

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### AWO and ClassNK Sign Agreement on Responsible Carrier Program Audits

ARLINGTON, VA – The American Waterways Operators and ClassNK are pleased to announce the signing of an agreement under which ClassNK will be authorized to conduct audits of AWO’s Responsible Carrier Program, a safety management system for towing vessels with which all AWO members must comply as a condition of association membership.

The agreement with ClassNK, an international classification society, expands the options for AWO member companies to obtain RCP audits following publication of the U.S. Coast Guard regulations establishing an inspection regime for towing vessels at 46 CFR Subchapter M. The rule was published in the *Federal Register* on June 20.

“AWO’s goal is to provide members with a large, geographically dispersed pool of well trained, well qualified auditors to conduct RCP/Towing Safety Management System audits to facilitate implementation of Subchapter M,” said Tom Allegretti, AWO President & CEO. “We are very pleased to enter into this agreement with ClassNK and expand the options available to AWO members as we take this historic step in our industry’s safety journey.”



*Pictured Left to Right:* Ed McCain, Manager - Client Relations, ClassNK America; Toru Urushihara, Manager - ClassNK; Tom Allegretti - President & CEO, AWO; Jennifer Carpenter - Executive Vice President & COO, AWO; John Kim, General Manager, ClassNK

“This agreement positions the technical resources of ClassNK in support of the AWO Responsible Carrier Program,” stated Ed McCain, Manager, Client Relations – ClassNK America. “With over 700 towing vessels included in ClassNK’s Register of Ships, the vision of this organization is to provide reliable and experienced people as well as proven resources in support of the U.S. towing industry.”

Subchapter M establishes two paths to compliance for towing vessel operators: either annual Coast Guard inspections or the implementation of a Coast Guard-accepted Towing Safety Management System (TSMS). The TSMS option is not only the best way to promote continuous regulatory compliance and prevent accidents, but also provides vessel operators with maximum operational flexibility under the new requirements.

Last June, the Coast Guard confirmed its intent to accept the Responsible Carrier Program as a TSMS based on its assessment that the RCP is substantively equivalent to the ISM Code and achieves the audit frequency required by Subchapter M. AWO is now working with the Coast Guard to take the final steps needed to submit the RCP for acceptance as a TSMS.

**The American Waterways Operators** is the national trade association representing the tugboat, towboat and barge industry, which operates on the rivers, the Great Lakes, and along the coasts and in the harbors of the United States. Barge transportation serves the nation as the safest, most environmentally friendly and most economical mode of freight transportation. For more information about AWO, please visit [www.americanwaterways.com](http://www.americanwaterways.com).

**ClassNK** is focused on delivering the highest quality classification, auditing and consulting services, by the highest quality personnel, while maintaining its independent third party, non-profit status. We take pride in our commitment to scientific and technological research and development and our dedication to ensure the safety of life and property at sea, and the prevention of pollution of the marine environment. Learn more about ClassNK and our broad range of services at <http://www.classnk.or.jp> and [www.classnkamerica.com](http://www.classnkamerica.com)

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