



THE MARINE FIREMAN

Official Organ of the Pacific Coast Marine Firemen, Oilers, Watertenders and Wipers Association



Volume 80

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, FEBRUARY 16, 2024



No. 2

Lawmakers call on Biden to create a new maritime policy czar

A bipartisan group of lawmakers is calling on President Joe Biden to create a maritime czar to organize American sea power and maritime policy. The January 29 letter is signed by nearly two dozen lawmakers from both parties and chambers. Citing China's aggression in the maritime space and the United States' deteriorating shipbuilding infrastructure, the letter asks Biden to create an "interagency maritime policy coordinator" who can synchronize policy across the defense, commercial and civilian realms.

Signatories to the letter include Senators John Cornyn (R-Texas), Mark Kelly (D-Arizona), Tammy Duckworth (D-Illinois), Marco Rubio (R-Florida), Rick Scott (R-Florida) and John Boozman

(R-Arkansas). Kelly is a retired Navy captain who graduated from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. The letter notably does not include the lawmakers leading the Senate and House armed services committees, nor does it include the chairmen and ranking members of those panels' respective sea power subcommittees.

Representatives John Garamendi (D-California) and Michael Waltz (R-Florida) did sign the letter. Waltz chairs the HASC readiness subcommittee and Garamendi is the panel's ranking member. Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-Colorado), who chairs the HASC strategic forces subcommittee, and Rep. Jack Bergman (R-Michigan), a retired Marine Corps lieutenant general, also signed the letter.

The lawmakers also call on Biden to create a strategy of "de-risking" the U.S. from China and other threats in the maritime space. Biden should also put out a presidential determination that would designate "commercial, civil, and military shipbuilding and shipping industries, with their associated domestic infrastructure and workforces, as elements on the nation's critical infrastructure sectors list," the letter reads.

Lawmakers also want the Pentagon to have the authority to implement the Defense Production Act and use Title III to invest in the commercial shipbuilding and shipping industries and civilian infrastructure and workforces, in coordination with the Maritime Administration.

The letter comes as the U.S. grapples with several competing priorities across the maritime sphere. U.S. Navy ships for the last several months have been protecting commercial shipping lanes in the Red Sea from drone and missile attacks launched from the Houthis in Yemen. With a need for ships to operate in the Middle East, the Defense Department is also balancing how to maintain presence in the Indo-Pacific, its priority theater where China's People's Liberation Army Navy is the most active.

Meanwhile, Congress and the Navy have struggled to address American sealift capacity, which Sadler described as the "gateway issue," and the aging ships that are responsible for helping the military in conflict overseas.

Congressman makes urgent call for U.S. sealift capacity expansion

U.S. Representative Mike Gallagher (R-Wisconsin), the Chairman of the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party, is sounding the alarm on the United States' "woefully inadequate" sealift fleet capacity to counter China in the event of an Indo-Pacific conflict. In a letter to U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) Commander General Jacqueline D. Van Ovost and Maritime Administrator (MARAD) Ann C. Philipps, Gallagher highlighted the significant challenges facing the U.S. sealift fleet.

The sealift fleet is critical for moving equipment across the region in the event of a conflict in the Indo-Pacific. Gallagher noted that almost 90 percent of all Army and Marine Corps equipment used in large-scale overseas operations would need to be transported by ship. However, as China rapidly expands its maritime capabilities, the American sealift fleet remains underfunded and aging.

"While China has undertaken a historic buildup of both military and commercial ships, the American sealift fleet has continued to age and go underfunded," the letter states. The congressman referenced one anonymous senior official who described the situation as a "scream-

ing national security vulnerability."

As of May 2023, the U.S. merchant fleet comprised of just 177 vessels, down from over 600 in 1990, while China's merchant fleet has grown to more than 5,500 ships, approximately 30 times larger than the U.S. fleet.

Gallagher's letter also drew attention to the inadequate size and age of the sealift fleet, consisting of just 60 ships between MARAD's Ready Reserve Force and the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command. The fleet's size is based on decades-old analysis and is further limited by the small number of civilian merchant ships that could boost the sealift capacity in the event of a conflict. MARAD's Maritime Security Program consists of just 60 participating merchant vessels. The age of the fleet also poses a problem, with the average age of the 45 ships of the Ready Reserve Force being 45 years old. 17 of these ships are 50 years or older.

Congressman Gallagher also highlighted the risks of hiring foreign merchant ships to transport U.S. military equipment in wartime, as there is no guarantee they would be willing to do so.

