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**HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE**

Interstate Commerce Halted:  
 Major Congressionally-Authorized  
 Waterway Closed.....1

Senators Lead Effort to Oppose  
 Lock Usage Tax in Congress.....2

MCTF and AWO Submit Jones Act  
 Comments to Customs and Border  
 Protection.....2

AWO Fall Convention Registration  
 Now Open.....3

Make Plans to Attend the Interregion  
 Safety Committee Meeting.....4

AWO Members Meet with  
 Sector New Orleans.....5

Midwest and Ohio Valley Regions Joint  
 Summer Meeting Held in St. Louis.....6

Tank Barge Emissions Study  
 Resumes in Tennessee.....6

Mid-America RQSC Casualty  
 QAT Meets in St. Louis.....7

Cape Cod Canal Stakeholders  
 Hold Meeting.....8

## Interstate Commerce Halted: Major Congressionally-Authorized Waterway Closed

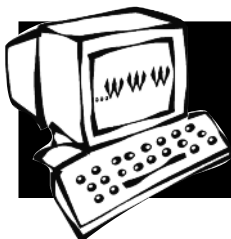
On August 16, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) increased the electric fish barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal to two volts per inch with no advance warning to the marine industry or to the U.S. Coast Guard. Due to safety concerns, the Coast Guard closed the Canal to all traffic until the safety testing was completed and analyzed. The voltage was increased in reaction to still-unconfirmed DNA tests that the Asian Carp, an invasive species of fish, was within five miles of the barrier. After the closure, the Coast Guard worked diligently to complete the analysis of the safety testing and reopen the Canal. The Canal was only reopened fully on August 24.

Several businesses, including power plants, refineries, manufacturers and construction businesses, were severely impacted during the shutdown of the Canal. Stalled vessels cost the regional economy hundreds of thousands of dollars a day in increased transportation costs, based on AWO member equipment alone.

This total does not include costs to the region as shippers shifted cargo to other, more costly and less environmentally-friendly options of transportation.

The Coast Guard has instituted a new safety measure in the area: all vessel personnel must now be inside the towboat as the tow transits the Regulated Navigation Area (RNA) due to the increased possibility of fatalities if a crewmember falls into the Canal. As the barrier is still operating at two volts per inch, it is imperative that all personnel follow this restriction. The Canal remains closed indefinitely to recreational traffic.

AWO members thank the Coast Guard for its partnership and work to restore this key transportation economic artery for the Chicago region. AWO will continue to keep members notified of future changes in the status of navigation through the Canal. 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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## Senators Lead Effort to Oppose Lock Usage Tax in Congress



On August 18, the offices of Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Kit Bond (R-MO) circulated two identical letters to Senate offices expressing opposition to the Obama Administration's proposal for a lock usage tax to fund the Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTF). Senators are urged to co-sign the letter, which references both the harmful nature of the proposed tax and the necessity for improved efficiency in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' construction process. The deadline for co-signing the letter is Friday, September 11.

Eventually, these letters will be sent to the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Senate Finance and Senate Environment & Public Works Committees. These bodies are the Senate's tax-writing and IWTF-authorizing committees, respectively. AWO is currently working with its colleagues at Waterways Council, Inc., to ask as many Senators to sign this letter as possible. AWO encourages its members to reach out to their Senators and urge them to sign this letter of opposition to the lock tax.

For further information on the lock usage tax, or to find out how to help gather signatures for the letter, please contact Chris Coakley at (703) 841-9300, extension 297, or via email at [ccoakley@vesselalliance.com](mailto:ccoakley@vesselalliance.com).

## MCTF and AWO Submit Jones Act Comments to Customs and Border Protection

On August 14, the Maritime Cabotage Task Force (MCTF) submitted comments to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in support of a notice proposing to strengthen the Jones Act by modifying and revoking several CBP ruling letters that permitted foreign-flagged construction vessels to engage in the transportation of vessel equipment in connection with offshore oil production. AWO, a signatory to the comments, serves on the Board of Directors of MCTF and strongly supports the revised CBP ruling. MCTF is a broad-based coalition that represents the U.S. maritime industry and is the leading advocate for the preservation of U.S. maritime cabotage laws.

