensive federal ballast water

legislation that preempts a patchwork system of state regulation, removes the regulation of vessel discharges from the purview of the Clean Water Act and exempts vessels that operate exclusively on inland waters from ballast water regulation. AWO members will be asking senators to contact Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Inouye and Ranking Member Stevens to urge them to bring the Ballast Water Management Act (S. 1578) to the floor, retaining its federal preemption and Clean Water Act provisions and adding an



exemption for vessels operating solely in U.S. inland waters. AWO members will also be urging members of the House of Representatives to contact House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica to ask them to include the Clean Water Act provision and inland vessel exemption in a manager’s amendment to the Coast Guard Authorization Act (H.R. 2830) and bring the bill to the House floor. To read a one-page summary of the background and details of AWO’s ballast water requests, please click [here](#).

AWO asked members to volunteer to participate in these grassroots visits during the Fall Convention held in Houston, TX on October 4-5. To date, more than 30 AWO members have agreed to make visits or to write letters or make phone calls to Members of Congress about these important issues. If you haven’t yet agreed to join in the effort and would like to either schedule a visit to Capitol Hill or contact legislators, please contact Jennifer Carpenter at (703) 841-9300, extension 260, or via email at [jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com](mailto:jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com).

### Important Dates and Reminders

..... at a glance

*For more information, please contact Hermoine Wellman at (703) 841-9300, extension 291, unless otherwise noted.*

**October 31-November 1:**  
Joint Safety Committees Meeting, Baltimore, MD.

**January 17-18, 2008:**  
Southern Region Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA.

**January 24-25, 2008:**  
Atlantic Region Annual Meeting, Miami, FL.

**January 30-31, 2008:**  
Midwest and Ohio Valley Regions Joint Annual Meeting, Nashville, TN.

**February 6-7, 2008:**  
Pacific Region Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA.

## TSAC-Developed Model Training Course Accepted by National Maritime Center

The Coast Guard's National Maritime Center (NMC) has accepted a model training program developed by the Towing Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) that companies and consortia can use to develop customized training courses for Coast Guard approval.



TSAC's goal in developing the program is to assist companies in offering high-quality training to Apprentice Mates/Steersmen seeking advancement to Mate/Pilot of Towing Vessels, while providing credit against service time to expedite the process of bringing new personnel into the wheelhouse. The Coast Guard has agreed to grant eight months of sea service credit to trainees who successfully complete the program.

In order to participate in the program, a trainee must have attained a Coast Guard license as Apprentice Mate (Steersman). While participating in the program, the trainee must serve in a dedicated training position and may not be assigned other duties onboard the vessel.

Companies or consortia wishing to use the model must develop a customized training program for submission to the National Maritime Center. All AWO carrier member companies were mailed a copy of the program on October 23. The program is also on the AWO Web site. For an electronic copy of the program, click [here](#).

AWO members with questions about the program should contact Jennifer Carpenter at (703) 841-9300, extension 260, or via email at [jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com](mailto:jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com).

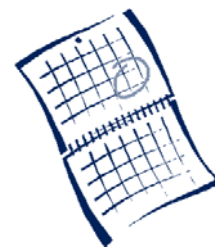
## BREAKING NEWS

### TWIC Enrollment to Begin in Corpus Christi on November 1

As this issue of the *AWO Letter* was going to press, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) announced that enrollment for the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) will begin in the Port of Corpus Christi, TX on November 1. Pre-enrollment online or by phone is available as of October 24. For more information, please visit TSA's Web site, [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov).

### NMC Extends Designated Examiner Approvals to Five Years

In an effort to reduce the burden on the towing industry and the Coast Guard, the National Maritime Center (NMC) will begin approving Designated Examiners (DEs) for a period of five years instead of the current two-year approvals. (The Coast Guard approves DEs to assess the competence of applicants for towing vessel officer licenses.) The change applies to all original and renewal approvals that occur on and after November 1. This change does not affect the expiration date of existing approvals.



In order to become a Designated Examiner and obtain an original approval, candidates must send a written request to the NMC. The request should include a description of the candidate's experience operating towing vessels, including the dates, towing vessels involved and their horsepower and tonnage, the capacity in which the candidate served, the types of tows and the areas transited. The request should also include a description of any experience and training in conducting assessments and providing training.

Designated Examiners seeking renewal of their approval should submit a short letter to the NMC that requests renewal and briefly describes their experience operating towing vessels since the last approval.

Correspondence to the NMC should be addressed as follows:

Commanding Officer  
National Maritime Center  
U.S. Coast Guard  
130 East Burr Blvd.  
Kearneysville, WV 25430

For more information, please contact Jennifer Carpenter at (703) 841-9300, extension 260, or via email at [jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com](mailto:jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com).

