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Congress Pursues Economic Stimulus Plan

Current Proposals Include Billions for Corps of Engineers

The U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate have both been in the process of deliberating over economic stimulus bills (H.R. 1 and S. 1), with the goal of helping revive the national economy. H.R. 1 was approved by the full House on January 28 by a vote of 244 to 188. The Senate is scheduled to vote on S. 1 during the week of February 2.

The stimulus plan that the House approved would cost \$819 billion. Included in that figure is \$4.5 billion for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps money is divided into portions that include \$2 billion for Construction; \$2.225 billion for Operations and Maintenance; \$250 million for the Mississippi River and Tributaries account; and, \$25 million for the regulatory account. H.R. 1 neither requires a match in spending from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTF) nor does it include earmarks.

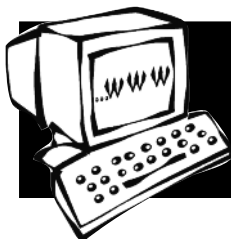
H.R. 1 also directs that any lock and dam projects that are funded consist of work on existing structures rather than new projects. Additionally, it includes preferential language directing funds toward lock and dam projects that are labor-intensive and that can be completed within two years. The House version of this bill would leave

decisions to the Corps on what individual projects get funded.

On January 27, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved S. 1. This package provides the Corps with \$4.6 billion, including: \$2 billion for Construction; \$1.9 billion for Operations and Maintenance; \$500 million for the Mississippi River and Tributaries account; \$25 million for the regulatory account; \$25 million for investigations; \$100 million for the Formerly Used Sites Remedial Action Program; and, \$50 million for Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies. The Senate bill does not include a requirement for funds to be matched by contributions from the IWTF.

Congressional leadership has indicated its desire to have a bill passed by both chambers and ready to be signed by President Barack Obama by mid-February. President Obama has also expressed his preference for having a stimulus bill become law quickly. If the House and Senate bills contain differing components when passed, a conference committee containing members from both chambers will need to meet and reconcile those differences before President Obama has an opportunity to sign the legislation.

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Congress Pursues Economic Stimulus Plan

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As mentioned in the January 16 edition of the *AWO Letter*, AWO is working with Waterways Council Inc., to secure funding for lock and dam projects in the developing stimulus package. For more information on this issue, please contact Chris Coakley or Benjamin Rogers at (703) 841-9300, extensions 297 or 264, respectively, or via email at ccoakley@vesselalliance.com or brogers@vesselalliance.com.



President Obama's DOT, DHS, EPA, and CEQ Nominations Confirmed

As President Barack Obama's inauguration made headlines last week, the new administration's top nominees to head the Departments of Transportation and Homeland Security, the Environmental Protection Agency and the White House Council on Environmental Quality were quietly confirmed by the United States Senate with little or no opposition.

Department of Transportation

On January 22, Representative Ray H. LaHood (R-IL) became the 16th Secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOT) after receiving a full Senate confirmation. Just a day before, on January 21, Secretary LaHood's nomination was unanimously endorsed by the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee. Secretary LaHood leads the DOT at a time when Congress is poised to pass legislation on several transportation reauthorization bills, waterway programs and a stimulus package promising to rebuild the nation's aging transportation infrastructure.

Secretary LaHood's testimony at his confirmation hearing strongly focused on the need to invest in sustainable infrastructure programs, creating jobs in the short term and helping the nation reap long-term economic and social benefits over the coming decades. Speaking to the Committee, Secretary LaHood said that "Sustainability must be a principle

reflected in all our infrastructure investments, from highways and transit to aviation and ports."

Overseeing Secretary LaHood's nomination hearing, Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-WV), the incoming Chairman of the Commerce Committee, kept a focus on multi-modal projects, saying he was "...concerned about the strength of our maritime and freight systems... Far too many of our ports and trade corridors are mired by inadequate infrastructure and limited capacity. I want to develop a strong multimodal



program that will provide investments in essential port and freight infrastructure projects that have national significance."

