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See You There!

**AWO 2013 Barge-In &
Spring Convention**
April 17-19
Mandarin Oriental
Washington, DC



For more information, please contact Sarah Young at (703) 841-9300, extension 291, or syoung@vesselalliance.com.

Charting a New Course with the Maritime Academies

Allegretti Addresses Higher Education Summit

At the invitation of the Maritime Academies Council, AWO President & CEO Tom Allegretti delivered a keynote luncheon address during the April 8 Higher Education Summit held on the campus of SUNY Maritime College. Mr. Allegretti used his remarks to acknowledge the shared values of the tugboat, towboat and barge industry and the maritime academies and encouraged greater collaboration to ensure that graduates are well prepared for the array of career opportunities available within the industry.

"We are at a critical point, looking to sustain a bright future as a key contributor to the fabric of this great nation," Mr. Allegretti stated. "Our important work cannot be accomplished without the thousands of dedicated domestic mariners who propel this industry forward...and we must work together to ensure the next generation of mariners."

Mr. Allegretti discussed AWO's long history, its foundational safety culture, and its role as a resource for government partners. He also addressed the depth and breadth of the industry, emphasizing that AWO members operate on inland waterways as well as along the coasts and in ports and harbors around the country, performing many different roles in facilitating the movement of domestic and international cargo. "It is a diverse membership and a determined membership, deeply committed to and invested in its role in moving the nation's commerce safely and efficiently."

Drawing a comparison to the values of AWO members and the values of the maritime academies and their graduates, Mr. Allegretti stated that "while we have different objectives, we are rooted by a common philosophy and common goals – a relentless pursuit of excellence,

(continued on page 2)



Frederick J. Harris, President, General Dynamics NASSCO; Rear Admiral Wendi B. Carpenter, USN (Ret.), President, SUNY Maritime College; and Tom Allegretti, AWO President & CEO, during the April 8 Maritime Academy Council's Higher Education Summit.

Charting a New Course with the Maritime Academies

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principled leadership, long-standing traditions, and a desire to constantly improve.”

Mr. Allegretti noted that the critical factor in the industry’s future success is an educated, motivated workforce. He said that the industry is healthy and growing, and that growth, in part, is driving the industry’s personnel challenge. He also acknowledged that the existing workforce is aging and that the regulatory environment is vastly more complex, requiring highly skilled and knowledgeable mariners able to help the industry keep pace with increased demands. The industry

itself, Mr. Allegretti noted, is also driving the pursuit of the next generation of leadership, “to make sure it is well-positioned to continue as an industry of skilled transportation professionals. Our customers certainly expect no less.”

Mr. Allegretti suggested four key areas where industry and the academies could work more closely together to better prepare graduates for careers in the tugboat, towboat and barge industry:

- Working to establish a specific tugboat, towboat and barge curriculum;

- Allowing cadets to generate enough TOAR sea-time;
- Offering paths to towing endorsements and certifications; and
- Partnering on internships and other learning opportunities.

By taking these steps together, Mr. Allegretti affirmed, industry and the academies would ensure that “graduates will leave the academies with specific training, skills and knowledge that will be immediately applicable in positions within our industry, and motivated graduates who show a commitment to the industry will find a career path before them that provides many opportunities for growth and advancement.”

“It starts on the boats,” Mr. Allegretti emphasized. “We need young men and women who will embrace the challenges and opportunities of work on towing vessels, either for the entire span of their vessel career, or as a foundation to an onshore position in our industry.”

Mr. Allegretti concluded his remarks by thanking the conference organizers and urging the need to continue and to elevate the conversation. “In my opinion, there is no better time for your graduates to be entering this industry,” he stated. “We need to work to build upon the good work that’s already been done by folks in our industry and by many of you in this room. I go back to where we started – the industry’s foundational values and principles, the same values and principles that you as educators hold dear. We are both committed to excellence, and together we will ensure the bright future of the nation’s tugboat, towboat and barge industry.” ❀

Applications for New TSAC Members Due May 20

The Coast Guard is seeking applications for membership on the Towing Safety Advisory Committee. TSAC advises the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security on matters relating to shallow draft inland and coastal waterway navigation and towing safety. The committee’s advice also assists the Coast Guard in formulating the position of the United States regarding the towing industry in advance of International Maritime Organization meetings. The Coast Guard is currently considering applications for six positions that will become vacant on September 30:

- Three representatives from the barge and towing industry;
- One representative from port districts, port authorities or terminal operators;
- One person representing licensed or unlicensed towing vessel engineers with formal training and experience; and
- One person representing shippers.

