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## California Senators Introduce Oil Spill Legislation Following San Francisco Spill

On December 6, California Senators Barbara Boxer and Diane Feinstein introduced two bills in response to the November oil spill in San Francisco Bay caused by the container ship *Cosco Busan* striking the Bay Bridge. Senator Boxer is a member of the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation and the Chairman of the Committee on Environment and Public Works. Senator Feinstein is the senior senator from California and serves as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations.

One of the bills amends the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90) to raise the limit of liability for non-tank vessels to the same level as tank vessels. Currently, non-tank vessels have a significantly lower limit of liability than tank vessels. In her introductory statement, Senator Boxer said that the San Francisco spill demonstrates that cargo ships carry large amounts of bunker fuel and are capable of causing large and expensive spills which justify the higher limits of liability. This bill was referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

The other bill introduced by the California senators addresses the Coast Guard's Vessel Traffic Service (VTS). The bill authorizes \$20 million to upgrade VTS systems around the country and contains language giving the Coast Guard

VTS the authority to order ships to change speed or course in an emergency or during hazardous conditions. The bill also requires federally-licensed pilots to have their own laptop computers for navigation where the local pilotage authority has determined that such computers are both practical and necessary. The VTS bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.

## CONGRESS RECONVENES FOR DECEMBER SESSION

### *Appropriations Top Agenda*

The Senate and the House of Representatives reconvened the week of December 3 following a two-week recess for the Thanksgiving holiday. Before recessing in November, the House and Senate had passed only one of the annual appropriations bills funding the various government departments. The federal government is operating under a "continuing resolution" which provides temporary funding through December 14.

The Democratic leadership in Congress has produced appropriations bills that total \$23 billion more than the \$933 billion that President Bush requested for

*(continued on page 2)*



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## Senate and House of Representatives Announce 2008 Congressional Schedule

On December 3, the House of Representatives Democratic leadership released its 2008 voting schedule. The Senate also released its schedule, but because it does not declare voting days in advance, it is less detailed than the House version.

Following is the 2008 Congressional Calendar:

- January 15 - House and Senate convene
- January 22 - State of the Union address
- February 18-22 - Presidents' Day recess
- March 17-28 - Spring recess
- May 26-30 - Memorial Day recess
- June 30 - July 4 - Independence Day recess
- August 11 - Sept. 5 - August recess, national political conventions
- September 26 - House adjournment target ☸

## TWIC Enrollment Update

TWIC enrollment will begin at the following ports:

- **December 20:** New York/New Jersey
- **December 27:** Wilmington, NC
- **December 28:** Duluth-Superior, MN; Jacksonville, FL; New Orleans, LA

For the complete up-to-date TWIC Quarterly Deployment Plan, please click [here](#). ☸

## CONGRESS RECONVENES FOR DECEMBER SESSION

(continued from page 1)



the Fiscal Year 2008 budget, and the President has threatened to veto any appropriations measure that exceeds his requested level of funding.

Negotiations since Congress reconvened have centered on a “split the difference” proposal that would be \$11 billion less than the Congressional Democrats want and \$11 billion more than the President had requested.

The proposed compromise would also include emergency funding for military operations in the Middle East. As this issue of the *AWO Letter* goes to press, negotiations have broken down because Democratic members are insisting on conditions on the military funding, and the measure put forth in the Congress included an additional \$7 billion in non-military “emergency” funding that the White House opposes. A further “continuing resolution” funding the government through the week of December 17 is expected to be passed.

Other items on the Congressional agenda include energy legislation, a tax package including a temporary “patch” of the Alternative Minimum Tax, and the farm bill. The energy legislation passed the House of Representatives after an agreement was reached to increase fuel economy requirements for automobiles. The House-approved energy bill includes provisions for reducing the nation’s consumption of energy. One of those sections promotes “short sea shipping” as a way to conserve energy and reduce congestion on highways. One of the short sea shipping provisions would for the first time extend the Capital Construction Fund (CCF) program to domestic coastwise shipping for the movement of containers and for roll-on/roll-off vessels. AWO has objected to the CCF provision because the CCF program was created to assist American-flag vessels compete in the international trades and its use for coastwise trade could disrupt the domestic market. The energy bill has stalled in the Senate and the President has threatened to veto the measure if it reaches his desk.