Department of Homeland Security

On January 21, Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano was sworn in as the third Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) following a successful January 15 nomination hearing before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. As Governor of Arizona, Secretary Napolitano was the first woman to chair the National Governors Association, where she was instrumental in creating the Public Safety Task Force and the Homeland Security Advisors Council.

As Secretary of DHS, one of Ms. Napolitano's first action directives was to instruct the Transportation

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President Obama's DOT, DHS, EPA, and CEQ Nominations Confirmed

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Security Administration (TSA) to review all current strategies and report back on its plans and programs for security of the air, surface and maritime transportation sectors, including a side-by-side comparison of the threat environment, resources and personnel devoted to each transportation sector.

Environmental Protection Agency

On January 23, Lisa P. Jackson, former Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, was confirmed by the Senate as Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). On January 14, Administrator Jackson's nomination was endorsed by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works.

In testimony at her confirmation hearing, Administrator Jackson asserted that "The [President] strongly believes responsible stewardship of our air and water can live side-by-side with robust economic growth. Done properly, these goals can and should reinforce each other." In a January 23 memo addressed to all EPA employees, Administrator Jackson said that "EPA will intensify [its] work to restore and protect the quality of the nation's streams, rivers, lakes, bays, oceans and aquifers. The agency will make robust use of [its] authority to restore threatened treasures such as the Great Lakes and the Chesapeake Bay, to address our neglected urban rivers, to strengthen drinking water safety programs, and to reduce pollution from nonpoint and industrial dischargers."

White House Council on Environmental Quality

On January 22, Chairwoman Nancy Sutley was confirmed by the Senate through

unanimous consent as Chairwoman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. On January 14, as she sat side by side with EPA Administrator Jackson before the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, her nomination received a full endorsement.

Prior to her appointment, Chairwoman Sutley was the Deputy Mayor for Energy and Environment for the city of Los Angeles, CA. As Deputy Mayor, she served on the Board of Directors for the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California as Chair for the Water Planning and Stewardship Committee and member of the Executive Committee.

Chairwoman Sutley also served as Energy Advisor to former California Governor Gray Davis and Deputy Secretary for Policy and Intergovernmental Relations in the California EPA from 1999-2003, advising on water and air pollution policy. During President Clinton's administration she worked for the EPA as a Senior Policy Advisor to the Regional Administrator in San Francisco and as a special assistant to the Administrator in Washington, D.C. ❀

Important Dates and Reminders

..... at a glance

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

February 4-5, 2009:
Atlantic Region Annual Meeting, Tampa, FL

February 12: Pacific Region Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA

March 31-April 3: AWO Spring Convention, Arlington, VA

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 mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com. ❀



SENATORS BOND AND VOINOVICH SET TO RETIRE

On January 8 and 12, Senators Christopher “Kit” Bond (R-MO) and George Voinovich (R-OH), respectively announced their intentions of retiring from the Senate in 2010 when their terms are set to expire.

During his past four terms, Senator Bond formally served as the Chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee and is a current champion of Missouri state farmers and the towboat and barge industry which carries their agriculture products. Senator Bond is also a prominent advocate for infrastructure improvements along the Mississippi River and Missouri’s inland ports, seeking to repair its aging lock and dam system, mindful that local waterways are the arteries to world markets.

During his past two terms, Senator Voinovich has served as a Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, and as a vocal proponent of Great Lakes commercial and environmental issues was awarded the title “Great Lakes Senator of the Year: 2001,” by the Great Lakes Shipping–Lake Carriers Association.



BOND



VOINOVICH

In opting to retire and not seek a run for re-election, both Senators Bond and Voinovich join their fellow party members Senator Mel Martinez (R-FL) and Senator Samuel Brownback (R-KA).