Each TSAC member serves a term of up to three years. Members may be appointed to serve consecutive terms. TSAC meets at least twice a year either in the Washington DC area or in cities with large towing centers of commerce and populated by high concentrations of towing industry and related businesses. Applications are due on or before May 20. For more information, please contact CDR Rob Smith of the U.S. Coast Guard at (202) 372-1410 or Robert.L.Smith@uscg.mil. ❀

Coast Guard to Consider Waivers for Seizure Disorders *Comments Due April 24*

On March 25, the U.S. Coast Guard published a notice of proposed policy change that would allow the National Maritime Center, the Coast Guard's credentialing body, to grant medical waivers to mariners with a history of seizure disorders. Current Coast Guard guidance found in Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular 04-08, Medical and Physical Evaluation Guidelines for Merchant Mariner Credentials, does not provide clear guidance on when seizure disorders are waivable and when they are not. To read the proposed policy change, click [here](#).

In order to facilitate consistent medical evaluations for affected mariners, the Coast Guard is seeking feedback from stakeholders on whether a policy change to allow medical waivers for seizure disorders is appropriate, and if so, under what criteria a mariner should be eligible for waiver consideration.

The Coast Guard has used its authority under 46 CFR 10.215(g), which allows for the issuance of waivers "when extenuating circumstances exist that warrant special consideration," to grant waivers on a case-by-case basis to mariners for a number of medical conditions. For mariners with a history of seizure disorders, NVIC 04-08 advises the mariner to contact the NMC for further guidance. However, NVIC 04-08 does not identify any criteria for making waiver determinations regarding seizure disorders. As a result, it is difficult for Coast Guard personnel to consistently evaluate mariners with a history of seizures and assess whether an individual applicant's medical condition warrants a medical waiver. In order to facilitate consistent medical evaluations for affected mariners, the Coast Guard is seeking feedback from stakeholders on whether a policy change to allow medical waivers for seizure disorders is appropriate, and if so, under what criteria a mariner should be eligible for waiver consideration.

Comments on the proposed policy are due April 24. For more information, click [here](#) or contact Brian Vahey at (703) 841-9300, extension 251, or via email at bvahey@vesselalliance.com.

Coast Guard Seeks Comments on Designated Medical Examiner Program

On April 2, the U.S. Coast Guard announced that it is seeking comments on the development of a merchant mariner medical evaluation program. The notice comes in response to the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2012, enacted into law last December, which requires the Coast Guard to conduct an assessment of the effectiveness of the National Maritime Center's current merchant mariner medical evaluation program, and to analyze whether a designated medical examiner program could work for the maritime industry.

The Coast Guard is seeking comments on the value of a designated medical examiner program, as well as on the relative merits of an "open," "closed," or "hybrid" medical evaluation system for mariners. Under the current "open" system, mariners can work with any qualified medical professional to complete evaluation forms, but NMC evaluators make the ultimate medical fitness determination. In a "closed" system, Coast Guard-authorized designated medical examiners would be granted the right to issue medical certificates to mariners upon the successful completion of a physical examination, but mariners would be required to use only designated medical examiners. Under a "hybrid" system, the designated medical examiner would issue medical certificates when mariners meet certain pre-established criteria, and the Coast Guard would only be involved in reviewing those mariners who have certain conditions.

AWO has long supported the concept of a "trusted agent" program for medical examiners that shares characteristics with the hybrid system discussed in the Coast Guard notice. In January 2012, the AWO Working Group on Mariner Licensing and Medical Standards recommended the establishment of a program in which mariners who use a medical professional recognized by the Coast Guard as familiar with agency standards and requirements receive expedited processing of their credential. AWO will work with members to develop a response to the Coast Guard's request for comment by the May 2 deadline.