In its comments, MCTF commended CBP as its "proposed action would not only interpret and apply the coastwise laws as Congress intended...but it would also help to ensure that these

crucial sectors of the U.S. maritime industry are able to operate without being unfairly disadvantaged through the use of foreign-built, foreign-crewed, and foreign-flagged vessels that are not required to abide by many U.S. laws, including tax, labor, and environmental laws." MCTF's comments went on to address the numerous legal precedents that affirm CBP's proposal and concluded by "urging the agency to move forward with the implementation of its proposed ruling modifications."

To read MCTF's comments, click [here](#). For more information concerning the CBP notice, please refer to the July 17 edition of the *AWO Letter* by clicking [here](#). For more information, please contact Chris Coakley or Robert McCaw at (703) 841-9300, extensions 297 or 279, respectively, or via email at [ccoakley@vesselalliance.com](mailto:ccoakley@vesselalliance.com) or [rmccaw@vesselalliance.com](mailto:rmccaw@vesselalliance.com).

### *Safety Calendar Sponsorship Opportunities Still Available!*

AWO is now accepting sponsorship applications for the 2010 edition of the AWO Safety Calendar! Each sponsor's information and logo is prominently placed in full color on a page of the calendar. This is a great way to promote your company's commitment to safety to AWO members and customers, as well as to legislators, regulators and the media. Additionally, each sponsor will receive six free calendars. The cost of sponsorship is \$500. Upon receipt of the sponsorship form, AWO will invoice your company.

Please note that the calendar photos are chosen through the AWO Safety Calendar Photo Contest. It is difficult for us to match photos of certain vessels to certain sponsors, but AWO will make every effort to accommodate sponsors' requests in this regard if they are made known on the sponsorship application. Thank you for your understanding.

To become a sponsor, please fill out a sponsorship form found [here](#) and fax it to Susan Miller at (703) 841-0389. For more information, please contact Susan at (703) 841-9300, extension 262, or via email at [smiller@vesselalliance.com](mailto:smiller@vesselalliance.com).

## Coast Guard Withdraws Tug Escort Rulemaking

On August 18, the U.S. Coast Guard withdrew its proposed rule concerning the extension of tug escort requirements for single-hulled oil tankers over 5,000 gross tons to waters other than Prince William Sound and Puget Sound. The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 required the Coast Guard to establish tug escort requirements in these two areas and gave the agency the authority to designate other areas in which tug escorts should be required by regulation.

In April 2008, the Coast Guard proposed to withdraw its 1993 advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPRM) establishing criteria for the designation of areas where tug escorts should be required, concluding that nationwide Coast Guard action to establish tug escort requirements was not advisable, and that escort requirements for other waters or other classes of vessels should be imposed only after local level Coast Guard consideration of local needs, conditions and alternatives. In July 2008, AWO submitted comments supporting the Coast Guard's proposal to withdraw the ANPRM.

The Coast Guard's August 18 notice withdrawing the ANPRM reached the same conclusion, expressing the agency's determination that a rulemaking of national scope is "neither necessary nor advisable." The Coast Guard highlighted the Ports and Waterways Safety Assessment (PAWSA) process as a better tool for determining if escort requirements are necessary in certain waters, noting that it provides a uniform, formal process for bringing together local stakeholders to identify potential risk factors and evaluate potential mitigation measures. The Coast Guard also noted that states are preempted from imposing their own escort vessel requirements in waters where the Coast Guard has expressly established, or declined to establish, special navigation requirements.

To read the withdrawal notice, click [here](#). 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](mailto:jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com) or [mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com](mailto:mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com).