Congress is expected to adjourn the first session of the 110th Congress before Christmas, and is tentatively scheduled to reconvene for the second session the week of January 14. ☸

# TWIC Rollout Continues

## *Stakeholders Discuss Implementation Challenges with TSA and Coast Guard*

The Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) Stakeholder Communication Committee (TSCC) met on December 5 to discuss the challenges being faced as the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) continues the TWIC rollout. During the meeting, TSA shared some statistics from 21 major TWIC enrollment centers that have become operational since the end of October 2007. Based on the metrics from these ports for the week of November 30, the estimated wait time was 11 minutes; the average enrollment time was 11.77 minutes; and, the number of daily enrollments was 750. However, there is considerable variation in these statistics from port to port.

TSA raised a number of areas in which the agency is working to improve performance, including: enhancing fingerprint matching for TWIC card pickup; improving the payment systems; and, improving the pick-up notification system. Stakeholders reported that some of the issues, including fingerprint matching capabilities, addressed at the November 9 TSCC meeting were still creating problems in the field.

AWO Senior Vice President - National Advocacy Jennifer Carpenter raised several additional items of concern to AWO members:

- In the ports of Baton Rouge and Corpus Christi, there were long waits to complete the enrollment process, even for mariners who have pre-enrolled online or by telephone;
- There were waits of several hours to pick up a TWIC, with no opportunity to make an appointment to expedite the card issuance process; and,

- There was a lack of available enrollment appointments through the end of 2007 and an inability to schedule appointments in 2008.

In response, TSA acknowledged that Baton Rouge and Corpus Christi have two of the longest average wait times of any of the permanent enrollment center sites, which they attributed to network connectivity, training issues, and higher than expected enrollment volume in Baton Rouge and Corpus Christi. In Baton Rouge, enrollment contractor Lockheed Martin has installed two additional enrollment workstations and is exploring the possibility of opening another enrollment center to handle the volume. In Corpus Christi, the contractor is providing additional enrollment center workstations. TSA also noted that the enrollment center in Port Arthur, TX, is experiencing a higher than anticipated number of applicants.

TSA acknowledged that the card pickup process remains a problem. Until an improved process can be put in place nationally, the agency recommended that applicants who must travel a long distance to the enrollment call ahead and speak to a supervisor to notify the center of their arrival. This will help to avoid a long wait to pick up their TWIC. (A list of enrollment center addresses and phone numbers can be found on the TSA web site at [www.tsa.gov/twic](http://www.tsa.gov/twic).)

Ms. Carpenter also questioned the Coast Guard on the possible extension of the September 25, 2008, deadline and reiterated the industry's serious concern that, given the many delays in the implementation process, not all mariners will be able to obtain a TWIC by this regulatory deadline. The



### Important Dates and Reminders

..... at a glance

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

**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.

*(continued on page 4)*

## TWIC Rollout Continues

(continued from page 3)

Coast Guard responded that it and TSA have the authority to extend the deadline, and the agencies will closely monitor the implementation process to determine whether an extension will be necessary. At present, the agency has no target date in mind for making such a decision, the Coast Guard said.



In other discussion, TSA and the Coast Guard advised the TSCC that:

- The Coast Guard will send a letter to all licensed or documented mariners advising them of the need to obtain a TWIC; and,
- In an effort to make enrollment more manageable for applicants who are not close to a fixed enrollment center, Lockheed Martin has released a document outlining its requirements for hosting a temporary mobile enrollment site. This can be found on the AWO Web site by clicking [here](#).

The next TSCC meeting has not yet been scheduled. To share your TWIC enrollment experience (positive or negative), please contact Jennifer Carpenter at (703) 841-9300, extension 260, or via email at [jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com](mailto:jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com). Member concerns will be shared (anonymously) with TSA, Coast Guard and Lockheed Martin officials, and agency responses will be reported in future editions of the *AWO Letter*. ❀

## Agencies Take Steps to Close Cabotage Loopholes

The Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP), at the request of the Maritime Administration, is developing rules to strengthen enforcement of U.S. cabotage laws regarding passenger cruises to the Hawaii. As reported in the November 21 *Federal Register*, the CBP is writing new criteria concerning the coastwise endorsement of passenger cruises under the Passenger Vessel Services Act. The specific goal is to stop the practice of having Hawaiian cruises include a minimum-length stay at Mexican ports so that the excursion can qualify as a foreign voyage. The proposed rules set strict, measurable requirements as to how a combined Hawaii-Mexico itinerary qualifies as a foreign voyage.