AWO thanks both Senators Bond and Voinovich for their many years of support of, and hard work for, the towing industry, and wishes them well in their new endeavors. 🍀

AWO ASP and IVSP Sent to Coast Guard for Approval *Coast Guard Clarifies Approval Letter Requirement*

On December 31, 2008, AWO submitted the revised AWO Alternative Security Program (ASP) and International Vessel Security Plan (IVSP) to the U.S. Coast Guard for review and approval. The revisions, which were made during a meeting of the AWO Security Working Group in November, updated both plans to include the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) requirements that come into effect on April 15, the new Vessel Security Officer (VSO) endorsement requirements and other changes based on member and Coast Guard experience with the plans over the past five years. The IVSP was also



amended to incorporate changes made to the ASP in 2005. The Coast Guard has confirmed that the review process is underway, and AWO hopes to have the revised ASP approved and ready to circulate to members by mid-February, giving industry approximately 60 days to implement the plan before the April 15 TWIC deadline. (The current versions of the ASP and IVSP remain valid until September 2010 and May 2009, respectively.)

Additionally, the Coast Guard has clarified the requirement for vessel owners or operators using the AWO ASP to submit a letter to the Coast Guard Marine Safety Center stating that the operator intends to use the

AWO ASP as its vessel security plan. Under the revised AWO ASP approval letter issued by the MSC in 2008, it is no longer required for owners or operators to submit such a letter every five years. The new approval letter states that an operator’s approval to use the AWO ASP “will remain valid as long as the ASP remains valid.” When a company adds or removes vessels from its list of vessels using the ASP, however, it will need to submit a new letter indicating as much.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Carpenter or Mary McCarthy at (703) 841-9300, extensions 260 or 254, respectively, or via email at jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com or mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com. 🍀

Regional Quality Steering Committees Meet

On January 22, the Mid-America and Atlantic Regional Quality Steering Committees (RQSC) convened a joint meeting to discuss topics of multiregional concern. These topics centered around the impending Notice of Proposed Rule Making on Towing Vessel Inspection and the transition from now to Subchapter M implementation.

Joint RQSC Meeting

CAPT Vern Gifford, Chief of Prevention for the Eighth Coast Guard District, gave the group a broad overview of the results of Operation Big Tow. While the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) is still analyzing the statistics that came out of Operation Big Tow, the initial analysis of the results was positive and the consensus was that the operation was successful in demonstrating that the industry is not rife with unlicensed operators. Across almost all sectors that conducted the operation, they found an approximate 98 percent licensing compliance rate.

CAPT Rick Kaser, Chief of Prevention for LANTAREA, presented the renewed Voluntary Inspection Program for towing vessels that the USCG is rolling out in 2009. Similar to programs that have long been in place, but understaffed, throughout LANTAREA, this will be a uniform voluntary inspection program providing operators with a one-year decal of inspection. The USCG is hoping to use this program to aide in the transition for towing vessel operators from uninspected to inspected class of vessels and to aide in training the new billets the USCG has received for towing vessel inspection. Click [here](#) for a copy of the booklet that will be used in the Voluntary Inspection Program.

CDR Lee Boone, Domestic Vessel Compliance at USCG Headquarters, brought the conversation full circle by briefing the group on the initial thoughts on the “Bridging Program” intended to transition us from now to becoming an inspected class of vessels. The USCG envisions this program encompassing three main components. The first is surge operations similar to Operation Big Tow. Second is increasing participation in the Voluntary Inspection Program with a goal of 100 percent inspections. Lastly, they envision this program engaging a risk based approach to inspection. It is on this point that CDR Boone indicated the USCG needed significant industry feedback to identify the metrics and the calculations used to determine risk.

The RQSCs agreed to take the question to their respective regional meetings to discuss and develop lists of metrics and feedback for the USCG in developing the risk based approach within the bridging program. Both the Mid-Continent and Atlantic RQSCs have conference calls on this issue in the coming weeks in advance of the National QSC meeting in February.

Following this productive joint meeting, both the Atlantic and Mid-America RQSCs broke off into separate sessions to conduct the regional business of the respective RQSCs.

