



## The Jones Act is essential for national security

By Michael Purzycki

When Congress passed the bipartisan CHIPS Act last year, it was not only helping to revive American semiconductor manufacturing; it was also boosting US national security. As Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo noted in February, “many of our defense capabilities – like hypersonic weapons, drones, and satellites – depend on a supply of chips that aren’t currently produced in America.”

Supply chain disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic exposed how dependent the United States is for computer chips on Taiwan – an island under constant threat of invasion by China.

**Jones Act** — There is another law that supports an industry vital to America’s security. The Jones Act requires cargo traveling between two U.S. ports to be transported on American-built ships, with crews that are at least 75 percent U.S. citizens. Like the CHIPS Act, the Jones Act recognizes that the U.S. must have its own supply of materials and personnel in sectors key to protecting vital interests and allies. While the act is frequently targeted for repeal by free-market purists, its critics should ask themselves whether they are willing to empower China’s military at the expense of America.

**Sealift Capabilities** — If the U.S. military is called on to defend allies across the Atlantic or Pacific, sealift capability will be vital. That means having a U.S. Merchant Marine that is skilled and well-practiced in its trade.

During World War II, the Merchant Marine brought troops, weapons, and food to Britain in the face of Nazi U-boats. Their casualty rate was higher

than that of any U.S. military branch. Without them, the Allies could not have defeated the Axis.

Undermining the Merchant Marine’s ability to prepare for wartime sealift – which repealing the Jones Act would bring – would devastate America’s ability to prevail over its foes.

**CHIPS Act vs. Jones Act** — There are important differences between the CHIPS Act and the Jones Act. The CHIPS Act contains \$39 billion in federal subsidies for American semiconductor manufacturers to help them expand production within the U.S. By contrast, America’s shipbuilding industry does not receive government subsidies, even though Chinese shipbuilders received \$132 billion from their government between 2010 and 2018. While Jones Act critics think of it as an economic matter, Beijing recognizes that a country’s merchant shipping and military strength are inextricably linked.

What the two laws have in common is an acknowledgment that a strong industrial base is essential for America’s security and prosperity. They recognize that national security is more important than free trade. If sectors key to national defense lack the necessary equipment and workers, the rest of the economy is vulnerable to America’s adversaries – especially China. Treating the maritime industry as just another sector is asking for disaster should war break out.

The Jones Act supports an estimated 650,000 American jobs, in all 50 states. In 2016, these jobs accounted for more than \$72 billion in U.S. value-added, and more than \$41 billion in labor compensation. The act keeps a wide variety of skilled workers employed, performing essential tasks on ships and in ship-

yards. Repealing it would destroy these vital jobs. And it’s not only the U.S. economy that would suffer.

**Jones Act Opponents** — Opponents of the Jones Act seem to think America would be more secure if it outsourced its shipbuilding to China, even as it massively subsidizes its shipbuilders at the expense of America. At a time when bipartisan majorities are embracing long-term investments in industries vital to national security, Jones Act critics are content with a hostile power gaining further advantages over the US.

For all their devotion to the free market, they push for China – a country far less committed to capitalist beliefs than America – to obtain a larger share of the world’s maritime power. One wonders whether they would be so complacent if they considered the consequences of the U.S. being unable to protect its vital interests or the allies it is treaty-bound to defend.

**Jones Act and Sealift Capability** — Repealing the Jones Act would deal a blow to America’s sealift capability at a time when Washington has already allowed it to atrophy. In a 2019 exercise testing the ability of Ready Reserve Force vessels – ships that bring troops and supplies across oceans – to sail on short notice, only 40 percent of vessels involved proved ready to leave port.

In February 2022, Eric Labs, an analyst at the Congressional Budget Office, said sealift was treated like the “black sheep” of shipbuilding. It has been given a low priority even though sealift vessels move about 90 percent of U.S. Army and Marine Corps equipment and supplies.

Last October, US Navy Rear Admiral Michael Wettlaufer, commander of Military Sealift Command (MSC), said that a combination of fewer ships, aging ships, and difficulties recruiting and retaining mariners was impeding MSC’s

ability to bring personnel and equipment across oceans.

“I think we’re ignoring the problem,” he warned. Without the Jones Act in place, Washington would feel able to ignore this problem even further.

And it is not only the ships themselves that are struggling; it’s also the people who sail them. The COVID-19 pandemic strained the mental health of mariners, people already tasked with difficult jobs. A 2021 study by the University of Washington found “nearly half of respondents (49 percent) reporting that their mental health got worse during the pandemic, and 26 percent of respondents reporting their sleep getting worse.”

To recover from the impact of the pandemic, it is essential that mariners have the ability to practice their trade, not be left idle. The Jones Act makes that possible.

When a U.S. Air Force four-star general worries that China may try to conquer Taiwan as early as 2025, undermining the Merchant Marine would severely compromise America’s Armed Forces. Just like the CHIPS Act aims to ensure that the military’s computer chips will not be threatened by Chinese military might, the Jones Act ensures that its transportation will not be threatened by China, either. While its critics may think they are solving an economic problem, they are really undermining America’s national security.

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## U.S. offshore wind market reaches projected capacity of 51,377 megawatts

Although still lagging behind progress in China and the United Kingdom, according to a report from the American Clean Power Association, offshore wind for the United States is hitting its stride, with 32 leases and 51,377 megawatts (MW) of expected capacity in the works. For context, this would be the equivalent of powering more than 20 million homes. Attached to such rapid expansion is a boost to the economy as well, with a separate report from 2020 crediting the development, construction, and operation of these projects leading to up to \$25 billion in potential economic output per year and up to 83,000 jobs by 2030. So far, this would benefit 10 states in total, which have combined targets of more than 81,000 MW.

“American offshore wind power is vital to accelerating the deployment of clean energy, and the industry is stepping up to the plate to invest,” said an analyst. “The rapid growth in the U.S. offshore wind pipeline reflects strong federal and state government commitment to clean energy expansion and the industry’s response to those goals. These projects have the potential to create tens of thousands of jobs, reduce our nation’s dependence on foreign energy, provide coastal cities with reliable, clean

power, and help the U.S. meet its emissions reduction goals.”

Currently, 42 MW are online along the U.S. coastline, so the combined 32 new leases would more than double the current capacity. New York leads the pack with 4,362 MW of capacity in the works, followed by New Jersey with 3,758 MW. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management lease sales last year generated nearly \$5.4 billion in federal revenue, with particularly high prices seen at the New York Bight auction, and all of these gains are having ripple effects on other industries, including domestic shipbuilding, as more than 30 vessels are either on order or under construction to support the burgeoning industry. An additional 14 facilities for the domestic supply chain are either anticipated or under construction, with investment into major offshore wind components expected to exceed \$1.7 billion.

The report did not focus exclusively on gains, though – it also reckoned with emerging issues. Supply chain disruptions have raised project costs, and inflation has also taken its toll, with the trickle-downs to commodity prices and higher interest rates. Steel prices, in particular, have surged, causing major concern in the industry.



U.S. Air Force General Jacqueline Van Ovost, Commander, U.S. Transportation Command, pictured with the crew of the *USNS Watkins*. The *Watkins* is a large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off vessel operated by Patriot Contract Services for the Military Sealift Command.

### Halls to close

**Memorial Day** — All MFOW hiring halls will be closed on Monday, May 29, 2023, in observance of Memorial Day, which is a contract holiday.

# The Marine Fireman

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## MARAD announces funding for 27 small shipyards

On May 3, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD) announced \$20.8 million in grant awards to 27 small shipyards in 20 states through the Small Shipyard Grant Program. The funds will help shipyards modernize, increase productivity, and expand local job opportunities while competing in the global marketplace. Since 2008, MARAD's Small Shipyard Grant Program has awarded \$303 million to nearly 350 shipyards in 32 states and territories throughout the U.S. Listed below is a complete list of shipyard grant recipients in Fiscal Year 2023:

Alabama Shipyard, LLC., of Mobile, Alabama, will receive \$718,442 to support the purchase of air compressor systems and fire suppression pumps.