AWO applauds this cooperative effort by agencies of the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Transportation to ensure that the nation's cabotage laws are upheld. Both AWO and the Maritime Cabotage Task Force will be submitting comments to the docket by the December 21 deadline.

For more information, please contact Doug Scheffler, Government Affairs Associate, at (703) 841-9300, extension 264, or via email at [dscheffler@vesselalliance.com](mailto:dscheffler@vesselalliance.com). ❀

## National Maritime Center to Move to Permanent Location



As of January 7, 2008, the Coast Guard's National Maritime Center (NMC) will be permanently located in Martinsburg, WV. The NMC was previously located in Arlington, VA, and temporarily relocated to Kearneysville, WV. The new contact information is:

**Coast Guard National Maritime Center**  
 100 Forbes Drive  
 Martinsburg, WV 25404  
 (304) 433-3400 (effective January 7)

Under the Coast Guard's restructuring plan for the NMC and Regional Exam Centers (RECs), mariners will still be able to submit their application at one of the 17 RECs, where on-site personnel will assist mariners in ensuring that their application is ready to be evaluated. When the application is established as fully qualified, the NMC will print the credential and send it to the mariner.

For more information on the progress of the NMC/REC restructuring effort, please see the NMC Web site at <http://www.uscg.mil/STCW/wnnmc.htm> or contact Jennifer Carpenter or Krista Reddington at (703) 941-9300, extensions 260 and 251, respectively. ❀

## EPA Proposes New Air Emission Standards for Category Three Engines



The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued two notices concerning emissions from Category 3 engines, which run large ocean-going ships. Because Category 3 engines are not used by the tugboat and towboat industry, these notices do not directly affect AWO members; however, the association has consistently urged EPA to move forward with standards for shipboard engines to maintain a level playing field as tugboat and towboat engines are subjected to increasingly stringent emissions standards.

The first notice, an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM), proposes new emissions standards for Category 3 marine engines and invites comment on the proposal. The second notice extends the deadline for EPA to

release a final rule on the second set of air emission standards for Category 3 marine diesel engines from April 27, 2007, to December 17, 2009, to allow for more time to research technology that would allow for deeper emission reductions. The next round of emissions standards for Category 1 and Category 2 engines, used for propulsion on tugboats and towboats and for auxiliary power on towing vessels and barges, were the subject of an April 2007 NPRM to be finalized in early 2008.

To read the ANPRM, please click [here](#). To read the extension notice, please click [here](#). If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Carpenter at (703) 841-9300, extension 260, or via email at [jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com](mailto:jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com).

## NOAA PORTS<sup>®</sup> System Installed at the Port of Mobile, Alabama

On November 29, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced the installation of the Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS<sup>®</sup>) at the Port of Mobile, AL. The PORTS system was created to make real-time oceanographic and meteorological information available to mariners in an effort to reduce grounding risks and improve the movement of cargo through ports. The analyzing and broadcasting of information related to water levels, salinity, currents, wind and bridge clearance enables mariners to safely navigate dredged channels.

The information on the PORTS system is utilized by vessel pilots, shipping companies, port authorities, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Navy, environmental organizations and academics. Where PORTS has been installed, vessel groundings have been reduced by more than 50 percent, and economic benefits range from \$7 million to \$16 million per year.

The Port of Mobile is the 14th port to install PORTS. Other port locations, as well as PORTS data, can be found by clicking [here](#).

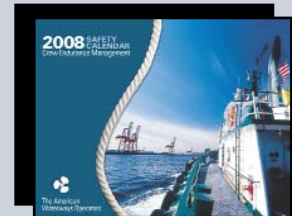


## 2008 AWO Safety Calendar Orders Now Being Accepted

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 soon, 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)



## “Vessels Help Port, Environment”

The following article, written by Karen Quincy Loberg, was published in the *Ventura County Star* on December 10.

\*\*\*\*\*

Mike Fullilove spends seven days a week pushing people and cargo around the Port of Hueneme.

As captain of the tugboat *Lulapin*, Fullilove commands one of two biodiesel tugs owned by Brusco Tug & Barge, which are the sole escorts to all commercial and military ships coming into the port.

On a recent day, the *Sevillan Reefer* drops a rope ladder to the *Lulapin* as it comes alongside so tug pilot Capt. Eric Ireland can go aboard and command the banana ship while under tow.