### Important Dates and Reminders

..... at a glance

*For more information, please contact Mary McCarthy at (703) 841-9300, extension 254, unless otherwise noted.*

**September 3:** AWO Pacific Region Summer Meeting, Seattle, WA

**September 9-10:** Interregion Safety Committee Meeting, St. Louis, MO

**October 14-16:** AWO Fall Convention, New Orleans, LA

**December 2-3:** AWO Executive Committee Meeting, Arlington, VA

## AWO Fall Convention Registration Now Open

The AWO Fall Convention will be held on October 14-16 at the Ritz-Carlton hotel in New Orleans, LA. The Convention will feature updates and discussions on critical issues facing the industry, such as the Vessel General Permit, the forthcoming towing vessel inspection regulation and crew endurance during the Common Issues Council, sector committee, Public Affairs and Board meetings.

**To see a full schedule and to register for the Convention, click [here](#).**

The Ritz-Carlton is holding a block of rooms for \$199 a night until **September 16**. To reserve a room, please call the hotel at (504) 524-1331 and mention that you are attending the American Waterways Operators Fall Convention.

For more information on the Convention, please contact Mary McCarthy at (703) 841-9300, extension 254, or via email at [mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com](mailto:mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com).



## Make Plans to Attend the Interregion Safety Committee Meeting

Don't miss the opportunity to join the largest group of safety professionals in the tugboat, towboat and barge industry as it works to improve mariner safety! Make your plans now to attend the summer meeting of the AWO Interregion Safety Committee to be held on September 9-10 at the Sheraton Westport Lakeside Chalet Hotel, 191 Westport Plaza, St. Louis, MO.

Subcommittee meetings on Lesson Plans, Falls Overboard and Crew Alertness will be held at the hotel from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on September 9, and the main meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. that day. A reception will be held at the conclusion of the afternoon session. The meeting resumes at 8:00 a.m. on September 10 and will conclude by noon.

A meeting agenda is available online, and can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

The hotel is holding a block of rooms at \$120.00 each. Reservations can be made by calling the hotel at (800) 822-3535 or online by clicking [here](#). When making your reservations, be sure to mention that you are attending the AWO Interregion Safety committee meeting. As always, a meeting fee of \$50.00 will be billed to attendees to cover the cost of meeting rooms and refreshments.

The committee is excited to welcome Mr. Peter Squicciarini, the new U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area Towing Vessel



Manager, who will discuss his role in assisting companies in their transition to inspected status. Mr. Squicciarini comes to his position with "real world" experience in the towing industry and is committed to working closely with the tugboat, towboat and barge industry to facilitate communication between regulators, companies and individuals who are actually doing the work, ensuring a smooth transition to inspection.

The committee will also continue its work on developing a strategic plan to improve the effectiveness of the committee and better integrate its efforts into the overall work of the association.

All AWO member companies are invited to send a representative to the meeting, particularly company safety and security officers and operations personnel who will be responsible for complying with the new towing vessel inspection regulations. Committee members are encouraged to "bring a mate (or captain or deckhand)" or anyone else who might benefit from seeing the work of a broad base of industry safety professionals and learning new ways crewmembers can enhance the safety culture of the inland barge and towing industry.

To RSVP for the meeting or for further information, please contact Bob Clinton at (703) 841-9300, extension 253, or via email at [bclinton@vesselalliance.com](mailto:bclinton@vesselalliance.com).

## CEMS Training Opportunities Available

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
September 14-15	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>
September 17-18	Salyers Solutions, LLC Houston, TX	Jo Ann Salyers (Instructor) (504) 236-4962 <a href="mailto:salyers_solutions@hughes.net">salyers_solutions@hughes.net</a>
October 8-9	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>
November 11-12	Salyers Solutions, LLC Portland, OR	Jo Ann Salyers (Instructor) (504) 236-4962 <a href="mailto:salyers_solutions@hughes.net">salyers_solutions@hughes.net</a>

## Nine AWO Members Complete RCP Audits

Nine AWO member companies have completed certification or recertification of their Responsible Carrier Program (RCP) audit. 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 undergo regular recertification audits to verify their compliance with the RCP.