Highmark Marine Fabrication, LLC of Kodiak, Alaska, will receive \$969,191 to support the purchase of a 120-ton rough terrain crane.

Bay Ship & Yacht Co. of Alameda, California, will receive \$830,380 to support the purchase of a 165-ton Grove GRT 9165 crane with a 205-foot boom.

Driscoll, Inc. dba Driscoll Boat Works, LLC of San Diego, California, will receive \$1,000,000 to purchase a 150-ton Marine Travelift.

Marine Group Boat Works, LLC of Chula Vista, California, will receive \$1,142,447 to support the purchase of an 820-ton variable width Marine Travelift.

Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc. of Mystic, Connecticut, will receive \$214,452 to support the purchase of a Wood-Mizer wide slab industrial sawmill, and two HYBRID articulating boom lifts.

The Thames Shipyard & Repair Company, Inc. of New London, Connecticut, will receive \$309,853 to purchase water-jet surface preparation equipment.

Fincantieri Marine Repair, LLC., of Jacksonville, Florida, will receive

\$874,079 to support the purchase of a water blast and wastewater collection and treatment system.

Norseman Shipbuilding and Boatyard, LLC., of Miami, Florida, will receive \$939,274 to purchase a 150-ton Marine Travelift.

Mike's, Inc., of South Roxana, Illinois, on the upper Mississippi River, will receive \$653,422 to support the purchase of a 30-ton rough terrain crane, telehandler, rack welder, and tig stick arc reach.

ACBL Transportation Services, Inc., of Jeffersonville, Indiana, will receive \$1,000,000 to support the purchase of a 200x70 floating drydock for vessel repair, barge fleet and cleaning operations.

Sunflower Enterprises, Inc., of Dubuque, Iowa, will receive \$599,840 to support the purchase of a 100-ton Marine Travelift.

Verret Shipyard, Inc., of Plaquemine, Louisiana, will receive \$1,000,000 to purchase a 120x64 floating drydock.

The Portland Company, of Portland, Maine, will receive \$739,302 to support the purchase of a 60-ton vessel trailer, tractor/loader and support for an indoor ventilation project.

United States Marine, Inc., of Gulfport, Mississippi, will receive \$238,741 to support the purchase of two Eastman CNC tables.

Bayonne Drydock & Repair Corp., of Bayonne, New Jersey, will receive \$730,477 to purchase ultra high-pressure hydro blasting equipment and telehandlers.

Hughes Bros., of Brooklyn, New York, will receive \$1,000,000 in funding to purchase a 160x86 floating drydock.

North Carolina Department of Transportation Ferry Division of Havelock, North Carolina, will receive \$86,649 to train and certify employees

in three required disciplines to enhance productivity in vessel repairs.

Superior Marine Ways, Inc., of South Point, Ohio, located on the Ohio River, will receive \$838,221 to support the purchase of a CNC brake and plasma table.

Heartland Fabrication, LLC., of Brownsville, Pennsylvania, will receive \$660,783 to support the purchase and installation of new overhead 25-ton electric bridge cranes and rigging.

J Goodison Company, of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, will receive \$704,206 to purchase a 176-ton hydraulic self-propelled vessel transporter.

Senesco Marine, LLC., of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, will receive \$738,289 to support the purchase and installation of a one-sided sub arc welding system that consists of three integrated digital systems to load, fit, and weld multi-plate panels; upgraded network servers and software; an All-Terrain Lift with variable reach; and a Tier 4 compressor.

Main Industries, Inc., of North Charleston, South Carolina, will receive \$527,173 to support the purchase of two (2) HydraBlast Pumps and associated equipment.

Southwest Shipyard, LP., of Channelview, Texas, on the Mississippi River, will receive \$1,200,000 for blasting and painting equipment upgrades.

Sterling Shipyard LLC, of Port Neches, Texas, on the Mississippi River will receive \$1,000,000 in funding to purchase a 120x80 floating drydock to further expand their orderbook capacities.

All American Marine, Inc., of Bellingham, Washington, will receive \$916,166 to purchase CNC dual head router and CNC press brake systems.

Everett Ship Repair, LLC., of Everett, Washington, will receive \$1,168,613 to support the acquisition of a 140-ton telescopic crawler crane.

## New engineering index will strengthen coastal management decision

Coastlines are ever-changing. Whether from nonstop wave action, wind or storms, these landscapes constantly shift and reshape, causing challenges for coastal managers. In response, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) researchers have created a tool to help assess the resiliency of our nation's coastlines and improve coastal management strategies.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the continental U.S. has almost 60,000 miles of shoreline. After observing Hurricane Sandy's effects on beaches from Virginia to Massachusetts, a team of experts began studying the area in hopes of understanding what caused some beaches to erode rapidly and some barrier islands to breach while others did not.

"We settled on the concept that beaches that have more sand in the system — whether it's on the beach or in the offshore — tended to respond better to the storm," said Jennifer said a re-

search physical scientist with the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center. "They did not have as much storm impact, and they also tended to recover naturally after the storm."

Without a way to quantify their findings, the team began developing the Coastal Engineering Resilience Index (CERI). The CERI is computed using a custom geographic information systems (GIS) toolbox that uses lidar data from the USACE National Coastal Mapping Program to extract parameters that describe the beach and dune system — measurements like the dune's height and the beach's slope and width. Using the data from USACE and NOAA models to extract wave and storm surge information, CERI then computes the index along the beach to estimate maximum shoreline recession and beach overtopping for specified storm events.

This strategy, along with other Engineering With Nature® practices, allows for the most efficient and effective beneficial use of sediment, making sure

those areas of the coast that need attention get attention. Currently, the index has been computed for pilot sites located on the northern Gulf of Mexico and North Carolina's Outer Banks, as well as the USACE New York District's area of responsibility in New Jersey and on Long Island. There are plans to compute CERI for most of the remaining U.S. sandy shorelines later this year.

CERI can also help coastal managers understand how resilience has changed over time.

From headquarters down to the project level, these data-driven approaches to decision making benefit all levels of coastal management. Having the data sets along with the toolbox and CERI helps USACE make better, more informed decisions. The index allows the agency to identify those areas of the coast that need the most attention and to manage placement of sediment or other engineering works to improve the resilience of communities.

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# California approves rule phasing out big diesel trucks

New big rigs and buses that run on diesel would not be sold in California starting in 2036, according to new rules approved by state regulators to wean the state off fossil fuels and combat climate change. The rule would tackle pollution from heavy trucks used to transport goods through ports and require companies to disclose their use of these so-called drayage trucks by 2024.

The rule cannot be implemented without approval by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

But it is related to standards the Biden Administration already approved last month to phase out diesel-powered box trucks, semitrailers and large passenger pick-ups. If the EPA approves California's rule, other states could later adopt the same standards.

The state continues to approve ambitious emissions standards as part of its broader goal of achieving carbon neutrality, meaning it would remove as many carbon emissions as it releases, by 2045. Air regulators previously voted to

require that all new cars, pickup trucks and SUVs be electric or hydrogen by 2035. And they have banned the sale of new products run by small gas-powered engines, including leaf blowers, lawn mowers and portable generators.

The truck emissions vote follows the California Air Resources Board's approval of a rule phasing out decades-old diesel locomotives and a transition to more zero-emission technology to power trains that transport food, lumber, oil and other products.

Some in the trucking industry are concerned the rule will ultimately increase prices for goods that are trucked. The American Trucking Association called the rule unrealistic. The group is worried about how expensive a drastic shift to zero-emission vehicles will be and says vehicle-charging infrastructure is not equipped for the transition.

Emissions from trucks have already gone down drastically in recent decades. More than 100 models of zero-emission trucks are available in North America, state regulators say. On top of that, more than 100 others are being produced.