Ireland stays in constant communication with Fullilove as he maneuvers the *Lulapin* to the rear of the ship, while Capt. Jim Kleeburg moves the tug *Wynema Spirit* to the front.

The fore and aft lines are taut as the two petite but mighty tugs guide the ship forward, backward and every way needed to get to the dock.

Named after the local Chumash Indians, the *Lulapin* and *Wynema Spirit* are state-of-the-art tugboats.

“They didn’t even monitor the emissions,” Fullilove said of his career when it started in 1966.

He said the industry is now working toward cleaner-burning boats. Fullilove wanted his company to be proactive in creating a better environment. The company was given that opportunity when TracTide Marine Corp. in Port Hueneme made Biosoy Low Nox, a biodiesel fuel, available for purchase.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has called biodiesel fuel a cleaner-burning alternative that can reduce emissions.

“With cleaner emissions, the crew is healthier and the coast is cleaner,” Fullilove said.

“There’s less dependency on foreign oil. There’s no unburned fuel, less waste, less emissions. It all adds up to making a difference in the end.”

The 2-year-old *Lulapin* cost \$5 million and the 5-year-old *Wynema Spirit*, \$4 million. Two Rolls-Royce hydraulic drive units paired with two Caterpillar 3512B, 2,000-horsepower engines enable the *Lulapin* to maneuver like a ballerina on the water.

The two tugs were designed by naval architect Robert Allen.

“These two tugs, for their size, have one heck of a lot of pull,” Fullilove said. 🌊

### DID YOU KNOW?

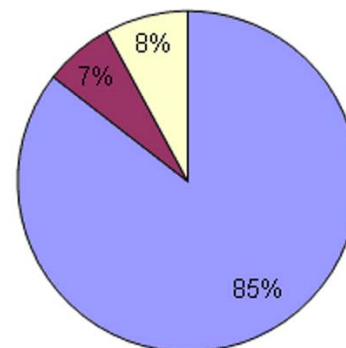
#### Eighty-Five Percent of the U.S. Petroleum and Chemical Tank Barge Fleet is Double-Hulled

AWO estimates that as of October 2007, the domestic tank barge fleet in the petroleum and chemical products trade consisted of 3,871 vessels.

As the chart below shows, double-hulled barges numbered 3,080, or 85 percent of the fleet. The rest of the fleet is divided nearly evenly between 255 single-hull barges and 306 other hull types (double-side, double-bottom, and other reinforced hull designs).

Compared to the previous estimate in October 2006, the tank barge fleet increased by 81 vessels, and the percent double-hulled increased from 81 percent to 85 percent. Analysis of the individual vessels deleted from and entering the fleet shows that in recent years companies have been removing older tank barges of all hull types and replacing them with modern double-hull tank barges.

**Petroleum and Chemical Tank Barge Fleet by Hull Type Data as of October 2007**



■ Double-Hull:	3,310
■ Single-Hull:	255
■ Other:	306

For more information, please contact Doug Scheffler at (703) 841-9300, extension 264, or via email at [dscheffler@vesselalliance.com](mailto:dscheffler@vesselalliance.com). 🌊

## 2008 AWO-Certified Auditor Training: Make Your Reservations Now!

The Responsible Carrier Program© (RCP) Accreditation Board is finishing its preparations for the upcoming Auditor Orientation and Recertification classes to be held in Arlington, VA, on January 29-31, 2008, at the Holiday Inn Rosslyn Key Bridge Hotel, 1900 North Fort Myer Drive. To make a reservation at the AWO rate of \$109 per night, please call the hotel directly at (703) 807-2000 and mention you are with AWO. The deadline for reservations with the AWO rate is January 9, 2008.

New auditors will attend initial training on January 29 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and then join recertifying auditors in the training sessions held on January 30 from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and on January 31 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Auditors wishing to become qualified to conduct joint RCP and American Chemistry Council (ACC) Responsible Care® audits will

have the option of completing an additional training session conducted by ACC from 12:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on January 31.

Members of the Accreditation Board design the curriculum and prepare and deliver the modules, ensuring that AWO-certified auditors are informed of the latest changes to the RCP, receive comprehensive professional training and understand AWO's requirement for audit consistency, credibility and value. Much of the success of these training sessions is the result of the professional knowledge and hard work of these members and the support of their companies.