For these companies, this achievement is tangible proof of their commitment to continued safety and environmental protection. AWO is proud of their accomplishment. For information on the RCP, 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:*

**Bolivar Barge Cleaning Service, LLC**  
Channelview, TX  
Audit date: 07/09/09  
Reaudit due: 07/09/12

**Capital Inland Marine, LLC**  
Houston, TX  
Audit date: 08/07/09  
Reaudit due: 08/07/12

**Crescent Marine Towing Inc.**  
Harvey, LA  
Audit date: 08/26/09  
Reaudit due: 08/26/12

**Crosby Tugs, LLC**  
Golden Meadow, LA  
Audit date: 08/27/09  
Reaudit due: 08/27/12

**Dann Ocean Towing**  
Tampa, FL  
Audit date: 10/20/09  
Reaudit due: 10/20/12

**Dixie Offshore Transportation**  
Belle Chasse, LA  
Audit date: 08/25/09  
Reaudit due: 08/25/12

**Harbor Docking & Towing**  
(rejoining member)  
Westlake, LA  
Audit date: 07/31/09  
Reaudit due: 07/31/10

**James Marine Inc.,  
dba Tennessee Valley Towing**  
Paducah, KY  
Audit date: 08/28/09  
Reaudit due: 08/28/12

**J.A.M. Marine Services, LLC**  
Houston, TX  
Audit date: 07/25/09  
Reaudit due: 07/25/12

## SOUTHERN REGION

### **AWO Members Meet with Sector New Orleans *New Orleans RNA Discussed***

On August 13, CAPT Edwin Stanton, Captain of the Port (COTP) for Sector New Orleans, met with AWO members David Hanby, McDonough Marine, and Kirk Landry, Florida Marine Transporters, and AWO Vice President - Southern Region Mark Wright as part of a meeting with the Harvey Canal Industrial Association (HCIA). The meeting centered around CAPT Stanton's COTP orders related to the proposed New Orleans area Regulated Navigation Area's (RNA) regarding restrictions on mooring in the Harvey Canal and the Industrial Canal during hurricanes and tropical storms. Mr. Hanby delivered a

presentation on HCIA's assessment of the proposed RNA, which identified concerns regarding logistical feasibility, safety and economic impacts. Following the presentation and a discussion about various aspects related to mooring and flood protection, CAPT Stanton agreed to consider applications for waivers.

Other meeting attendees included COL Al Lee, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District; CAPT John Arenstam, Eighth U.S. Coast Guard

District; David Miller, State of Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority; Jefferson Parish President Aaron Broussard; staff for Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA), Senator David Vitter (D-LA), Congressman Steven Scalise (R-LA) and Congressman Charlie Melancon (R-LA); and, several local political officials and their staff. For more information, please contact Mark Wright at (985) 674-3600, or via email at [mwright@vesselalliance.com](mailto:mwright@vesselalliance.com).



MIDCONTINENT OFFICE

## Midwest and Ohio Valley Regions Joint Summer Meeting Held in St. Louis

On August 20, the AWO Midwest and Ohio Valley Regions held their joint Summer Meeting in St. Louis, MO. Ohio Valley Region Chairman David Sehrt, Ingram Barge Company, and Midwest Region Chairman George Leavell, Wepfer Marine, Inc., led the meeting. The gathering was preceded by a Special Session on August 19 that addressed the status of the pending notice of proposed rulemaking for towing vessel inspection, the Vessel General Permit and proposed alternative energy projects.

Among the individuals giving presentations at the meeting, AWO Vice Chairman George Foster, JB Marine Service, Inc., discussed the challenges facing AWO this year; Stan Knight, AEP River Operations, provided an update on the activities of the safety committees; and, Peter Stephaich, Campbell Transportation Company, Inc., informed members about the recent work of the AWO Strategic Planning Task Force.