The new rule, combined with previ-

ous electric truck regulations approved by the state, would mean more than 1.6 million zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty trucks would operate in the state by 2048. Nationwide, the transportation sector contributes the largest share of greenhouse gas emissions annually, according to the EPA, with medium- and heavy-duty trucks contributing nearly a quarter of those emissions.

Heavy-duty vehicles make up about three percent of vehicles on the road in California, but they generate more than half of nitrogen oxides and fine particle diesel pollution, according to the California Air Resources Board. That's because these trucks have diesel engines that, while more powerful, produce more pollution than gasoline engines. They also travel many more miles than passenger vehicles.

California has many of these trucks on the road because it has two of the busiest ports in the nation at Los Angeles and Long Beach. Of the top 10 most ozone-polluted cities in the U.S., six are in California, according to the American Lung Association.

## Five California ports announce data partnership

Five California ports signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on April 26 to launch the California Port Data Partnership. The MOU is an agreement among the ports of San Diego, Los Angeles, Long Beach, Hueneme and Oakland "to jointly advance computerized and cloud-based data interoperability with a common goal of supporting improved freight system resilience, goods movement efficiency, emissions reduction and economic competitiveness," the Port of Los Angeles said in a statement.

The agreement will serve as the basis of cooperation for \$27 million in grant funds from the governor's Office of Business and Economic Development for port data system development, officials said.

"California's ports are an essential link in the global supply chain. Thanks to the leadership of Governor Gavin Newsom and our state legislature, California is establishing a first-of-its kind, collaborative data system between all our state's containerized cargo ports," said Lt. Governor Eleni Kounalakis. Kounalakis described the MOU as an "historic agreement" that would create a greener, more transparent and more efficient supply chain.

In recent months, officials from the five ports joined state officials in bi-

weekly roundtables to develop the deal's framework.

"The Port of San Diego is a vital part of goods movement in our region and for the entire state of California," said Rafael Castellanos, chairman of the Port of San Diego Board of Port Commissioners. "We are an indispensable economic engine pumping \$9.2 billion into our county's economy and we serve as an integral part of our national security. We are thankful to Governor Gavin Newsom for the opportunity to collaborate with other California ports to further improve our operations, increase throughput and enhance customer service through the Ports Data Partnership. This is particularly important as our port, through our Maritime Clean Air Strategy, is creating a greener, cleaner and more modern seaport."

Assemblyman Mike Gipson (D-Carson), who is chair of the Select Committee on Ports and Goods Movement, also lauded the deal.

"The California legislature has emphasized the importance of these investments in the budget in the wake of supply chain challenges," he said. "I am happy to see all of California's containerized ports come together and sign the Memorandum of Understanding that will give \$27 million for data system development."

## Cargo ship lifeboats need to be redesigned

While there have been significant advancements in developing lifesaving equipment, the Container Ship Safety Forum (CCSF) says there are far too many injuries to crewmembers aboard cargo ships while launching lifeboats. The industry association, which has a goal to improve safety performance in the container shipping industry, says the time has come for the lifeboat to be reinvented to improve crew safety.

Over the years, many seafarers have been injured — some of them fatally — while launching the lifeboat during evacuations or evacuation drills. Not because the lifeboats have not been compliant with safety standards, but simply because the launch of a lifeboat is a dangerous task to perform.

They point to a 2017 report from the U.K. Chamber of Shipping as recognition of the problem. The UK article identified 60 fatalities during the testing of lifeboats over a 10-year period. The article suggested that the use of simulation training could improve safety. Last year, Canada's Transportation Safety Board released a report on a serious lifeboat-drill accident, illustrating the continuing hazards of

this routine SOLAS safety exercise.

A similar report for the U.K. P&I Club a decade ago pointed to the range of incidents. A lot of them were related to the launching of the boats during drills with the report saying that a sixth of all seafarers killed were injured in incidents directly related to lifeboats and their launching systems. A lot of the problems they related to the launch mechanism although they also cited instances of poor maintenance leading to failures.

The group says that there is too much focus on compliance and training and not enough focus on the root cause of the problem, which is that the design of the equipment is too complicated and in the case of containerships lags behind other segments of shipping which have focused on improving safety systems.

The CSSF points to alternative designs that are already available for offshore installations and for passenger evacuation on passenger and cruise ships through Marine Evacuation Systems.

The CSSF is encouraging the industry, classification societies, flag states, and suppliers to launch innovation to replace current lifeboats with a safer technology.

## Port of San Diego tries to figure out what to do with 8,000 water acres of new territory

Up against a state deadline, the Port of San Diego is embarking on a planning effort to set the parameters for the development and preservation of more than 8,000 acres of recently inherited submerged lands in San Diego Bay. The submerged lands, previously held in trust by the California State Lands Commission, were transferred to the port on January 1, 2020, through California Senate Bill 507. The state bill, authored by State Senator Toni Atkins (D-San Diego), also requires that the port produce a land-use framework, called a Trust Lands Use Plan, by January 1, 2024.

The port's expanded jurisdiction could create room for longer piers, larger anchorages, new water taxi transportation points and more conservation areas, while also preserving areas for boating and other water activities. Last month, port staffers told board members that they expect to release a first draft of the trust lands blueprint for public review in the spring or early summer. The agency will have permitting authority over the acreage once the plan is completed and approved by State Lands and the California Coastal Commission. As it stands, the port can enter into and administer leases, but permitting power rests with the Coastal Commission.

Formed by the state in 1962, the San Diego Unified Port District is a special district comprised of the tidelands and submerged lands in five different cities: San Diego, National City, Chula Vista, Imperial Beach and Coronado. The agency's newly granted water territory extends farther into the bay, and has colloquially been referred to as "the doughnut hole" because the port's jurisdiction historically wrapped around the coastline of the entire bay, from Shelter Island to the South Bay and Coronado, but did not include the more central water areas.

The port will lean on work recently completed in the Port Master Plan Update to fill in the Trust Lands Use Plan, carrying over nearly identical goals, policies and water-use designations. As currently envisioned, the Trust Lands Use Plan will introduce four new planning districts covering 8,010 acres: North Bay with 1,530 acres, North Central Bay with

1,145 acres, South Central Bay with 3,023 acres and South Bay with 2,311 acres.

The port also plans to create a new water-use designation to accommodate a federal navigation channel. Existing designations support a broad range of water-based facilities and activities, including anchorages and short-term docking facilities, restaurants, museums, fisheries, research, and commercial and industrial berthing. Several areas are constrained by existing uses, military requirements and a need to maintain a navigation channel.

The developer seeking to redo Seaport Village and the broader Central Embarcadero region has already sought to take advantage of the extended water-side footprint within the port's jurisdiction. The \$3.6 billion Seaport San Diego project, now undergoing environmental review, envisions elongated piers that stretch beyond the previous boundary. The project is, however, on a separate track, meaning the Trust Lands Use Plan may need to be amended at a later date to reflect the Seaport project if approved by the board.

The doughnut-hole territory already includes nearly two dozen leases of varying scope. Some of the agreements are for public agency use, academic use or right-of-way use, and cover items such as buoys, cables or sewer mains. Other leases bring in revenue, with the port required to share proceeds with State Lands. For instance, BAE Systems, which operates a ship repair yard, pays \$224,204 per year to lease submerged lands within the new territory for portions of its dry dock facilities, public records show. And Everingham Bros. Bait Company pays \$71,736 per year to operate two bait barges in the bay.

The port expects to finalize the contents of the Trust Lands Use Plan before the end of the year, an action it says will satisfy the requirements of the bill. The agency would then still need to conduct a state-mandated environmental review of the plan and process the document as an amendment to its Port Master Plan. The processes could take two years or more to complete.

## MFOW PRESIDENT'S REPORT



By Anthony Poplawski

### Jobs

There was a flurry of activity at Headquarters in April, with contracted companies reaching out for assistance in obtaining operating contracts for new vessels. The Union continues to work with contracted companies to secure new work for our members.