Next month's training will focus on "Continuous Improvement of Auditor Skills in Understanding and Conducting RCP Audits" through better communication between



auditors, AWO members and the RCP Accreditation Board. Modules will include: Trust and Credibility, Review of New RCP Elements, and Verification That All RCP Elements Are in Place.

The training will be challenging, and as we move toward an ever safer industry, the goal is to continue to ensure that AWO-certified auditors are among the best qualified and trained in the business.

In addition to new and recertifying auditors, the training sessions will be open to a limited number of AWO members who are interested in RCP audits on a first-come, first-served basis. If you would like to attend, or have any questions about the RCP, please contact Bob Clinton at (703) 841-9300, extension 253, or via email at [bclinton@vesselalliance.com](mailto:bclinton@vesselalliance.com).

## 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) 267-0173.

DATE	LOCATION	CONTACT
December 18-19	Salyers Solutions, LLC New Orleans, LA	Jo Ann Salyers (Instructor) (504) 236-4962 <a href="mailto:salyers_solutions@hughes.net">salyers_solutions@hughes.net</a>
December 20-21	Kirby Corporation Houston, TX	Kelly Parker (Contact) (713) 435-1775 <a href="mailto:kelly.parker@kirbycorp.com">kelly.parker@kirbycorp.com</a>

## Downstreaming Video Available

As high water season approaches, AWO members are reminded that the video "Better Safe Than Sorry," a short training video highlighting the do's and don'ts of downstreaming, is available from AWO. Towing companies involved in fleeting, shifting or terminal operations are already familiar with the dangers associated with downstreaming maneuvers, but when a Coast Guard-AWO study highlighting the dangers of downstreaming under the wrong conditions was published, this video was developed in 1999 as a tool to make vessel crews aware of the hazards, and review strategies to allow them to operate safely in these conditions. The video is eight minutes long and costs \$8.95 for AWO members and \$12.95 for non-AWO members. Shipping charges also apply. To order a video, please contact Bob Clinton at (703) 841-9300, extension 253, or via email at [bclinton@vesselalliance.com](mailto:bclinton@vesselalliance.com).



## Atlantic Region

### Delaware River and Bay Oil Spill Advisory Committee Seeks Members

The Delaware River and Bay Oil Spill Advisory Committee is seeking members, two of which must represent organizations that operate tugs or barges on the Delaware River and Delaware Bay. Applications are due to the Coast Guard by January 28, 2008. The purpose of the committee is to provide guidance on

oil spill prevention and response measures in the Delaware River and Delaware Bay to the Coast Guard, the governors of New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware, and federal congressional committees. For more information, please read the *Federal Register* notice by clicking [here](#).

### Atlantic Region Annual Meeting to Be Held Next Month

The Atlantic Region Annual Meeting will be held on January 25, 2008, at the Marriott Miami Biscayne Bay Hotel in Miami, FL. The meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m. and conclude at 1 p.m., and gives members the chance to elect the Atlantic Region Board, approve the 2008 regional priorities that direct staff work for the entire year and discuss the issues that are central to their business. The regional and national staff will provide a full report on AWO's efforts to protect members' interests in front of federal agencies, Congress and state legislators and regulators. On the evening preceding the meeting, January 24, a social dinner will be held at 6:00 p.m.



AWO has reserved a block of rooms at the Marriott Miami Biscayne Bay Hotel for \$199 per night. **To receive the AWO rate, you must reserve a room by January 3, 2008.** To make a reservation, please call the hotel directly at 1-800-228-9290 and mention that you are with AWO. The hotel is located at 1633 North Bayshore Drive, Miami, FL 33132.

Information on registering for the meeting and agenda topics will be emailed shortly. For more information, please contact Hermoine Wellman at (703) 841-9300, extension 291, or via email at [hwellman@vesselalliance.com](mailto:hwellman@vesselalliance.com).



If you receive a hard copy of the *AWO Letter* and need to know the exact Web addresses of the hyperlinks in any articles, please contact Mary McCarthy at (703) 841-9300, extension 254, or via email at [mccarthy@vesselalliance.com](mailto:mccarthy@vesselalliance.com).