Atlantic RQSC Meeting

The Atlantic RQSC met for its winter semi-annual meeting following the joint RQSC session on January 22. The first item for discussion was the anticipated modernization of USCG structure from geographical

Headquarters, LANTAREA and PACAREA commands to a more function-oriented command structure. CAPT Kaser explained the changes and the functions that would fall under each of the three new commands of DOC, OPCOM, FORCECOM, and the value that industry should see in better operations and functionality when this modernization takes

effect. The Atlantic RQSC then amended its charter to adjust the USCG chairmanship of the RQSC to account for these changes. Moving forward, the USCG co-chair of the Atlantic RQSC will be on an annual rotation between the Chiefs of Prevention for the First, Fifth and Seventh Coast Guard Districts. CAPT Liam Slein, First District, will assume the first co-chair rotation at the Atlantic RQSC summer meeting in May. The group also discussed the successes and challenges from the 2008 hurricane season and how to continue to improve communication and cooperation in 2009. Lastly, the Atlantic RQSC discussed how to further the work of the Casualty QAT in order to encourage AWO member companies to provide the QAT with lessons learned from serious casualty incidents. The group will meet for its summer semi-annual meeting during the second week in May 2009.

A summary of the Mid-America RQSC will be included in the February 13 edition of the *AWO Letter*. For questions about the RQSC meetings, please contact Nicole de Sibour or Lynn Muench at (703) 841-9300, extension 292, or (314) 308-0378, respectively, or via email at ndisibour@vesselalliance.com or lmuench@vesselalliance.com.



Coast Guard to Hold Public Meeting on AIS/NOAD Proposal March 5

On March 5, the United States Coast Guard will hold a public meeting to hear comments on the recently published notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) on Vessel Requirements for Notices of Arrival and Departure (NOAD) and Automatic Identification System (AIS). The meeting will take place from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in room 2415 at Coast Guard Headquarters, 2100 2nd Street, SW., Washington, DC.

As reported in the December 19 *AWO Letter*, the AIS/NOAD proposal was published in the December 16 *Federal Register*. AWO is currently working with members of the Technology Steering Group and other interested members to develop comments on the NPRM. AWO will present a preview of its comments at the March 5 public hearing.



W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001. To submit comments online, the Federal eRulemaking Portal can be accessed by clicking [here](#) – reference docket USCG-2005-21869.

For more information, or to share your perspective on the NPRM, please contact Jennifer Carpenter,

Brian Vahey, or Robert McCaw at (703) 841-9300, extensions 260, 251, or 279, respectively. Jennifer, Brian, and Robert can be reached by email at jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com, bvahey@vesselalliance.com, and rmccaw@vesselalliance.com, respectively. ☘

EPA to Stage Vessel General Permit Web Cast

On February 5, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be holding a Web cast to review the Vessel General Permit (VGP), which goes into effect on February 6, and to address questions about it. For more information on the Web cast and to register, please click [here](#). Thanks to all members who submitted suggested Frequently Asked Questions to EPA.



In addition, the AWO Recommended Practice Guide for the VGP, developed by a large cross-section of AWO members to assist with complying with the VGP, can be found [here](#). For more information on recent developments in regards to state requirements as part of the VGP, and AWO strategy and next steps in those states, please see the Members Only story on page 13.

For more information on the VGP, please contact Jennifer Carpenter or Mary McCarthy at (703) 841-9300, extension 260 or 254, respectively, or via email at jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com or mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com. ☘

To read the NPRM, please click [here](#). Comments on the NPRM are due April 15 and should be submitted to: Docket Management Facility (M-30), U.S. Department of Transportation, West Building Ground Floor, Room

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 Pik Kwan Rivera, U.S. Coast Guard, at (202) 372-1354. ☘

DATE	LOCATION	CONTACT
February 5-6	Salyers Solutions, LLC New Orleans, LA	Jo Ann Salyers (Instructor) (504) 236-4962 salyers_solutions@hughes.net
March 5-6	Salyers Solutions, LLC New Orleans, LA	Jo Ann Salyers (Instructor) (504) 236-4962 salyers_solutions@hughes.net
March 25-26	Salyers Solutions, LLC Cincinnati, OH	Jo Ann Salyers (Instructor) (504) 236-4962 salyers_solutions@hughes.net
April 26-27	Salyers Solutions, LLC Fairbanks, AK	Jo Ann Salyers (Instructor) (504) 236-4962 salyers_solutions@hughes.net
April 30- May 1	Salyers Solutions, LLC Seattle, WA	Jo Ann Salyers (Instructor) (504) 236-4962 salyers_solutions@hughes.net