**Surge LMSR** — In September 2022, I reported that on August 23, 2022, the Military Sealift Command (MSC) published solicitation N32205-22-R-4119, for the operation and maintenance of two *Bob Hope*-class large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off (LMSR) vessels. The ships are the *USNS Pililaau* and *USNS Seay*.

The government anticipates prepositioning one of the vessels in the Indian Ocean and one in the Western Pacific. The normal operating tempo for each vessel is expected to be 92 percent in port and eight percent underway. The percentages do not include transits to and from the Continental United States (CONUS) to conduct maintenance or participation in military exercises.

In September 2022, I began working with Patriot Contract Services (PCS) to formulate a successful bid for the vessels, but by November 2022, the process appeared to have fizzled out. On April 6, 2023, PCS abruptly notified the Pacific District unions that they needed to finalize a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and appendices for submission of their *Seay-Pililaau* proposal to MSC. By April 12, the Pacific District unions tentatively agreed to a standard government vessel MOU and sent wage and benefit appendices based on the Wage Determination under the Service Contract Act, as published by the U.S. Department of Labor.

**Non-MSP Vessels** — As reported last month, the Maritime Security Program (MSP) chit for the *APL Gulf Express* will be transferred to the *APL Eagle*; and the *APL Eagle* will replace the *APL Gulf Express* in the Jebel Ali-Middle East Express (JMX) Service. The planned turnover is to take place later this month. The crew aboard the *APL Gulf Express* will cross deck to the *APL Eagle* on or about May 19 at Bahrain or, if circumstances warrant, another Persian Gulf port.

On April 24, the SIU Pacific District unions teleconferenced with APL to discuss the future of the *APL Gulf Express*. APL stated that the company is actively seeking work to allow the *APL Gulf Express* to remain active in the U.S.-flag APL fleet.

The *APL Gulf Express* will not be enrolled in the MSP program; therefore, the company will not receive an annual MSP subsidy to operate the vessel. Using the MSP collective bargaining agreement wage and benefit rates, the anticipated business plan for the *APL Gulf Express* is not feasible. The company is seeking a 15 percent total labor cost (TLC) reduction from all licensed and unlicensed unions in order to operate the *APL Gulf Express* without MSP payments.

The membership may recall a similar situation back in 2009 when APL planned to operate the *APL Japan* and *APL Coral* without the benefit of MSP payments. Each union creatively came up with a plan to reduce TLC and the deployment of the vessels was successful.

On April 26, the SIU Pacific District unions sent a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) covering the *APL Gulf Express*, and other potential non-MSP vessels, to the company. Each union was also tasked with drafting appendices to the MOU covering proposed manning, wage and benefit packages.

As part of their business plan for the *APL Gulf Express*, the company is not expecting to carry reefer cargo. In order to meet the 15 percent reduction in TLC, I have proposed manning of one Electrician/Reefer/Junior (ERJ) and two Oiler/Utility ratings, in lieu of the MSP manning of one ERJ, one Reefer/Electrician/Junior (REJ), and one Day Junior/Utility (DJU). This manning would bring TLC down about seven percent. The Wiper billet would be optional, as it is in the MSP fleet. To get to 15 percent, I have suggested a cut in the daily contribution rate to the MFOW Welfare Fund for all non-MSP ratings.

**Ready Reserve Force** — As previously reported, the Ready Reserve Force (RRF) contracts are scheduled to expire on July 26, 2024. On January 23, the Union was notified by PCS that the successor RRF Ship Management Services request-for-proposal (RFP) No. 693JF722R000009 had been published by the Maritime Administration (MARAD) on December 21, 2022. The period of performance for the new contract, beginning in 2024, will be a base period of five years with one five-year option for a total contract period of 10 years.

On March 31, 2023, MARAD amended the RFP to move the proposal submission date for interested bidders from May 3 to May 12. I have been working with PCS to formulate a successful bid.

**Nota Bene** — The negotiating process is ongoing and fluid for all three of these activities (Surge LMSR, non-MSP, and RRF vessels). Once we get to a best-and-final bid package on each, will seek membership approval of contracts. Will keep the membership informed.

### Matson Direct Deposit for Standby Personnel

On April 5, Matson notified the Union that they would like to shift the majority of standby pay from paper check to direct deposit. The old payment method required checks to be printed out of the Phoenix office and mailed to Headquarters, Wilmington, Honolulu, and Seattle for distribution. Direct deposit should speed up that payment process and make it quicker and more efficient to get cash in accounts with less manual work and handling for all involved.

If a standby sails with Matson and already has a direct deposit bank account set up with Matson, the company will use the same bank details for standby work direct deposit. If a standby does not sail or does not have a direct deposit bank account al-

ready set up with Matson, they can complete a form and submit it to the company's Marine Pay Group.

The company wishes to default all standby pay to direct deposit unless the standby opts out and requests a paper check at the time of dispatch. When a standby receives a direct deposit, Matson's vessel payroll department will send an email notification to the local hiring hall advising which standby direct deposits have been paid, along with a PDF copy of their pay vouchers. If the standby opts to receive a check, their voucher and check will be mailed from Phoenix to the union hall postmarked within three days from the time they worked, as usual.

### LNG Training

On April 17, the Union was notified that our training partner – Maritime Institute – had started work on a two-day Basic LNG course and was targeting submission to the Coast Guard's National Maritime Center by May 8. With a 90-day course approval window, the course could be available to members in August or later. When courses become available, dates will be published in *The Marine Fireman*.

On May 1, after discussions with Matson labor relations, and in anticipation of the arrival of the *Daniel K. Inouye* from the shipyard in Nantong following LNG conversion, the parties tentatively agreed to the following Memorandum of Understanding:

**Memorandum of Understanding  
between  
Matson Navigation Company  
and  
Marine Firemen's Union**

*THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING is made as of May 1, 2023, between Matson Navigation Company (herein "Company") and Marine Firemen's Union (herein "Union").*

*WHEREAS, the parties hereto have a collective bargaining agreement ("CBA") covering ocean going, dry cargo and passenger vessels, as amended and supplemented from time to time by agreement and/or arbitration awards; and*

*WHEREAS, the Company is converting one or more vessels to LNG fuel for which the United States Coast Guard requires additional training; and*

*THEREFORE, the Parties agree to the below training requirements for personnel dispatched to LNG fueled vessels only:*

**Training Requirement for All Unlicensed Engine Department Mariners' Including Shoreside and Standby Personnel**

*Satisfactory completion of approved or accepted training in Basic IGF Code Operations that meets the training and standards of competence required by STCW Code Section A-V/3 and Table A-V/3-1 for original or renewal of STCW endorsement for Basic IGF Code Operations.*

The near-term challenge, during the first few port visits of the *Daniel K. Inouye* in U.S. ports following the shipyard period, will be the vetting of LNG-trained crew replacement and standby personnel to the vessel. As more members cycle through the training, the problem will fade away. I recommend approval of the MOU between Matson and the MFOW covering training requirements for LNG-fueled vessels.

### MFOW Welfare Fund Changes

Long-time MFOW Welfare Fund employee Esther Hernandez retired effective May 1, 2023. Herlinda Vizcarra was hired, effective April 13, to cover the Active Member Medical and Dental Eligibility desk previously occupied by Esther. Also, Shirley Martos was hired, effective March 23, to cover the Optical/Death Benefits/Accounts Payable desk that has been vacant for a couple of years. I would like to wish Esther a well-deserved long and happy retirement!

## LAUSD teachers union ratifies labor agreement

Members of the union representing Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) teachers have overwhelmingly approved a labor agreement that includes a 21 percent salary increase and reductions in class sizes. Of the 27,171 members of United Teachers Los Angeles who cast ballots between May 2-4, 94 percent voted to ratify the three-year agreement reached April 18.