## CTAC to Hold November Meeting

The Chemical Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC), sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard, will meet in Arlington, VA on November 1. CTAC provides guidance to the Coast Guard on the safe transportation of hazardous materials in bulk by water. Topics on the agenda include implementation of MARPOL Annex II regarding offshore supply vessels; emergency response for tank vessels; and, the impact of biofuels on the maritime industry.



The meeting will take place from 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at Top of the Town, 1400 14th Street, Arlington, VA.

For a copy of the meeting notice, click [here](#).

## 2008 AWO Safety Calendar Orders Now Being Accepted

The 2008 AWO Safety Calendar was unveiled at the Fall Convention in Houston, TX, revealing the winners of the seventh annual Photo Contest. The theme of this year's calendar is "Crew Endurance Management" and each page contains an important safety message. It is also a tool that AWO uses to promote the industry's commitment to safe operations by distributing the calendar to members of Congress, regulators in the Coast Guard and other federal agencies, state legislators and the media.



Each AWO member company will receive a calendar as a gift when they are printed in early November, and additional calendars are on sale for \$12 each. If you would like to order calendars, please fill out the attached form and mail it with a check, or fax it and be invoiced, to:

Mary McCarthy  
The American Waterways Operators  
801 North Quincy Street  
Suite 200  
Arlington, VA 22203  
(703) 841-0389 (fax)

## Eight Members Certify Responsible Carrier Program® Compliance

Since July, eight AWO member companies have certified or recertified their commitment to the Responsible Carrier Program® (RCP). Congratulations to these companies on their successful participation in the program! The RCP is the award-winning safety management program of the tugboat, towboat and barge industry. Members are required to undergo a certification audit by an AWO-certified third-party auditor within one year of joining AWO and to recertify every three years to verify their compliance with the RCP.



For these companies, this achievement is tangible proof of their commitment to improved safety and environmental protection, and is concrete evidence of their dedication to the continuous journey toward this goal. AWO is proud of their accomplishment. For information on the RCP or the audit, please contact Bob Clinton at (703) 841-9300, extension 253, or via email at [bclinton@vesselalliance.com](mailto:bclinton@vesselalliance.com).

*The following companies have achieved audited certification:*

**Allied Transportation Company**  
Norfolk, VA

**GRIFCO Transportation, LTD**  
Houston, TX

**Hanson Material Service**  
Lockport, IL

**Kirby Corporation**  
Houston, TX

**Marathon Petroleum Company LLC**  
Ashland, KY

**Midwest Tankermen, Inc.**  
Lockport, IL

**OSG America**  
Tampa, FL

**Superior Marine Ways, Inc.**  
South Point, OH

## Annual Meetings of the Regions Scheduled for Early 2008

Mark your calendars for the upcoming AWO Annual Regional Meetings, to be held in January 2008.

Issues that are critical to both the regional and national tugboat, towboat and barge industry will be discussed, and members will vote on which issues should be included on the 2008 Regional Priorities lists that direct the work of AWO staff. In addition, attendees will nominate and elect members to the AWO Board of Directors. Below is a list of the 2008 Annual Regional Meetings. If you have any questions, please contact Hermoine Wellman at (703) 841-9300, extension 291, or via email at [hwelldman@vesselalliance.com](mailto:hwelldman@vesselalliance.com).



### Southern Region Meeting

January 17-18, 2008  
InterContinental New Orleans  
New Orleans, LA



### Atlantic Region Meeting

January 24-25, 2008  
Marriott Miami Biscayne Bay  
Miami, FL



### Midwest & Ohio Valley Regions Joint Meeting

January 30-31, 2008  
Nashville, TN



### Pacific Region Meeting

February 6-7, 2008  
Seattle, WA



## CEMS *Training Opportunities*

The Crew Endurance Management System (CEMS) is a system for managing risk factors in maritime work environments that can lead to human error and performance slumps. The Coast Guard and AWO have been working together to help companies implement the principles of CEMS. In this space, AWO will publish details of CEMS training opportunities around the country. For further information on CEMS training opportunities, please contact LCDR Vivianne Louie, U.S. Coast Guard, at (202) 372-1358.