To read the *Federal Register* notice, click [here](#). For more information, please contact Brian Vahey at (703) 841-9300, extension 251, or via email at bvahey@vesselalliance.com.

Busy Year for Offshore Wind

As expected, 2013 is shaping up to be a busy year in the development of offshore alternative energy projects. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management has two competitive lease auctions planned, the first of their kind. Regulatory and political activity surrounding the issue of offshore wind is taking place up and down the East, Gulf, and West coasts as well as throughout the country.

The first proposed Wind Energy Area subject to sale this year lies in federal waters 9.2 nautical miles off of the Massachusetts and Rhode Island coast. An official BOEM nautical map of the area can be seen [here](#). The second proposed lease area lies 23.5 nautical miles offshore from southern Virginia, near Hampton Roads. A map of the proposed area can be seen [here](#). Lease auctions for these areas have not yet been scheduled, but BOEM officials have indicated they will take place later in 2013.

BOEM has also issued notices of “no competitive interest” for the leasing of WEAs offshore of Delaware and the broader Mid-Atlantic coast. These notices allow potential developers to bypass a lease auction process and negotiate directly with BOEM. However, the projects are still subject to an environmental and public review process, which are both expected to take place this year.

On April 9, Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley signed an offshore wind energy bill into law. A key part of his legislative agenda since taking office, the law will raise residential electric bills by about \$1.50 per month to subsidize future wind energy projects off the Maryland coast. Similar wind related legislation is being developed

in state legislatures around the country.

Despite the procedural and political activity taking place this year, the Cape Wind project in Nantucket Sound is the only one on the verge of construction. A first in American waters, the controversial offshore wind project recently received an

influx of foreign financing last week from the Bank of Tokyo and other Japanese investors. Outgoing Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar told the Associated Press last week that “there is a good chance it [Cape Wind] will happen before the end of the year.” The

timeline, however, remains unclear in light of litigation from nearby localities and community groups.

In recent weeks, AWO staff has met with officials from BOEM and the Coast Guard to discuss the effects these projects may have on vessel safety and the integrity of nearby shipping routes. AWO will continue to monitor offshore wind energy projects and collaborate with policy makers to ensure any development does not adversely affect vessel navigation. For more information on this issue, contact Kevin Dowling at (703) 841-9300, extension 264, or kdowling@vesselalliance.com.



Applications for New MEDMAC Members Due May 29

The Coast Guard is seeking applications for membership on the Merchant Mariner Medical Advisory Committee. The committee provides advice to the Coast Guard on matters related to medical certification determinations for issuance of licenses, certificates of registry, and merchant mariners’ documents, medical standards and guidelines for the physical qualifications of operators of commercial vessels, medical examiner education, and medical research. The Coast Guard is considering applications for three positions that expire on August 8, and one position that became vacant on February 20, including:



- Two professional mariners with knowledge and experience in mariner occupational requirements; and
- Two health care professionals with particular expertise, knowledge, or experience regarding medical examinations of merchant mariners or occupational medicine.

Each MEDMAC member appointed will serve a term of five years. Members may be appointed to serve consecutive terms. The committee is expected to meet at least twice a year at various locations around the country. Applications are due on or before May 29. For more information, please contact LT Ashley Holm of the U.S. Coast Guard at (202) 372-1128 or Ashley.e.holm@uscg.mil.

Coast Guard Issues Safety Alert on Counterfeit Fire Extinguishers

On March 21, the U.S. Coast Guard issued Marine Safety Alert 01-13 on counterfeit portable fire extinguishers. The Coast Guard announced that it has become aware of counterfeits of Coast Guard-approved portable fire extinguishers manufactured by Amerex Corporation and Buckeye Fire Equipment. Both companies are major producers of genuine approved fire extinguishing equipment. The Coast Guard considers these counterfeit extinguishers a significant safety hazard and urges vessel owners and operators to inspect their equipment to ensure they are not carrying counterfeit extinguishers on their vessels.