According to the LAUSD, the agreement includes a 21 percent wage hike, beginning with three percent effective July 1, 2022; four percent on January 1, 2023; three percent on July 1, 2023; four percent on January 1, 2024; three percent on July 1, 2024; and four percent on January 1, 2025. It also includes an additional \$20,000 increase for nurses; \$3,000 for psychologists, psychiatric so-

cial workers, counselors and other special services providers; \$2,500 for special education teachers; and \$1,500 for early education teachers.

When the agreement was announced, the district noted that the increases were on top of five percent hikes included in the 2021-22 district budget. UTLA negotiators had been pushing for a 20 percent across-the-board wage hike during their labor talks with the district. The pact also calls for a class-size reduction of two students in all classes from transitional kindergarten through 12th grade, along with additional counselors at all high schools with 900 or more students.

The contract, covering 2022-25, still needs to be ratified by the LAUSD Board of Education.

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[Marine-Firemens-Union-121622254577986/](https://www.facebook.com/Marine-Firemens-Union-121622254577986/)

## VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Now that we're back to normal-ish, we're starting to see some of the normal issues that come with shipping, namely credentials and documentation. I'm sure union officials will publish a reminder every month or two on the topic but please be mindful of your document expiration dates. We try to provide our members with good service and help as much as possible. However, keeping your documents valid is ultimately the member's responsibility. Best recent example of this is a member and two applicants fumbling a C-9 Wiper billet due to

letting a required document lapse. Job ended up in the hands of a third applicant with everything order. Those of you who have been around know that this is unheard of.

The big news here at HQ is that our good friend Philip is no longer with us. Many of the tenured membership knew him. I'll say, "if you know, you know" and leave it at that. Rest easy brother. With that, please take care of yourselves and prioritize your health.

Fraternally,  
**Deyne Umphress**

## World's first methanol-fueled containership launched

The world's first methanol-fueled containership has been launched for A.P. Moller - Maersk as the Danish shipping giant makes headway toward its goal to decarbonize its operations. The launching was successfully completed on April 4 at Hyundai Mipo Dockyard, and construction is continuing with delivery in the summer 2023.

The 2,100 TEU, ABS-classed class feeder vessel features dual fuel main and auxiliary engines built by MAN Energy Solutions that are able to operate on

green methanol. The use of methanol as marine fuel emits fewer NOx emissions and no SOx, and methanol synthesized from carbon dioxide and hydrogen can achieve CO2-neutral combustion.

Maersk plans to put into service 19 vessels capable of running on e-methanol between 2023 and 2025 as part of its net-zero emissions target by 2040. According to Maersk, these vessels will generate annual CO2 emissions savings of around 2.3 million tons when deployed to replace older vessels.

## NOAA, Proteus Ocean Group to explore uses of groundbreaking underwater lab

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Proteus Ocean Group have signed a formal agreement to use the "underwater space station of the ocean," PROTEUS™, to advance marine science, research and education. Together, NOAA and Proteus Ocean Group seek to develop a deeper understanding of the ocean environment and reveal solutions to some of the planet's most pressing concerns, including those related to climate change.

PROTEUS™, the first underwater site of this stature, is set to be built and will be located off the Caribbean Island of Curacao. It will serve as an underwater habitat where scientists, innovators, private citizens, the public sector and global customers can live underwater to study the ocean environment for extended periods of time. In addition to state-of-the-art scientific laboratories, living quarters, and an underwater garden for food production, PROTEUS™ will include a full-scale video production facility to provide live streaming for research and educational programming.

Under the new cooperative research and development agreement, NOAA and Proteus Ocean Group will work together to identify opportunities for research using the unique capabilities of PROTEUS™. NOAA will provide access to scientific experts, vessels and other technology, expedition plans

and mission results relevant to PROTEUS™ activities, as well as access to shoreside facilities and programs throughout the agency's mission portfolios of the ocean, weather, climate and coastal science. Proteus Ocean Group will share data and insights related to the development phase of the underwater habitat.

Fabien Cousteau, founder and Chief Oceanic Explorer of Proteus Ocean Group said, "On PROTEUS™ we will have unbridled access to the ocean 24/7, making possible long-term studies with continuous human observation and experimentation. With NOAA's collaboration, the discoveries we can make — in relation to climate refugia, super corals, life-saving drugs, micro environmental data tied to climate events and many others — will be truly groundbreaking. We look forward to sharing those stories with the world."

The partners may undertake joint expeditions, exchange personnel and share methods of operation related to missions to study the ocean environment. They will also work together to communicate their activities to increase public engagement in marine science.

The agreement supports the goals of both partners to better understand the impacts of climate change on the ocean, increase public engagement in ocean exploration and improve decisions related to ecosystem health and resilience.

## BUSINESS AGENT'S REPORT

Here is the vessel rundown for April 2023:

### Matson Navigation Company

On the Pacific Southwest triangle run: *MV Matsonia* — delegate REJ Europa Demont, #3865, no beefs. The ship is headed on the far east run. *MV Lurline* — delegate REJ Dale Cunningham, #3597, no beefs. *MV Mokihana* — activation shipped an ERJ, REJ, three DJU's and a Wiper.

On the Pacific Northwest triangle run: *MV Manoa* — also going on the far east run. *MV R.J. Pfeiffer* — delegate REJ Travis Kehoe, #3922, no beefs. *MV Mahimahi* — activation one ERJ, DJU and Wiper shipped. *Cape Henry* and *Cape Horn* have new one-year Electricians, no beefs.

### APL Maritime Services

On the EX1 run: *MV President Kennedy* — delegate REJ Bozhidar Krastev, #3936, mentioned the internet service was intermittent, shipped an additional REJ. *MV President Truman* — delegate REJ Arthur Katley, #3966, no beefs. Shipped one ERJ, and Wiper for time up. *MV President Cleveland* — delegate REJ Thomas Davis, JM—5156, no beefs. Shipped an additional REJ. *MV F.D. Roosevelt* — delegate REJ Randy Fogle, JM—5133, no beefs.

### Patriot Contract Services

*USNS Soderman* — shipped an Oiler for time up. *USNS Charlton* — shipped an Oiler. *USNS Watkins* — shipped an Oiler. *Cape Orlando* — Electrician Ronny Ting, #3916, no beefs.

Fraternally, **Bobby Baca**

## Coastal Oregon ports ask lawmakers for green light to dredge

Commercial ports from Astoria to Coos Bay line the Oregon Coast. Despite those ports and its beauty, the coast remains economically depressed, with family-wage jobs scarce outside government or health care. Coastal lawmakers from both parties want to make it easier for the ports to realize their economic potential by dredging navigation channels in the Pacific Ocean, while environmentalists fear doing so would endanger delicate habitat. Because the bill enjoys bipartisan support and would theoretically boost coastal fortunes, it has more of a chance than most bills environmentalists despise. It also comes as lawmakers have already voted to loosen Oregon's hallowed land use laws to attract semiconductor investment.

The chief sponsors of the bill are State Senator David Brock Smith (R-Port Orford) and State Representatives David Gomberg (D-Otis) and Cyrus Javadi (R-Tillamook). The bill would authorize deep water ports at Astoria, Astoria, Coos Bay, Newport, Portland and St. Helens "to construct, maintain and improve deep draft navigation channel improvements without demonstrating compliance with state or local land use law."

Tides, weather and rivers periodical-

## Port of Oakland, Japanese officials advance green seaport initiatives

A delegation of Japanese Ministry officials and representatives from the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) met with the Port of Oakland to discuss green initiatives to reach zero emissions from seaport operations. The meeting was a follow-up to a clean energy trade mission to Japan in March where California policymakers, decisionmakers and business executives met to exchange ideas about tackling climate change, growing green energy and creating new investment and trade opportunities. As a major U.S. West Coast seaport, Port of Oakland officials were part of the California delegation and discussions.