DATE	LOCATION	CONTACT
November 8-9	Inland Waterways Academy Huntington, WV	Ms. Jo Ann Salyers (Instructor) <a href="mailto:salyers_solutions@hughes.net">salyers_solutions@hughes.net</a> (504) 236-4962
December 6-7	Inland Waterways Academy Huntington, WV	Ms. Jo Ann Salyers (Instructor) <a href="mailto:salyers_solutions@hughes.net">salyers_solutions@hughes.net</a> (504) 236-4962

### Atlantic Region

## Atlantic Region Members Welcome New Coast Guard Sector Boston Commander

On October 12, AWO and several AWO members with operations in and around Massachusetts met with the new Coast Guard Sector Boston Commander CAPT Gail P. Kulisch and her staff to inform the Coast Guard about various AWO member operations in the sector. Members in attendance gave complete reports on their company operations within the sector and discussed current issues in the port, including ameliorating tensions between vessel crews and Coast Guard law enforcement during routine boardings through enhanced communication between vessel owners and senior officers in Sector Boston. AWO members also discussed the challenges of the personnel shortage, encouraged continued improvements to the mariner licensing process and offered themselves as an “eyes and ears” resource to the Captain of the Port in Sector Boston. AWO members in attendance included Buckley McAllister, McAllister Towing & Transportation; Marc Villa, Constellation Maritime; Brendan MacGillivray, Seaboats, Inc.; and, Stash Pelkowski, Roehrig Maritime, LLC. For more information on this meeting, or future meetings with new COTPs in the Atlantic Region, please contact Chris Coakley at (703) 841-9300, extension 297, or via email at [ccoakley@vesselalliance.com](mailto:ccoakley@vesselalliance.com).

# “Illinois Waterways Deliver the World - Barge by Barge”

The following article, written by Mike Danahey, appeared in the *Beacon News* on October 21.

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The mulch you put down as you winterize your garden. The antifreeze to protect your car in cold weather. That salt used to melt ice and snow off local roads. The cement being poured to build the Interstate 355 extension.

What do they all have in common? There is a good chance these goods – and myriad others – made their way to the local area by barge.

According to Todd Hudson, commercial director for the American River Transportation Co. (Artco) in Lemont, during the first eight months of 2007, 15,000 loaded barges and 10,000 empty ones passed through the locks in Lockport, a decrease caused by the slowdown in the construction trade.

Many people don't realize how important the river system is to hauling freight into this country, said Bill Arnold, business development manager for Memco Barge Line.

Using the waterways takes pressure off already congested roads and saves some energy, said Hudson.

“Each barge can hold the equivalent of 60 truckloads or 15 railcars of material,” Hudson said.

## Lock system

As the elevation differs greatly from Chicago to St. Louis, barges traveling up and down the Illinois and Mississippi rivers pass through a series of locks. The number of barges that can be towed together on different segments of the journey differs, too.

Arnold gave an example of a barge loaded at Morris with 1,500 tons of corn. From Morris, the barge would be one of 15 tethered together to make their way south.

At Cairo, they would join other barges to make a 30-barge tow, taken by another towboat and crew south to New Orleans. The barge might typically be reloaded with furnace coke heading for a steel plant on Lake Michigan in Indiana.

## Manning the barge

Barge crews for Artco in Lemont consist of six people who work shifts of 21 days on and 21 days off. During each

shift, each person works for six hours, then has a six-hour break. With such schedules, the Harvest Run crew has workers from throughout the Midwest, including eight-year veteran Nick Woods, who usually captains the *Donna Jean*.

The farthest south the Artco vessel heads is by Ottawa near Starved Rock State Park. It also makes it out to Lake Michigan along the Cal-Sag Channel and up the Chicago River, north past Goose Island.

“It's beautiful going down there,” said deck hand Bob Schafer, of Mokena, who started onboard in January.

## Different views

The process of moving goods back and forth along the Illinois and Mississippi rivers is older than the country it serves, and it is not without political controversy.

According to Kiplinger's magazine, Congress intends to authorize spending \$2 billion for the construction of seven new river locks on the two rivers.

Farms and agribusinesses have requested the locks for decades. Proponents say about 60 percent of exported American grain is shipped on barges down the Mississippi River.

They also note that a number of the locks and dams are more than 60 years old and too small for current shipping needs.

Kiplinger's reported the new locks would allow strings of 15 barges – 1,100 feet end to end, which is twice the current length limit – to pass through without having to be separated. The process involves larger fleets being split apart at locks along their route or being pulled into bigger fleets as they make their way down the Mississippi.

However, opponents say the proposed new locks are not needed. The Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility recently released U.S. Army Corps of Engineers figures showing that river barge traffic has been declining for 17 years.

“I'm not confident there has been a decline,” said Memco's Arnold. “The river industry has continued to grow to meet the needs of farmers and the need for commerce in the U.S. to bring imports to manufacturers. There has been an increased demand that will grow significantly.”