AWO Safety Committees Hold Ninth Annual Joint Safety Committee Meeting

The AWO Interregion and Coastal Safety Committees held their ninth annual joint meeting in New Orleans on January 21 and 22. This meeting was held in conjunction with the Southern Region Annual Meeting. It created an opportunity for the Safety Committee and regional meeting attendees to gain a better understanding of the advocacy and safety issues facing the association. Vertical alignment is designed to improve communication between the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, and the Safety Committees in order to accomplish work that augments AWO's advocacy efforts and involves a larger segment of the membership in the work of the Safety Committees.

The meeting opened with Coastal Safety Committee Chairman Gail Johnson, Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company, and Interregion Safety Committee Chairman Stan Knight, AEP River Division, welcoming 69 AWO members representing 56 member companies.

During the meeting, attendees heard from several invited speakers beginning with Rick Hicks, Randy Smith Training Solutions, who presented a training session on developing a safety culture that

recognizes and promotes safety 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Attendees also participated in a drawing to receive a book describing the concept and providing suggestions on how to develop this safety culture in their own organizations. Also addressing the committee was Coastal Safety Committee Vice Chairman Jeff Slesinger, Western Towboat Company, who gave a presentation on the use of bridge simulators as an onboard assessment tool. Slesinger's presentation included a video of a simulation, on the Mississippi River, showing the value of bridge simulators as both an evaluation and learning tool. Other speakers included Steven Richards, BP, who introduced TMSA², a new vetting tool being used by major oil companies; Spencer Collins, Enterprise Systems Analytics, on a computer program to manage a company's safety management system; and, Dominic Ingerto, Senture Security Solutions, who provided a demonstration of a Transportation Worker Identification Card (TWIC) card reader. This device is hand-held and can verify the worker's identity using biometric data included on the TWIC card. Dana Teicheira, Tugboat Compliance



Systems, gave a demonstration of a software system, developed with his real-world tugboat experience, to help towing companies manage all facets of their safety management systems including training, inspections and documentation.

The second day of meetings opened with remarks from Merritt Lane, Canal Barge, Chairman of the AWO Board of Directors and Tom Allegretti, President of AWO. Mr. Lane's comments focused on the need and value of the efforts to improve the vertical alignment between the work of the Safety Committees and the priorities of the association. Mr. Allegretti directed his remarks toward efforts and issues currently facing the association, and areas where the safety committees clearly have a role to play including Crew Endurance Management System (CEMS) leadership, Subchapter M implementation and Safety Statistics.

In addition to invited speakers, Joanne Salyers, Salyers Solutions, Chairman of the Crew Alertness Subcommittee, introduced a Crew Alertness Guide developed by her subcommittee as a tool to present practical guidance on implementing various CEMS principles. Jim Smith, Magnolia Marine, introduced a new fall overboard questionnaire developed by

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2009 AWO Safety Calendar on Sale!

AWO is still accepting orders for the 2009 *AWO Safety Calendar*, which features 13 beautiful, full-color industry photos and highlights "Safe Line Handling." If you would like to order a calendar, please click [here](#).



AWO Safety Committees Hold Ninth Annual Joint Safety Committee Meeting

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This Fall Overboard Subcommittee that was designed to gather information on the causes of falls overboard occurring at member companies. Donnie Hall, Hunter Marine, presented a number of lesson plans developed by his Subcommittee that were designed for the use of members in training their crews. Lora Ferraro, The Hile Group, gave a report on historical trends developed through the AWO Voluntary Safety Statistics Program. A new CD developed by AEP River Operations on Fall Overboard Prevention was introduced by Tim Sizemore, AEP River Operations, and a lesson learned was presented by Jim Fletcher, Marine Compliance, on a slipping hazard that can be created by the application of epoxy deck paint.