The letter also pointed out that the lack of experienced American mer-

chant mariners to crew sealift vessels was a "clear and present danger to our national security," quoting former MARAD Administrator Mark Buzby. The U.S. is short of nearly two thousand mariners that would be needed to crew the available sealift vessels in the Indo-Pacific.

Lastly, Gallagher expressed concerns about the readiness of the sealift fleet. He cited a 2019 readiness exercise that revealed that only 40 percent of the fleet was ready for mobilization. The large-scale turbo activation, meant as a "stress test" of the Ready Reserve Force, tested the fleet's ability to transition

from reduced operating status to fully crewed and full operating status within 5-days. Of the 28 vessels participating, only about 60 percent were considered "ready" and 40 percent were able to get underway in the allotted time.

Gallagher says this lack of readiness could increase risk for overseas servicemembers and calls into question the sealift fleet's ability to support major operations in the Indo-Pacific. He concluded by stressing the urgency of addressing these issues, calling for an immediate expansion of U.S. sealift capacity and focusing resources on restoring deterrence against China.



Pictured is the MV *President John Q Adams* — which will replace the MV *President Wilson* on APL's Eagle Express 1 (EX1) trade route.



Day Junior Engineer Orlando Pajarillo, JM-5027, working in the machine shop aboard the MV *President FD Roosevelt*.

It's better in a union

Standing together with co-workers in a union makes a tangible difference you can feel every day. Here are just a few benefits:

- Workers in labor unions make 18 percent more in wages than our non-union counterparts.
 - We are more likely to have health care benefits. More than nine out of 10 union members have access to employer-provided health insurance, compared to 68 percent of nonunion workers, according to the Department of Labor.
 - We work in safer workplaces. One study found job sites that were unionized have lost-time claims at a 31 percent lower rate than non-unionized sites.
 - We have more job security — even and especially in moments of economic crisis.
 - Countries where most workers are in a union are among the happiest and healthiest on Earth.
- Life is better in a union.

USACE, SF issue draft plan to remake city shoreline

Last month, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Port of San Francisco released a draft plan to remake the city's shoreline, raising it by several feet in a bid to adapt the waterfront to the future impacts of sea level rise. With a \$13.5-billion budget, it would be the city's largest single infrastructure project ever.

The goal would be to complete work by 2040 if a final report is completed next year and Congress approves the proj-

ect in 2026. That would be less time than the 16 years it took to design and build the eastern span of the Bay Bridge that opened in 2013. For now, the plan emphasizes work that can be done within 15 years of Congress agreeing to put the project into the federal budget. If this occurs, 65 percent of the costs would be covered by the Army Corps. San Francisco would be responsible for raising the additional 35 percent.

Halls to close

Lincoln's Birthday and Presidents' Day — The MFOW hiring halls will also be closed on **Monday, February 19, 2024, in observance of Presidents' Day**, a contract holiday under the APL and Matson Master Offshore Agreements.

The Marine Fireman

Published Monthly By

The Pacific Coast Marine Firemen, Oilers, Watertenders and Wipers Association

ORGANIZED 1883

Affiliated with the Seafarers International Union of North America, AFL-CIO

Yearly subscription rate: \$20 first class, \$25 overseas air

Postmaster: Send address changes to The Marine Fireman, 240 2nd Street, San Francisco, CA 94105

Reefer Container 101

Refrigerated containers, also called reefer containers, are used for goods that need to be temperature controlled during shipping. Reefer containers are equipped with a refrigeration unit that is connected to the power supply on board the ship.

Reefer Cargo

Temperature-sensitive goods are transported over long distances in refrigerated containers. Maintaining freshness is of utmost importance during transport. Perishable goods must be transported under optimal conditions to ensure that they arrive in pristine condition. Cargo shipped in refrigerated containers can generally be divided into chilled and frozen goods. In addition, there is special cargo.

Chilled cargo — Chilled commodities are goods that have to be transported at low temperatures above freezing point. Reefer containers can automatically control cooling with their supply air sensor. They are able to detect and change the temperature. Chilled cargo typically includes: fresh fruits and vegetables (especially bananas and pineapples), fresh meat and seafood, milk and dairy products, eggs, fresh juices, confectioneries and flowers.