To ensure fire extinguishers are genuine, the Coast Guard advises operators to check for the following physical characteristics. Genuine fire extinguishers will have:

- A unique serial number printed on each unit;
- A security imprint/texture printed on the “UL Listed” label (Genuine Amerex Corporation extinguishers will have a series of scored circles; genuine Buckeye Fire Equipment extinguishers will have the letter “S” imprinted on the label);
- A date stamped on the bottom of the unit; and
- Silver-colored aluminum handles.

Companies that may have identified counterfeit extinguishers should contact the Coast Guard Office of Design and Engineering Standards immediately. Contact information and additional information that should be submitted is included in the Coast Guard safety alert, available [here](#).

For more information, contact Brian Vahey at (703) 841-9300, extension 251, or via email at bvahey@vesselalliance.com.

NOSAC Announces Next Meeting Date, Request for Applications

On March 27, the U.S. Coast Guard announced that the next meeting of the National Offshore Safety Advisory Committee will take place April 17-18 in New Orleans. The Coast Guard also requested applications from qualified candidates seeking consideration for appointment to NOSAC, which is the federal advisory committee that makes recommendations to the Coast Guard on safety issues in the offshore mineral and energy industries.

At the April 17 session, the NOSAC subcommittee on standards for accommodation service vessels will continue its work on this active task statement, and plans to provide a final recommendation to the full committee on April 18. In addition, NOSAC members will consider new task statements on voluntary standards for life saving and firefighting on the Outer Continental Shelf; marine casualty reporting/form CG-2692 revisions; and U.S. implementation of the Maritime Labor Convention, among other issues. For more information about the meeting, click [here](#).

Individuals who are interested in applying for one of six NOSAC positions that will become vacant on January 31, 2014, must submit their application before May 28. The Coast Guard will consider applications from individuals with expertise in petroleum production, offshore drilling, offshore supply vessels, safety and training services, environmental protection, and offshore oil exploration. To read the *Federal Register* notice, click [here](#).

For more information, please contact CDR Rob Smith or Mr. Scott Hartley at (202) 372-1410 or (202) 372-1437, respectively.

Coast Guard Announces Additional TWIC Reader Public Meeting Dates

The U.S. Coast Guard has announced three additional public meeting dates for the notice of proposed rulemaking on TWIC reader requirements. As reported in the April 3 *AWO Letter*, the Coast Guard will hold a public meeting on April 18 in Arlington, VA. The Coast Guard announced the time of the April 18 public meeting as well as three additional meetings. The other public meetings will be held in Houston on April 25, Seattle on May 2, and Chicago on May 9.

For more information on the public meetings, click [here](#).

For more information, please contact Jennifer Carpenter or Brian Vahey at (703) 841-9300, extensions 260 and 251, respectively, or via email at jcarpenter@vesselalliance.com or bvahey@vesselalliance.com.



AMP Highlights GAO Findings on Jones Act National Security Benefits

On April 3, the American Maritime Partnership sent a letter to the chairman and ranking member of the House Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces outlining the national security benefits of the Jones Act fleet as depicted in a recent GAO report. The full text of the letter appears on the right. 🌐

April 3, 2013

The Honorable Randy Forbes, Chairman
The Honorable Mike McIntyre, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces
House Armed Services Committee
2120 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515



Dear Chairman Forbes and Ranking Member McIntyre:

In light of your interest in national security issues, we are writing to highlight a recent report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) that details the critical role of the Jones Act and the domestic maritime fleet in supporting our country's military preparedness and national security.

The GAO study¹ reviews the impact of the Jones Act in Puerto Rico, but GAO also looks beyond the Commonwealth to describe the important role of our American domestic shipping industry for the Department of Defense (DOD). In finding that "the original goal of the [Jones] Act remains important to military preparedness," GAO made three particular points about the

American domestic fleet:

- 1) **A strong domestic fleet is necessary to ensure an available supply of seafarers for times of national crisis.** GAO stated, "A decline in the number of U.S.-flag vessels would result in the loss of jobs that employ skilled mariners needed to crew the U.S. military reserve and other deep-sea vessels in times of emergency."

As you know, DOD and the U.S. Navy heavily rely on commercial mariners, including many from the U.S. domestic fleet, for a variety of critical national security roles.