Pacific Region

## California Seeks Comment on Options to Increase Marine Invasive Species Control Fund

The state of California currently collects a \$400 Marine Invasive Species Fee from every vessel operator making a port call. According to the Board of Equalization and the State Lands Commission, by mid-2008 the current fee will not be sufficient to cover budgetary needs for the Marine Invasive Species Control Fund. The State Lands Commission has reached out to stakeholders to implement a new fee structure and is now seeking input on two new fee options. The first option is a flat fee of \$700 per qualifying voyage. The second option is establishing a base fee of \$625 and adjusting annually based on the West Region Consumer Price Index. Under either scenario, the fee will continue as long as the state legislature mandates the continuation of the State Program, and will be evaluated periodically.

The Marine Invasive Species Fee was established initially at \$600 per voyage by emergency regulation that became effective on January 1, 2000. During an annual review of the Fund by the Board of Equalization and Commission staff in August 2007, the current fee of \$400 per voyage was evaluated. Based on the current fee amount of \$400 per voyage, projections estimated that revenues will not meet the costs of the programs mandated under the Marine Invasive Species Act.

For additional information, please contact Jason Lewis, Vice President - Pacific Region, at (206) 262-8019, or via email at [jlewis@vesselalliance.com](mailto:jlewis@vesselalliance.com).



## California State Legislature Proposes New Oil Spill Legislation

In reaction to the *Cosco Busan* cargo ship striking the Bay Bridge in San Francisco last month and spilling 58,000 gallons of oil into the bay, the California state legislature is introducing a new oil spill legislation package. The package will require the following:

- The Office of Oil Spill Prevention and Response to supply local responders with sufficient equipment to clean up spills;
- The creation of teams of disaster-trained volunteers able to respond as soon as a spill is reported;
- The requirement of more rigorous standards for ships with large fuel loads;
- An increase in the funding available for clean-up and prevention measures;
- An increase in oversight standards of spill response companies;
- An increase in tug escorts for ships with large petroleum cargoes; and,
- The reduction of the use of bunker fuel.

Assembly member Loni Hancock, Chair of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee, along with other members of the state legislature have also asked Governor Schwarzenegger to establish an independent Blue Ribbon Commission to review the oil spill and recommend additional action.

For additional information, please contact Jason Lewis, Vice President - Pacific Region, at (206) 262-8019, or via email at [jlewis@vesselalliance.com](mailto:jlewis@vesselalliance.com).

## Pacific Region Meeting Fast Approaching

Now is a great time to make your plans for the Pacific Region Annual Meeting to be held on February 7, 2008, at Salty's on Alki, 1936 Harbor Avenue, SW, Seattle, WA. The meeting will start with registration and a breakfast at 7:30 a.m., and the meeting will run from 8:00 a.m. until noon. The agenda will be packed with informative updates and discussion on regional and national issues, selection of Board members, adoption of regional priorities and interesting speakers.



Information on registering for the meeting and agenda topics will be emailed shortly. For more information, please contact Hermoine Wellman at (703) 841-9300, extension 291, or via email at [hwellman@vesselalliance.com](mailto:hwellman@vesselalliance.com).

Pacific Region

## Pelosi and Cummings ask DHS Inspector General to Review *Cosco Busan* Oil Spill

On December 4, House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Chairman Elijah Cummings (D-MD) asked Inspector General Richard Skinner of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to investigate the Coast Guard's response to the November *Cosco Busan* oil spill in San Francisco bay. They requested the report to be completed by early spring.

The dozen issues Pelosi and Cummings identified as needing

review include the Coast Guard's delay in notifying local authorities of the magnitude of the spill, the Coast Guard's Vessel Traffic Service, which advises ship movements, and the Coast Guard's testing of the crew for drugs and alcohol after the legal time limit had expired. Pelosi remarked that it is important for DHS to investigate oil spill prevention and response measures to ensure that they are adequate not only to protect the bay from another spill, but also from an attempted shipboard terrorist attack.



AWO is monitoring the response to the spill by federal and state lawmakers to identify which of their proposals may potentially affect the tugboat, towboat and barge industry. For more information, please contact Jason Lewis at (206) 262-8019, or via email at [jlewis@vesselalliance.com](mailto:jlewis@vesselalliance.com).

Southern Region

## Southern Region Annual Meeting: Make Your Hotel Reservation Now

On January 18, 2008, AWO will host the Southern Region Annual Meeting at the InterContinental Hotel in New Orleans, LA, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. A continental breakfast will be served at 8:00 a.m. On the evening before the meeting, January 17, AWO will host a reception from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 pm. Further information will be sent to all AWO members via email early next week.