Members of the AWO staff gave presentations as well, including AWO President & CEO Tom Allegretti, Senior Vice President - Regional Advocacy Lynn Muench and Senior Vice President - National Advocacy Jennifer Carpenter. Additionally, U.S. Coast Guard officers from throughout the regions issued District, Sector and Marine Safety Unit reports, and gave the Coast Guard perspective



*AWO Vice Chairman George Foster, JB Marine Services, Inc., and CAPT Tom Hooper, Eighth U.S. Coast Guard District, watch a presentation during the Midwest and Ohio Valley Regions Joint Summer Meeting.*

on a number of issues important to AWO, including the Towing Vessel Bridging Program and the fish barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal.

AWO was very pleased with the strong attendance at this meeting, as it gave a large number of members the opportunity both to learn more about AWO's work and interact with their colleagues about common challenges. For more information about the meeting, please contact Lynn Muench at (314) 446-6474 or [lmuench@vesselalliance.com](mailto:lmuench@vesselalliance.com), or Benjamin Rogers at (703) 841-9300, extension 264, or [brogers@vesselalliance.com](mailto:brogers@vesselalliance.com).

## TANK BARGE EMISSIONS STUDY RESUMES IN TENNESSEE

On August 18, the AWO Tank Barge Emissions Working Group met with Jim Holt, an Assistant Manager for the Memphis and Shelby County Health Department (MSCHD), to discuss the MSCHD's upcoming study to examine emissions from tank barges. In 2006, the HAWK infrared camera identified tank barges as a "potential" source of Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) emissions. However, the HAWK camera did not quantify emissions, and MSCHD will be working to take quantitative emission measurements in

the area as part of this new study, which will run from the end of September to the middle of October.

AWO will continue to work with Mr. Holt, MSCHD and the Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that the tank barge industry is fairly represented in the study. For more information, please contact Lynn Muench at (314) 446-6474 or [lmuench@vesselalliance.com](mailto:lmuench@vesselalliance.com), or Brian Vahey at (703) 841-9300, extension 251, or [bvahey@vesselalliance.com](mailto:bvahey@vesselalliance.com).

**Special thanks to our Midwest & Ohio Valley Region meeting sponsors:**

**Meeting and Board Luncheon Sponsor**  
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**Breakfast Sponsor**  
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**Reception Sponsors**  
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**Special Session Sponsors**  
Brennan Marine ♦ Evansville Marine

MIDCONTINENT OFFICE**Mid-America RQSC Casualty QAT Meets in St. Louis**

On August 19, the Mid-America Regional Quality Steering Committee (RQSC) Casualty Quality Action Team (QAT) met in St. Louis, MO, to discuss the incident causal information survey that it developed earlier this year. The survey allows companies to enter the causes for each incident listed in the U.S. Coast Guard's Marine Information for Safety and Law Enforcement (MISLE) database without revealing the company name, a sort of "black box" system. A test of the survey was sent to certain AWO members in February, and a majority of companies participated. The "black box" test was a success, protecting proprietary information while revealing incident causes so that actions can be identified to mitigate them.

Since February, the RQSC has worked to correct the few flaws in the system.

Also, the Coast Guard did a closer study of MISLE to narrow the scope of the survey, revealing geographic clusters of incidents for the survey to address, which it presented during the meeting. The QAT decided to ask the Coast Guard to look at three other clusters: time of day, date and water level, and major casualties. The group also committed to identifying which causes should be tied to the incidents, in order to reveal trends, by November. Finally, the QAT tasked itself with taking a closer look at MISLE to highlight categories that should be to prioritized and developing ways to ensure that those contain correct information.

Meeting attendees included QAT members Dr. Madeleine McNamara, Coast Guard; Dave Dewey, Western Kentucky Navigation, Inc.; Chuck McAllister, American River

Transportation Co.; Emmett Neal, Crouse Corporation; and, CAPT John Arenstam, Coast Guard. QAT and RQSC member John Patterson, Ingram Barge Company also attended. RQSC member attendees included Fred Nyhuis, Marathon Oil; CAPT Tom Hooper, Coast Guard; CAPT Verne Gifford, Coast Guard; and, Lynn Muench, AWO, Senior Vice President - Regional Advocacy. Other attendees included CDR Greg Case, Coast Guard, and Ben Rogers, AWO Government Affairs Associate (GAA). Joining by conference call were RQSC members Jim Farley, Kirby Inland Marine, LP, and Tom Smith, Canal Barge Company, Inc. Also joining the call were Cherrie Felder, Channel Shipyard Company, Inc., and Mary McCarthy, AWO GAA.