- 2) **The American domestic fleet is a cost-efficient way to provide military sealift.** GAO quoted military officials describing the cost-effectiveness of a commercial merchant marine, declaring that "according to DOD officials, to the extent that Jones Act markets are unable to sustain a viable reserve fleet, DOD would have to incur *substantial additional costs* to maintain and recapitalize a reserve fleet of its own." (emphasis added)

DOD has previously estimated that replacing the commercial maritime industry with military vessels, seafarers and shipyards would cost billions of dollars.

¹ "Puerto Rico: Characteristics of the Island's Maritime Trade and Potential Effects of Modifying the Jones Act," GAO-13-260, March 2013.

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AMP Highlights GAO Findings on Jones Act National Security Benefits

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- 3) **A strong national shipyard base is essential to military preparedness, particularly today.** Quoting DOD and the U.S. Maritime Administration, GAO said that “orders for commercial vessels have become significantly more important to retaining the industry shipbuilding base because military and other non-commercial orders have declined.”



A vibrant American maritime industry helps ensure that our nation’s shipbuilding workforce is not jeopardized, GAO said. Of course, this is one of the reasons that the U.S. Navy has long supported the Jones Act.

This is not the first study to reach these conclusions, but it is the most recent. The American Maritime Partnership is available at any time to provide additional information about this report and the benefits of the American domestic maritime industry to our nation’s security. Thank you for your interest in this important matter.

Sincerely,

AMP Board of Directors

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Offshore Marine Service
Association

Thomas Allegretti
The American Waterways
Operators

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Kirby Corporation

Bob Zuckerman
Horizon Lines

Seamen's Church Institute's Mountain Challenge: Inspired by Mariners

On September 19-22, the Seamen's Church Institute will hold its first SCI Mountain Challenge, a unique charity competition designed to test participants' strength and fortitude as they tackle the mountains of western Maine in recognition of the work of the many mariners who push themselves every day to deliver the world's commerce safely and efficiently.

Teams of competitors will take on harsh environments as they span 25 miles of rugged terrain and 10,000+ feet of ascent, including five iconic summits: Burnt Mountain, Sugarloaf Mountain, Spaulding Mountain, Barker Mountain and Jordan Mountain. SCI

will award prizes based on cumulative times and philanthropic dollars raised in support of mariners.

The Institute will also recognize award winners by category from various sectors of the maritime industry. Participants may choose one of two levels of involvement, which vary in physical demands, but both levels represent a serious challenge of strength and ability.

SCI is hoping to recruit companies from all aspects of the maritime industry with a goal of registering 40 three-person teams to compete. Each

team will pay a \$3,500 registration fee while also taking responsibility for a combined philanthropy challenge of at least \$3,000. The adventure race will benefit SCI's programs serving merchant mariners—port hospitality, law and advocacy, and maritime education.

More information on this unique event is available by clicking [here](#) or by contacting Claudia Fortunato-Napolitano, SCI's Special Events Manager, at cfortunato@seamenschurch.org or (212) 349-1791. ☎



Midcontinent Office

AWO Provides Testimony to Mississippi River Commission

On April 8, AWO provided testimony to the Mississippi River Commission in Cape Girardeau, MO, on the challenges facing the industry and a path forward on issues that occurred during the 2012-2013 low water; the need to improve aging waterways infrastructure; and the need to keep locks in the Chicago area and in Minnesota open to commercial traffic as the Asian carp issue is addressed using viable scientific methods. The MRC expressed its support for maintaining the nation's marine superhighway, including "low-use"

ports and waterway segments, but pointed out that without emergency funding for the 2011 flood, most of the "low-use" reaches of the system would not have been maintained. For a copy of AWO's comments, click [here](#).

The MRC is a congressionally authorized advisory body charged with helping Congress and the Administration improve the condition of the

Mississippi River, foster navigation, promote commerce, and prevent floods. Its membership includes U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 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 or Caitlyn Stewart at (703) 841-9300, extension 262, or cstewart@vesselalliance.com. ☎



Got Links?

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 Frank Leach at (703) 841-9300, extension 254, or via email at fleach@vesselalliance.com. ☎