AWO has reserved a block of rooms at the InterContinental New Orleans Hotel for \$159 per night. **To receive the AWO rate, you must reserve a room by December 28.** To make a reservation, please call the hotel directly at 1-800-445-6563 and mention that you are with AWO. The hotel is located at 444 St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70130. For more information, please contact Hermoine Wellman at (703) 841-9300, extension 291, or via email at [hwellman@vesselalliance.com](mailto:hwellman@vesselalliance.com).

Midcontinent Office

## Mid-America RQSC Meets, Discusses New Quality Action Teams

The Mid-America Regional Quality Steering Committee (RQSC) met on November 28 in New Orleans to review the work of the Quality Action Team (QAT) tasked with reviewing casualties in the Eighth Coast Guard District and best ways to move the QAT forward.

The RQSC also discussed establishing two new QATs focused on bridge landings and Coast Guard-industry education and training. The group approved moving forward with the expansion of the Waterways Action Plan (WAP) with the addition of drift management at key lock locations and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers agreed to provide further feedback at the next RQSC meeting on crew changes at lock facilities and concerns that vessel operators are being asked by lockmasters to turn off their radar, causing safety concerns. It was also reported to the group that the admirals of the Eighth and Ninth Coast Guard Districts sent a letter to River Industry Executive Task Force (RIETF) Chairman Mike Monahan to inform him that the boundary between the districts will not change. (See article on page 11.)

Industry representatives for the Mid-America RQSC are Jim Farley, Kirby Inland Marine, LP; Fred Nyhuis, Marathon Petroleum Company LLC; John Patterson, Ingram Barge Company; Tom Smith, Canal Barge

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Midcontinent Office

## Midwest and Ohio Valley Regions Joint Annual Meeting

Hotel Reservation Deadline is December 28

On January 31, 2008, AWO will host the Midwest and Ohio Valley Regions Joint Annual Meeting at the Renaissance Hotel in Nashville, TN, from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. On the evening before the meeting, January 30, AWO will host a reception from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 pm. Further information will be sent to all AWO members via email early next week.

AWO has reserved a block of rooms at the Renaissance Nashville Hotel for \$179 per night. **To receive the AWO rate, you must reserve a room by December 28.** To make a reservation, please call the hotel directly at 1-800-327-6618 and mention that you are with AWO. The hotel is located at 611 Commerce Street, Nashville, TN 37203-3725.

For more information, please contact Hermoine Wellman at (703) 841-9300, extension 291, or via email at [hwellman@vesselalliance.com](mailto:hwellman@vesselalliance.com).

Midcontinent Office

## Coast Guard Work Group Advises Against Moving District Eight Boundary

In 2006, the Eighth and Ninth Coast Guard Districts formed a work group at the request of the River Industry Executive Task Force (RIETF) to evaluate moving the district boundary line so that all towing operations would take place in one district (the Eighth) to ensure consistent policies. Last month, the work group found that doing so would be detrimental to the industry because it would increase casualty and response times. In a November 26 letter from RADM Joel Whitehead and RADM John Crowley, Commanders of the Eighth and Ninth Coast Guard Districts, respectively, to RIETF Chairman Mike Monahan, the commanders explained how the work group weighed the possible results of moving the boundary and concluded that shifting it would not address the true issue, inconsistent policies between the Eighth and Ninth Districts. Therefore, the commanders re-tasked the working group with reviewing district Coast Guard policies toward the towing industry and making recommendations on how to harmonize them. The work group ultimately did recommend moving the boundary, but only seven miles north on the Illinois River to align with Illinois county lines.



To read the letter, click [here](#). For more information, please contact Lynn Muench at (314) 446-6474, or via email at [lmuench@vesselalliance.com](mailto:lmuench@vesselalliance.com).

## Mid-America RQSC Meets, Discusses New Quality Action Teams

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Company, Inc.; and, Tom Tray, Bay-Houston Towing Co. The lead Coast Guard member is CAPT Tim Close, Chief, Western Rivers Division, and the lead Corps of Engineers member is Mike Kidby, senior program manager for inland waterways. Also in attendance were Emmett Neal, Crouse Corporation; Cherrie Felder, Channel Shipyard Company, Inc.; and, Mario Munoz, American Commercial Lines. For more information, please contact Lynn Muench at (314) 446-6474, or via email at [lmuench@vesselalliance.com](mailto:lmuench@vesselalliance.com).

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