In their final actions, both committees approved their safety priorities for 2009 which remain essentially unchanged from 2008. They are listed in the column on the right.

Members of both committees appreciated the opportunity this unique gathering of towing vessel safety officers afforded them in sharing information and reaffirming Safety Committee priorities.

For further information on the Safety Committees, please contact Bob Clinton at (703) 841-9300, extension 253, or via email at bclinton@vesselalliance.com.

Atlantic Region

Hours of Operation Extended at New York/New Jersey TWIC Enrollment Center

On January 26, the New York/New Jersey Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) Enrollment Center announced that it would be extending its hours of operation, effective immediately. The new hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and will be in place until the close of business Friday, February 6. If you have any questions, please contact Benjamin Rogers at (703) 841-9300, extension 264, or via email at brogers@vesselalliance.com.



2009 Safety Priorities

Coastal Safety Committee

- Crew Alertness
- Managing Fire Risk in the Offshore Environment
- Communication and Improved Crew Safety Performance - Leadership Skills
- Line Handling - Safety with Super Strength Synthetic Lines
- Disaster Preparedness

Interregion Safety Committee

- Crew Alertness
- Fall Overboard Prevention
- Communication and Improved Crew Safety Performance
 - Leadership Skills
 - Staph Infections
 - Navigation Technologies
- Safety Statistics



Atlantic Region Annual Meeting Quickly Approaching!

The **Atlantic Region Annual Meeting** will be held on February 4-5 in Tampa, FL. To register for the meeting click [here](#). The scheduled events include:

February 4

- 7:30 - 10:00 p.m.: Social Dinner at Malio's Prime Steakhouse, located at 400 North Ashley Drive, Tampa FL. (*The cost of dinner will be shared among all dinner attendees.*)

February 5

- 7:00 a.m.: Continental Breakfast
- 8:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.: Annual Meeting
- 12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.: Board Luncheon

All meetings will be held at the Sheraton Tampa Riverwalk Hotel, located at 200 North Ashley Drive, Tampa, FL. To make reservations, please contact the hotel directly at (813) 223-2222.

Pacific Region

Washington State Introduces Rescue Tug Legislation

On January 19, companion bills SB 5344 and HB 1409 were introduced in the Washington State House and Senate. The bills would mandate that all covered vessels with contingency plans entering any portion of the Strait of Juan de Fuca west of the city of Port Angeles must contract with a multimission tug to provide assistance and response for the vessel while it is in the western portion of the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Under current regulation, tug owners submit bids to the Washington Department of Ecology for the right to provide service to covered vessels operating in Port Angeles. Under these proposed regulations, tug owners would be required to contract specifically with the owner of the covered vessels that the tug would be on hand to assist.

In addition to these stipulations, SB 5344/HB 1409 would mandate that multimission tugs have the following response capabilities and equipment:

- (1) The ability to make up, stop and tow to safety a fully loaded tanker with a deadweight tonnage capacity of one hundred eighty thousand metric tons;
- (2) Be equipped with an Orville hook and line throwing gun;
- (3) The ability to deploy high seas boom and oil spill skimmers while towing an oil recovery barge or the ability to store recovered oil on board;
- (4) The ability to provide a platform for salvage operations, including divers and firefighters;
- (5) The ability to transfer passengers from a stricken vessel;
- (6) Be equipped with onboard oil storage or be contracted with a dedicated barge stationed alongside the tug, or both; and
- (7) Starting five years after the effective date of this section, be equipped with a fully integrated external firefighting system with no fewer than two pumps, a total pump capacity of not less than two thousand four hundred cubic meters per hour, a throw length of not less than one hundred twenty meters, and a throw height of not less than forty-five meters.