If you have any questions, please contact Lynn Muench at (314) 446-6474 or [lmuench@vesselalliance.com](mailto:lmuench@vesselalliance.com), or Mary McCarthy at (703) 841-9300, extension 254, or [mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com](mailto:mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com).



*Casualty QAT meeting attendees included (left to right) Dave Dewey, Western Kentucky Navigation; Fred Nyhuis, Marathon Oil; and, CAPT John Arenstam, U.S. Coast Guard.*

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](mailto:mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com).

MIDCONTINENT OFFICE

## AWO TESTIFIES AT MRC HEARINGS

On August 14 and 21, AWO testified at hearings held by the Mississippi River Commission (MRC) on board the *m/v Mississippi* in St. Louis, MO, and Morgan City, LA, respectively. AWO



Senior Vice President - Regional Advocacy Lynn Muench delivered AWO's comments in St. Louis, which focused on the potential harm of the proposed study of the Missouri River; concerns with the proposed New Orleans Regulated Navigation Area (RNA) barring vessels from certain areas during hurricanes; the need for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to assess the navigation impacts of proposed alternative energy projects; and, the need for the Corps to fix its broken lock and dam project delivery system. Ms. Muench concluded by urging the Corps to coordinate with industry through groups such as the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC), the River Industry Executive Task Force (RIETF) and the Regional Quality Steering Committee (RQSC). Also testifying in St. Louis was AWO member Brent Nissen of American River Transportation Co. on behalf of RIETF.

AWO Vice President - Southern Region Mark Wright delivered AWO's comments in Morgan City, which were similar to Ms. Muench's, but also emphasized the fact that the over 200 pieces of Corps' construction equipment stationed in the proposed New Orleans RNA will create a logistical nightmare as hurricanes approach. Mr. Wright reminded the Corps that the 150-foot-wide Inner Harbor Navigation Canal hurricane protection gate is a navigation hazard.

The MRC is a congressionally-authorized advisory body charged with helping the government improve the condition of the Mississippi River, foster navigation, promote commerce and prevent floods. Its membership includes Corps officers as well as civilian engineers and a representative from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

For more information, please contact Lynn Muench at (314) 446-6474 or [lmuench@vesselalliance.com](mailto:lmuench@vesselalliance.com); Mark Wright at (985) 457-9354 or [mwright@vesselalliance.com](mailto:mwright@vesselalliance.com); or, Mary McCarthy at (703) 841-9300, extension 254, or [mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com](mailto:mmccarthy@vesselalliance.com).

ATLANTIC REGION

## Cape Cod Canal Stakeholders Hold Meeting; Group Discusses Massachusetts Litigation and Proposed Legislation

On August 11, the Cape Cod Canal Stakeholders held a meeting at U.S. Coast Guard headquarters in Boston, MA. In attendance at the meeting were representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Coast Guard, AWO and local pilot groups. Among the topics discussed was the proposed Massachusetts bill HB 4119, known as "An Act Preventing Oil Spills in Buzzards Bay," and its potential impact upon local operators. To read more about HB 4119 and AWO's position on it, please click [here](#) for the July 6 edition of the *AWO Letter*, and scroll to page 13.

The group also discussed the recent ruling by the Magistrate Judge in Massachusetts District Court recommending that a summary judgment be entered against the state's 2004 oil spill statute. To read more about the Judge's recommendation, please click [here](#) for the July 31 edition of the *AWO Letter*, and see the article on the first page.