Japan's Director General of Ports and Harbor Bureau of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, talked about his country's efforts to create Carbon Neutral Ports. Japan's goal is to reach carbon neutral port operations by 2050. Osamu Horita

ly deposit silt and sand in the navigation channels leading to ports. Port authorities must get state and federal permission to deepen those channels through dredging. Their supporters say Oregon land use laws slow dredging and make it more expensive. Ports in California and Washington are deeper, larger and closer to population centers than are Oregon ports, so Oregon port operators feel they begin at a disadvantage.

To compete for potentially lucrative offshore wind turbine work, to realize developers' dreams of constructing a container port at Coos Bay, and to keep federal and state research ships based in Newport, proponents want to reduce state and local regulators' oversight.

Supporters say that any dredging work would be done by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in full compliance with all applicable federal laws, so environmental fears are moot. However, more than 50 environmental organizations across the state say that removing state and local protections creates an untenable threat.

The bill is currently in the Joint Committee on Transportation and is being amended.

and CalSTA Secretary Toks Omishakin were on hand to hear about the progress made by the Port of Oakland on its road to zero emissions.

Port officials shared information on the electrification of the Oakland Seaport, the turning basins widening project and the Seaport Gateway project, all intended to increase efficiency and reduce congestion while reducing emissions. The port also talked about grant funding applications to help finance green initiatives that support cutting diesel emissions and greenhouse gases from its maritime operations. Following the discussion, officials were able to see some of the port's successful projects that significantly reduce harmful emissions by touring the Oakland Seaport.

Japan is an important U.S. trade partner. It is the top destination for cargo that leaves the Oakland Seaport, accounting for 16 percent of exports from the Port of Oakland.

## MARINE FIREMEN'S UNION TRAINING PROGRAM — 2023

Interested members who meet the Training Program eligibility requirements and prerequisites outlined for each course may obtain an application online at [mfow.org](http://mfow.org) or at Headquarters and branch offices. All applications must be accompanied by a copy of the member's Merchant Mariner Credential.

(a) Eligible participants are MFOW members who:

- (1) Have maintained A, B or C seniority classification.
- (2) Are current with their dues.
- (3) Are eligible for medical coverage through covered employment.
- (4) Have a current Q-card (annual physical) issued by the Seafarers' Medical Center and are fit for duty.

(b) Non-seniority applicants:

(1) Applicants may be selected for required government vessels training as required to fulfill manning obligations under the various MFOW government vessel contracts.

(2) Selectees under this provision must meet all other requirements for seagoing employment and shall have demonstrated satisfactory work habits through casual employment.

### Maritime Institute (formerly TRLMI)

Courses are conducted at Training Resources Maritime Institute in San Diego, California, contingent on enrollment levels. Tuition, lodging and transportation are pre-arranged by the MFU Training Plan.

### Military Sealift Command (MSC) Government Vessels Course

This four-day course is required for employment aboard various MSC contract-operated ships and includes the following segments: Shipboard Damage Control; Environmental Protection; Chemical, Biological and Radiological Defense; Helo Firefighting.

June 12-16                      July 24-27                      August 14-17

#### Military Sealift Command (MSC) Readiness Refresher

This two-day course renews the following government vessel segments: Helo Firefighting; Environmental Protection; Damage Control; and Chemical, Biological and Radiological Defense. The full versions of these segments must have been completed within 5 years of taking the Readiness Refresher course.

June 1-2                      July 13-14                      August 3-4

#### High Voltage Safety

This five-day course is open to members who have electrical equipment background and training. Each student should:

- Have the requisite skills (knowledge and techniques) to distinguish exposed energized electrical conductors and circuit parts from other parts of electrical equipment, capability to determine nominal system voltages
- Have the ability and be capable of providing first aid, including resuscitation, CPR and AED (where provided)
- Be capable of determining the proper use of personnel protective equipment to protect against shock and arc flash.

**Prerequisites:** Electrician-Refrigerating Engineer/Junior Engineer/RFPEW and Able Seafarer-Engine endorsements.

June 12-16                      July 31-August 4                      August 28-September 1

### QMED Fireman/Watertender and Oiler

A member who successfully completes the 160-hour Qualified Member of the Engine Department (QMED) Fireman/Watertender/Oiler course will satisfy the requirements needed for the national endorsements as QMED Fireman/Watertender and QMED Oiler, provided all other requirements, including sea service, are also met. **Prerequisites:** 180 days or more of MFOW-contracted sea time as Wiper; PLUS, Coast Guard approval letter for endorsement upgrading, which certifies minimum of 180 days' sea time as Wiper.

Contact Training Coordinator

### STCW Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch

A member who successfully completes the 40-hour Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch (RFPEW) course will satisfy the requirements needed for the STCW endorsement as RFPEW. **Prerequisites:** See QMED Fireman/Watertender and Oiler course. It is recommended that eligible candidates schedule the QMED Fireman/Watertender and Oiler and RFPEW courses back-to-back for a five-week combined training session.

Contact Training Coordinator

### QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer

A member who successfully completes the 240-hour QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer course will satisfy the requirements needed for the national endorsement as QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer, provided all other requirements, including sea service, are also met. **Prerequisites:** Endorsements as QMED Fireman/Watertender, QMED Oiler, and RFPEW; PLUS 180 days of MFOW-contracted sea time while qualified as RFPEW.

September 11-October 20

### STCW Able Seafarer-Engine

A member who successfully completes the 40-hour Able Seafarer-Engine (AS-E) course will satisfy the requirements needed for the STCW endorsement as AS-E. **Prerequisites:** Endorsements as QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer, QMED Fireman/Watertender, QMED Oiler and RFPEW; PLUS 180 days or more of MFOW-contracted sea time while qualified as RFPEW.

June 12-16

August 21-25

October 23-27

### STCW BASIC TRAINING

All Basic Training Certificates Hold A One-Year Validation When Used For Mariner Document Renewal.

#### STCW Basic Training Revalidation

The BT Revalidation course is designed for personnel who have previously completed a 40-hour Basic Training course and have at least one year of approved Sea Service within the last five years.

Marine Institute, San Diego, CA: June 2, June 23, June 30

Marine Institute, Honolulu, HI: June 9, July 7, August 25, October 13, December 8

Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA: June 12-13, August 14-15

Compass Courses, Edmonds, WA: June 20-21, July 18-19, August 22-23

MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA: May 20-21, June 12-13, July 5-6

#### STCW Basic Training Refresher (three days)

The BT Refresher course is designed for personnel who have previously completed a 40-hour Basic Training course and have NOT completed one year of approved Sea Service within the last five years.

Marine Institute, San Diego, CA: June 14-16, August 23-25, September 6-8

Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA: July 17-19

Compass Courses, Edmonds, WA: June 20-22, July 18-20, August 22-24

MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA: May 20-22, December 9-11

## Marine Firemen's Union Training Plan Tuition Reimbursement Policy

The Marine Firemen's Union Training Plan reimburses tuition costs (not lodging, subsistence or transportation) for certain types of training taken by a participant on his own.

However, preapproval of the training must be given by the Marine Firemen's Union Training Plan prior to taking the course.

Any request for reimbursement without preapproval from the Marine Firemen's Union Training Plan will be denied.

## Record-breaking cable-stayed bridge making huge strides at U.S. - Canadian border

Motorists will soon have a record-breaking new way to travel between Canada and the United States as a massive infrastructure project accelerates between Windsor, Ontario and Detroit, Michigan. The Gordie Howe International Bridge — named for the Canadian-born Hall-of-Fame hockey player and Detroit Red Wings legend — is a feat of engineering and cooperation between the Canadian and U.S. governments, and will redirect traffic away from existing overcrowded crossings upstream over and below the Detroit River.

Once complete, the bridge will span 2.5 kilometers over the river, anchored by monolithic 140-metre-tall concrete support towers equal in height to a 40-storey condo. It will also break the record for the longest cable-stayed bridge in North America, with its clear span of 853 meters absolutely shattering the record currently held by the Port Mann Bridge in British Columbia, which spans 470 meters over the Fraser River.