Additionally, the bills mandate that the Department of Ecology develop

procedures to determine the adequacy of covered vessel contingency plans, including the drilling of qualifying tugs contracted by covered vessel owners. Although the procedures for drilling rescue tugs are not outlined in the bills, they must place an emphasis on the tug's ability to respond to a potentially worst case spill scenario and would be considered as evidence of the adequacy of the contracting vessel's overall contingency plan.

AWO will continue to follow this legislation and will keep members involved of developments as they occur. For more information, contact Jason Lewis at (206) 262-7308 or via email at jlewis@vesselalliance.com; or contact Brian Vahey at (703) 841-9300, extension 251, or via email at bvahey@vesselalliance.com.

2009 AWO Letter Sponsorships Available!

AWO is currently accepting sponsorship applications for the 2009 *AWO Letter*. Each great advertising opportunity costs \$500, which includes a front-page "sponsorship block" featuring your company's name, location, logo, and Web site address.



Sponsorship forms can be found by visiting the AWO Web site, or by clicking [here](#). If you have any questions, please contact Susan Miller at (703) 841-9300, extension 262, or via email at smiller@vesselalliance.com.

Save the Date for the Pacific Region Annual Meeting

If you haven't already marked your calendars please take the time to do so now! The Pacific Region Annual Meeting has been scheduled for February 12 from 8:00 a.m. to noon with registration starting at 7:30 a.m. The meeting will be held at Salty's on Alki Restaurant, 1936 Harbor Avenue S.W., Seattle. There will be a discussion on the regional priorities, new board member nominations and issues that are critical to both the regional and national tugboat, towboat and barge industry will be discussed. For more information, please contact Jason Lewis at (206) 245-5758, or via email at jlewis@vesselalliance.com.

Midcontinent Region

Temporary RNA Established on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal *Fish Barrier IIA to Become Activated*

On January 17, the Coast Guard established a regulated navigation area (RNA) and safety zone on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal near Romeoville, IL. The RNA will be in place on a temporary basis, lasting until September 30, 2009. The Coast Guard has designated the RNA as including all waters of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal between mile marker 295 and mile marker 297.5.

This temporary RNA was introduced in the wake of studies by the Corps of Engineers that concluded that Fish Barrier IIA could begin operating safely at a maximum in-water field strength of 1 volt/inch. The Corps will activate Barrier IIA shortly. Barriers I (demonstration barrier) was

reactivated in October 2008 after testing of Barrier II and repair work on Barrier I was complete.

Operational conditions in this RNA include:

- 1) not being able to pass, meet or overtake other vessels;
- 2) the use of wire rope; and,
- 3) the use of a bow boat throughout the entire RNA for tows containing one or more barges carrying flammable products ("red flag" barges). The Corps will provide bow boats in this area.

The Coast Guard is accepting comments on the RNA. The deadline for the submission of these comments

is not yet known, however, because the establishment of the RNA had not yet been published in the *Federal Register* as of the release date of this edition of the *AWO Letter*. Until this information is published, the Coast Guard must give actual notice to mariners prior to taking enforcement action. Directions for how to submit comments are available, though, and can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

If you would like to be notified as to when the RNA will be published in the *Federal Register*, please contact Lynn Muench at (314) 446-6474 or Benjamin Rogers at (703) 841-9300, extension 264, or via email at lmuench@vesselalliance.com or brogers@vesselalliance.com.

Southern Region

Informative Southern Region Annual Meeting Held

The AWO Southern Region held its annual meeting on January 23 in New Orleans, LA. The Friday session was kicked off with opening remarks by Congressman Gene Taylor (D-MS) and newly elected Congressman Anh "Joseph" Cao (R-LA). Following the congressional speakers the agenda was packed with the election of regional directors, a review of the 2009 regional and national priorities and presentations by the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Southern Region Chairman Roger Harris, Magnolia Marine Transport Company, began his comments with a request for members to become more engaged in advocacy on behalf of the industry. There was special attention paid to the importance of the grassroots program and the need to strengthen AWO's Political Action Committee (PAC).