Also at this meeting, the Corps indicated that it will be beginning dredge work in the Canal in November or December of this year that will ultimately increase the water's depth to 32 feet. Due to increased and expanding shoal water, the Canal has had 30-foot draft transits during the last year and a half. The dredging is expected to be completed by January 2010.

For more information on the meeting, please contact Nicole deSibour at (703) 841-9300, extension 292, or via email at [ndesibour@vesselalliance.com](mailto:ndesibour@vesselalliance.com).

## DRBOSAC to Meet in Delaware



The Delaware River and Bay Oil Spill Advisory Committee (DRBOSAC) will meet in Lewes, DE, on September 9. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss topics involving the improvement of oil spill prevention and response strategies for the Delaware River and Bay. The meeting is open to the public and will begin at 2:00 p.m. For more details about the meeting and about DRBOSAC, please click [here](#).

## PACIFIC REGION

## Washington Response Tug Negotiations Continue

The funding mechanism for the response tug stationed at Neah Bay has begun and a compromise among the stakeholders seems bleak. The law requiring the response tug, passed earlier this year by the Washington State legislature, requires stakeholders to not only pay for the tug, but to determine among themselves how to pay for it. The points of contention rest on how much the funding mechanism will depend on oil. The two sides of the funding debate are at odds over whether the oil industry, comprising all vessels that carry oil as cargo, will pay more than 50 percent of the response tug. To date, the oil industry has tentatively agreed to fund 50 percent of the response tug, leaving the remaining 50 percent to be paid by non-tank vessels.



AWO has been steadfast in its position that the funding formula must include the net weight of the vessel in question and the amount of oil carried as cargo or fuel. Also, AWO believes the state of Washington should provide 50 percent of the funding for the response tug. For more information on this issue, please contact Jason Lewis at (206) 245-5758 or via email at [jlewis@vesselalliance.com](mailto:jlewis@vesselalliance.com).

## California's New Tax System Still Cloudy

As reported in the July 17 *AWO Letter*, the state of California has authorized the formation of the "Commission on the 21st Century Economy" to evaluate and recommend changes to the state's existing tax structure. Currently, the commission is exploring the elimination or reduction of the corporate income tax, to be replaced by a Value Added Tax (VAT). Still at question is the implementation of a sales and use tax on tug services. Recently, the commission is focusing all of its efforts on the VAT and tabling the tax on tug services. AWO has been in discussions with the commission and will testify in front of the commission about the negative consequences of a tug tax. If you have any questions, please contact Jason Lewis at (206) 245-5758 or via email at [jlewis@vesselalliance.com](mailto:jlewis@vesselalliance.com).



## PACIFIC REGION

## CARB Looking to Close Loophole in Harbor Craft Regulation

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) is reaching out to the tug and barge industry to gather emissions data on barges. It has come to the attention of the state that there is a loophole in the harbor craft regulation in regards to barge auxiliary engines. CARB will hold a series of meetings to discuss possible amendments to close the existing loophole in the regulation. AWO has been in contact with CARB staff and will continue to work with interested members and the state. If you have any questions or comments please contact Jason Lewis at (206) 245-5758 or via email at [jlewis@vesselalliance.com](mailto:jlewis@vesselalliance.com).

## AWO Letter Sponsorships Now Offer Half-Page Ad!

Sponsors of the *AWO Letter* now have a chance to get even more attention for their company's services with a half-page ad for the same reasonable price! This is a great way to advertise your company to the AWO membership and show support for the tugboat, towboat and barge industry.

Each sponsorship now includes a front-page "sponsorship block" featuring your company's name, location, logo and Web site address PLUS a half page ad! The *AWO Letter* reaches a wide and diverse audience including AWO members, elected officials, transportation agencies and companies in industries related to the maritime industry. It is published 24 times a year. The cost of sponsorship has remained the same for several years at \$500. Now you get even more for your money! (To see an example of the first sponsor display ad, please click [here](#).)



There are still a number of issues still available. 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](mailto:smiller@vesselalliance.com).