The bridge's six-lane road deck has been gradually

taking shape over the past several months, and installation began earlier this year on the cables that will allow the central span to take shape over the river. A total of 216 stay cables will be installed to support the bridge's span across the river in a process that takes two-to-five days per cable. Crews begin by lifting white weather-resistant, high-density polyethylene plastic pipes up to the road deck, which are welded together before individual cable strands are inserted in a highly technical and precise process.

Each of the bridge's 216 cables is made up of between 38 and 122 steel strands

The bridge is currently projected to enter service in 2025, closing a missing link in the busy highway trucking route between Michigan and Ontario and relieving the congested crossings upstream.

The project faced stiff resistance during planning. The late owner of the gridlocked Ambassador Bridge, billionaire Manuel "Matty" Moroun (1927-2020), fought



An artist's rendering of the Gordie Howe International Bridge that will open up another gateway to trade and tourism between Canada and the United States.

Illustration courtesy of the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority.

the new crossing until the very end, fearing that it would siphon revenue from his monopoly on international cross-river travel.

# California sees population decline in 2022

The San Francisco Bay Area and California suffered a population decline in 2022, according to a new government report that hints at an ongoing exodus of residents from the nation's largest state. The population decline engulfed all four of California's largest cities and seven of the state's 10 largest cities, which shows that the dwindling trend of residents is not merely some isolated cases, but extends to all of the state's major population centers, the state Finance Department reported in its new release.


The Bay Area lost just a shade under 34,000 residents in 2022. The Bay Area now has approximately 7.55 million residents. The nine-county region's population shrank by 0.4 percent.

San Jose lost nearly 4,500 residents and now has a population of 959,300, the state agency estimated. That puts the Bay Area's largest city on a trajec-

tory to no longer be the nation's 10th-largest municipality. That top 10 placement might go to Austin, Texas, which, according to the World Population Review website, now has about 966,300 residents.

San Francisco suffered the largest population loss among the region's cities, losing more than 5,300 residents for a decline of 0.6 percent. Oakland lost 2,250 residents, a drop of 0.5 percent. Los Angeles lost 36,600 residents, a one percent decline, while San Diego suffered a drop of 4,400 people, down 0.3 percent.

All nine of the Bay Area's counties lost population in 2022. The largest numerical decline was in Alameda County, which shed nearly 8,100 residents. California lost 138,400 residents and now has a population of 38.94 million, for a decline of 0.4 percent.



April 26, 2023

Commissioner Barb Leslie, President  
Board of Port Commissioners  
Port of Oakland  
530 Water St.  
Oakland, CA 94607

**Re: Removal of Maritime Reservation Area from All Future Howard Terminal Uses, Including Any Future Renewals of ENA/Term Sheet with Oakland Athletics**

Dear President Leslie and Port Commissioners:

With the looming expiration of the current Exclusive Negotiating Agreement and Term Sheet with the Oakland Athletics upcoming on May 13, 2023, the undersigned maritime stakeholders ask the Port of Oakland to commit to fully and completely removing the entire 10-acre Maritime Reservation Area from the Howard Terminal for all future potential uses, tenants, or redevelopment, including any potential renewals of the ENA/Term Sheet with the Oakland A's. It is imperative that the full 10-acre Maritime Reservation Area envelope, as described in the current Howard Terminal Environmental Impact Report, is preserved for the future viability of the Port of Oakland for decades to come.

To facilitate turning basin expansions in the near-term and long-term, all future projects (whether it be a renewal of the ENA/Term Sheet with the Oakland A's or some other development) should exclude from its terms all rights and entitlements for any permanent development within the 10-acre Maritime Reservation Area. This is necessary to protect both the current turning basin expansion project, which is in its initial planning stages with the US Army Corps of Engineers now, and next generation vessel accommodation projects that are inevitable in the decades to come.

The long-term future viability of the seaport must be the top priority for the Port. By protecting the full Maritime Reservation Area at Howard Terminal the Port can begin to re-orient itself to the tasks of gathering resources necessary to develop new sustainable infrastructure, jobs, and maintain its competitiveness. This should be a simple step by the Port to protect the long-term future of its core business functions in the inner harbor. We have been very pleased that Port leadership has made numerous public commitments to the current proposed turning basin expansion and that this is a project of the highest priority for the Port.

It is also appropriate to acknowledge the long-odds facing the Oakland A's project at Howard Terminal and the dwindling likelihood that this project will ever come to fruition. It would be inappropriate to continue to provide entitlement and development rights to the Oakland A's for the full 10-acre Maritime Reservation Area if its extension of the ENA/Term Sheet is considered, or if any other redevelopment of Howard Terminal is to be evaluated instead.

No future project should be approved that does not affirmatively commit the Port and any development partner to the full future expansion of the turning basin and full vessel productivity in the Inner Harbor including full 10-acre reservation.

We look forward to working with the Port to ensure the protection of future turning basin expansion.

Sincerely,

American Waterways Operators  
Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association of Northern California  
GSC Logistics  
Inland Boatmen's Union  
International Longshore and Warehouse Union - Northern California District Council  
Marine Firemen's Union  
Marine Engineers Beneficial Association  
Masters, Mates & Pilots  
Pacific Merchant Shipping Association  
Propeller Club Northern California  
Sailor's Union of the Pacific  
San Francisco Bar Pilots  
Schnitzer Steel  
SSA Marine



## Marine Firemen's Union Employment Guide

If you are looking for a career that offers challenging work, substantial pay and an opportunity for adventure, a career as an engine department merchant mariner and member of the Marine Firemen's Union, might be right for you.

The official name of our union is the *Pacific Coast Marine Firemen, Oilers, Watertenders and Wipers Association*. We are also known as the *Marine Firemen's Union*. The union is often identified by the acronyms *MFOU, MFU, MFOUW or MFOU&W*.

The union was formed October 1883 in San Francisco, California. The founding members were firemen on Pacific Coast coal-burning steamships.

Today, we dispatch merchant mariners to containerships, roll-on/roll-off ships, tankers, and shore facilities to the following ratings:

- |                                    |                     |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer | Oiler               |
| Pumpman/Machinist                  | Fireman/Watertender |
| Junior Engineer                    | Wiper               |

If you are not a member of the Marine Firemen's Union, you may register in person for work as a non-seniority applicant. The minimum requirements necessary to receive an application are:

- Current U.S. Merchant Mariner's Credential (endorsed as Wiper)
- Current STCW Basic Training endorsement
- Current STCW Vessel Personnel with Designated Security Duties (VPDSD) and Security Awareness (SA) endorsements
- Current STCW Two-Year Medical Certificate
- Current Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC)
- Current Passport
- Printout of DOT-approved drug screen (within six months)
- COVID Vaccination (Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson, or Novavax)

You will not be considered for employment if you do not possess all of the above items. Contact one of our hiring halls for guidance on credentialing.

The Marine Firemen's Union does not send or receive applications by mail. We dispatch members and non-seniority applicants to billets aboard vessels operated by contracted shipping companies. We utilize a seniority-based rotary dispatch system. The selection and eventual membership status of non-seniority applicants is determined by the union on an as needed basis.