The Southern Region Vice Chairman Bob Fry, Jr., Megafleet Towing Co., Inc introduced the Southern Region directors' slate. The nomination committee made up of Z. David DeLoach, DeLoach Marine Services; Steve Golding, Golding Barge Line, Inc.; Charles "Charlie" Haun, Parker

Towing Company, Inc.; Charles "Chuck" King, Buffalo Marine Services, Inc.; Frank Morton, Turn Services, Inc.; and Clark Todd, Blessey Marine Services, Inc. nominated Roger Harris, Magnolia Marine Transport Company; Robert A. "Bob" Fry, Megafleet Towing Co., Inc.; Taylor DuChaine, Cenac Towing Company, Inc.; Tommy Echols, Echo Marine, Ltd./Echo Towing Service Inc.; Paul Janoush, JANTRAN, Inc.; Matt Woodruff, Kirby Corporation; Joe Devall, Devall Towing & Boat Service, Inc.; and an alternate, Mark Bourgeois, LeBeouf Bros. Towing, L.L.C.

AWO Chairman of the Board Merritt Lane discussed the challenges facing the industry and the need to be vigilant in these trying times. The members were also given a U.S. Coast Guard District Report, an inside take on the New Orleans oil spill and a report on Crew Endurance Management (CEMS). The regional report was given by Ms. Lynn Muench and Mr. Tom Allegetti gave a report on the 111th Congress. For more information on the Southern Region Meeting, please contact Lynn Muench at (314) 446-6474 or via email at lmuench@vesselalliance.com.

Southern Region

Lower Mississippi River Waterway Safety Advisory Committee to Meet

On February 5, the Lower Mississippi River Waterway Safety Advisory Committee (LMRWSAC) will meet in New Orleans, LA. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss a number of issues related to navigational safety on the Lower Mississippi River. The meeting will include a Captain of the Port (COTP) status report and a Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) update report.

The meeting will last from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.,

and may close early if all of the scheduled business is completed sooner than expected. The location of the meeting is the New Orleans Yacht Club, 403 North Roadway, West End, New Orleans, LA 70124. It is open to the public.

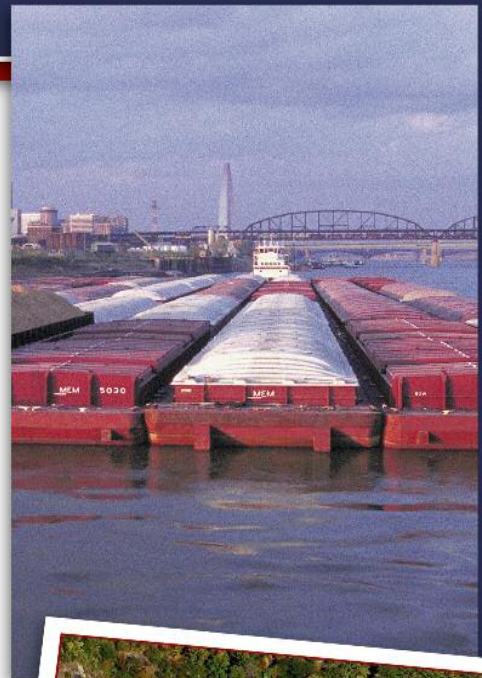
To read the announcement for the meeting that appeared in the *Federal Register*, please click [here](#). For more information, please contact Benjamin Rogers at (703) 841-9300, extension 264, or via email at brogers@vesselalliance.com.

In order to inform the incoming Administration and new Members of Congress about the industry, AWO has developed two new print ads; one focusing on the economic benefits of waterways transportation and the other on the environmental benefits. Displayed on this page is the ad focused on the environment – the economic ad ran in the January 16, 2009 issue of the AWO Letter. For more information on the ads, contact Anne Burns at aburns@vesselalliance.com.

Barges are Beautiful...

For the Environment.

This towboat pushing a 24-barge tow moves the same amount of grain as 384 rail cars or 1,680 highway trucks, reducing pollution in our air and congestion on our roads. We get 576 miles to the gallon...while pushing a ton of freight.



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