**The jobs calls are held at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, at the following hiring hall locations:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>San Francisco Bay Area Hiring Hall</b></p> <p>Marine Firemen's Union<br/>240 Second Street<br/>San Francisco, CA 94105<br/>Dispatch Telephone: (415) 362-7593<br/>Email: mfowvp@mfoww.org<br/>Email: robchili510@yahoo.com</p> | <p><b>Honolulu Hiring Hall</b></p> <p>Marine Firemen's Union<br/>707 Alakea Street<br/>Honolulu, HI 96813<br/>Dispatch Telephone: (808) 538-6077<br/>Email: mhiga@mfoww.org</p>                               |
| <p><b>Los Angeles/Long Beach Hiring Hall</b></p> <p>Marine Firemen's Union<br/>533-B North Marine Avenue<br/>Wilmington, CA 90744<br/>Dispatch Telephone: (310) 830-0470<br/>Email: hgage@mfoww.org</p>                              | <p><b>Puget Sound Hiring Hall</b></p> <p>Sailors' Union of the Pacific<br/>4005 - 20th Avenue West, Suite 115<br/>Seattle, WA 98199<br/>Dispatch Telephone: (206) 467-7944<br/>Email: seattle@sailors.org</p> |

If a sea-going billet becomes available to you, you will be sent to a medical center for a physical examination and given instructions on when and where to report for duty.

**U.S. Navy veterans** who served in the following ratings are encouraged to visit our hiring halls and inquire about credentialing and employment: Damage Controlman (DC), Electrician's Mate (EM and EMN), Engineman (EN), Gas Turbine System Technician (GSE and GSM), Hull Maintenance Technician (HT), Interior Communications Electrician (IC), Machinist's Mate (MM and MMN), Machinery Repairman (MR), Electronics Technician (ET and ETN), Fire Controlman (FC), Fire Control Technician (FT), and Information Systems Technician (IT).

**U.S. Coast Guard veterans** who served in the following ratings are encouraged to visit our hiring halls and inquire about credentialing and employment: Damage Controlman (DC), Electrician's Mate (EM), Electronics Technician (ET), Machinery Technician (MK), and Information Systems Technician (IT).

# HONOLULU NOTES

April was an average month for Honolulu with 11 rotary jobs and 57 stand-by jobs. I got to say "Welcome Back" to Larry Carranza who has returned from a bad shipboard injury. He swooped in and took the *Manoa* Day Junior/Utility billet. The Honolulu list has 15 A-, seven B-, and eight C-seniority members registered on it.

In April, I represented the MFOW at the Hawaii Ports Maritime Council monthly meeting. I attended another Career Expo on Molokai with the Marimed Foundation. About 60 high schoolers and a handful of adults came to visit us for three hours. Our group from Oahu answered a lot of questions and handed out informational flyers. I also attended the AFL-CIO Labor of Love event where over 300 volunteers from 23 unions, teachers, staff, students, businesses, and community partners volunteered at Dole Intermediate School. Each year, the Hawaii AFL-CIO Labor Community Services Program selects a Title 1 public school to support. Later in the month I also represented the MFOW at the Interna-

tional Worker's Day March and Rally, which was led by the Hawaii Worker's Center.

With more LNG ships coming our way you might want to apply for the very scarce basic LNG class. I've heard that the Maritime Institute is trying to get approval for a basic LNG course. Hopefully, they'll come out with classes soon.

Another document that is always helpful to have: a Chinese crew visa. No one could apply for one during COVID; so not many members have one. The guys returning to the DKI had to get new ones because their initial visa going to shipyard was only good for 90 days, but I've seen their new visas. They are good for five years or until their passport expiration date. I would try applying for one; but remember it must be a crew visa and make sure it is for five years. One last thing: I just heard you can have two U.S. passports. This might come in handy for you. Geez, it's always more documents to carry.

Aloha,  
**Mario Higa,**  
Port Agent

# SEATTLE NOTES

During the month of April Seattle shipped two Electricians, one ERJ, one REJ, one Oiler, one Wiper, three Standby Reefers, and nine Standby Wipers. Seattle currently has 10 A-, two B-, and five C-seniority members registered for shipping.

Seattle had some open board jobs come up, but we could not fill them because we had no members with Chinese visas. It may be wise, when returning from vacation, for members to take advantage of their time off to apply for a Chinese visa to fill more job opportunities that arise.

The struggle to fill *Watson*-class jobs continues. Members, please keep up

with your documents and ensure that your training is in order. Also, those who have been vaccinated for tuberculosis in their youth will likely test positive and should consider getting a QuantiFERON TB Gold, or T-Spot test done prior to being dispatched to speed up the process and avoid a non-fit-for-duty. Both tests are considered valid by Anderson-Kelly and vary in price and availability depending on the facility where it is performed. If you are qualified and enrolled for benefits the tests are also covered by our insurance at Kaiser Permanente.

Fraternally  
**Brendon Bohannon,**  
Representative

# New study reveals benefits of union membership

A new report from the Center for American Progress shows that union membership helps build wealth for working-class families. The report concludes that "unions are a crucial means for building wealth among the working class and reducing racial wealth gaps for workers without four-year college degrees." Other key findings from the report include:

- The median wealth for working-class union households (\$201,240) is nearly four times that of nonunion working-class households (\$52,221).
- Being a union member helps close the wealth gap between working-class and college-educated households.
- Working families of color see the largest percentage of gains from union membership.

• For all races, working-class union families are far more likely to own homes.

The report concludes, "There is a long way to go to ensure that workers are able to join unions and have access to the many ways by which union members can boost their wealth. Policymakers at the federal and state levels must properly implement these laws to encourage joint labor-management partnerships for training and safety, for example. Policymakers should also design industrial policies that benefit all of the working class, particularly those who are employed in services. Finally—and most directly—policymakers need to reform labor law to make it fairer and easier for workers to form a union and bargain collectively, and they can start by passing the PRO Act."

## HOWZ SHIPPING?


April 2023

San Francisco	Wilmington
Electrician..... 3	Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer..... 3
Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer..... 3	Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer..... 4
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer..... 4	Junior Engineer..... 1
Junior Engineer ..... 3	Pumpman ..... 1
Oiler ..... 3	Oiler ..... 1
Wiper ..... 3	Wiper ..... 4
Standby Electrician/Reefer ..... 5	Shore Mechanic..... 8
Standby Wiper ..... 5	Standby Electrician/Reefer ..... 12
<b>TOTAL .....29</b>	Standby Wiper ..... 22
	<b>TOTAL .....56</b>
Honolulu	Seattle
Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer..... 2	Electrician..... 2
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer..... 1	Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer..... 1
Junior Engineer..... 1	Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer..... 1
Oiler ..... 2	Oiler ..... 1
Wiper ..... 4	Wiper ..... 1
Shore Mechanic..... 1	Standby Electrician/Reefer ..... 3
Standby Electrician/Reefer ..... 25	Standby Wiper ..... 9
Standby Wiper ..... 32	<b>TOTAL .....18</b>
<b>TOTAL .....68</b>	

## MFOW member pensioned

Name	Book Number	Pension Type	Sea Time	Effective
Charles Finklea	JM-4312	SIU PD Only Basic L/T	28.515	5/1/2023

**FINISHED WITH ENGINES**



**David Santos, P2641/#3275.**  
Born April 24, 1935, Honduras. Joined MFOW June 28, 1967. Pensioned January 1, 2000. Died April 11, 2023, San Pedro Sula, Honduras.

## HONOR ROLL

**Voluntary donation to General Treasury — April 2023:**  
Denny Capley, P-1809.....\$20.00  
Eric White, #3925 .....\$100.00

## POLITICAL ACTION FUND

**Voluntary donations for April 2023:**  
Ahmed Mohamed Munassar,#3934 ..... \$40.00

Regular membership meeting dates 2023					
June	7	S. F. Headquarters	October	4	S. F. Headquarters
	13	Honolulu		10	Honolulu
	14	Wilmington		11	Wilmington
July	5	S. F. Headquarters	November	1	S. F. Headquarters
	11	Honolulu		7	Honolulu
	12	Wilmington		8	Wilmington
August	2	S. F. Headquarters	December	6	S. F. Headquarters
	8	Honolulu		12	Honolulu
	9	Wilmington		13	Wilmington
September	6	S. F. Headquarters			
	12	Honolulu			
	13	Wilmington			



### MARINE FIREMAN SUBSCRIPTIONS, AND VOLUNTARY PAF DONATIONS

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