Fruits and vegetables continue to “live and breathe” after harvest. They need access to oxygen and generate heat as they grow. In addition, they produce gases such as carbon dioxide. This respiration process needs to be considered when shipping as it influences the product. Therefore, fresh air ventilation is required for ‘living’ fruits and vegetables. This air has to flow through the cargo uniformly. The air should be able to circulate through the packaging and over the produce in order to take ripening heat, CO₂ and C₂H₄ (ethylene) away and refresh the O₂. The amount of air depends on the level of respiration of the produce and its tolerance to lower oxygen and a higher CO₂ and ethylene level. The cartons should be stacked on top of each other with the holes aligned so the air can circulate freely throughout the load. Any material that can block the airflow should be removed. Ethylene gas is a natural by-product of perishables that can be used to control the ripening process.

Building a controlled atmosphere is the most technologically advanced way to precisely control the atmospheric composition of the container throughout its journey. A controlled atmosphere can keep the post-harvest perishables fresh for up to two to three times longer compared with other methods. Controlled atmosphere technology uses computer systems to monitor and control the atmospheric composition of the container.

Cold treatment is a procedure that destroys fruit flies, larvae or eggs. This is done by keeping the cargo at a low temperature for a determined time. It avoids the use of chemicals and is more environmentally friendly.

Frozen cargo — Frozen cargo generally refers to goods that need to be shipped and stored at -20 C or less. Some goods that have a high-fat content, such as ice cream, require a lower temperature. It is important to note that local regulations for the transport temperature of certain frozen goods may differ.

Frozen loads should be stacked in block stowage. There should be no gaps between the pallets or packages and no holes in the packaging. The air must be able to flow over the cargo and dissipate any heat that may have entered the refrigerated container. Ventilation is not required for non-respiring goods such as candy and pharmaceuticals or any frozen cargo.

Frozen cargo typically includes frozen meat and seafood, frozen prepared foods, frozen fruit concentrates, frozen fruits and vegetables and ice cream.

Special cargo — These goods are non-food-products, but require temperature and/or humidity protection during transport. They need to be treated with the highest level of care. This includes for example pharmaceuticals or medical care

products, tobacco products, film and photo equipment, chemicals or sensitive industrial products.

Pre-Cooling and Packaging

Cold temperatures help to keep food fresh for longer. The basic idea behind refrigeration is to slow down the activity of bacteria (which are present in all food). Deep freezing can stop bacterial activity altogether. Many factors influence the shelf life of products: from hygiene and pre-cooling to stowage and storage temperature. The correct handling of the product is crucial. Proper pre-cooling of the goods is essential. It rapidly removes heat from the commodities and reduces the rate of water loss for many perishables.

Once a product is chilled or frozen, it has to be kept in this condition until it reaches the consumer. This distribution cycle is called the cold chain. Chilled or frozen goods must be pre-cooled to the recommended temperature before they are loaded into the container.

Moments without electricity during loading and unloading must be kept as short as possible to avoid temperature fluctuations. This means that the reefer containers must be plugged in as soon as they come on board the vessel and disconnected as late as possible during discharge.

For inland haulage, gensets are used. These are portable power sources that use a motor to generate electricity.

Internal air circulation is essential for maintaining the set temperature in a reefer container. As such, the air is constantly steered over the cargo space. The stowage of the cargo must ensure that the air can move freely over the cargo.

Each commodity has its own shelf life and temperature, ventilation, humidity and drains requirements, which ensure optimal quality maintenance during transport. They also have different airflow requirements. The type of packaging, the type of filling and the nature of the product itself all influence this.

Features of a Reefer Container

They are designed to maintain the temperature, humidity and atmosphere of the container at a constant value during the whole transit time. There are four settings that must be considered when shipping reefer cargo: temperature, ventilation, humidity and drainage.

Temperature — All standard reefer containers are built to maintain a temperature between +25 C and -25 C for chilled and frozen cargo. A certain percentage of the global reefer fleet is also capable of maintaining a temperature down to -35 C or even lower. Special containers (super freezers) can maintain a temperature down to -70 C.

Ventilation — For a chilled temperature, air must flow through the cargo at all times to remove heat and gases. Therefore, the transport boxes used should have ventilation. Fresh air ventilation is required for fruits and vegetables. For frozen goods, air must flow around the cargo. There must be no large gaps between the cargo, the walls and the cargo itself. The cargo should be stowed in blocks.

Humidity — Some products benefit from a lower level of humidity in the air. A reefer unit has a dehumidification function which can lower the level of moisture in the air. Although some newer units can reach 50 percent, the standard is between 60 and 85 percent relative humidity (RH).

Drains — These are used to release excess water that may accumulate inside the containers. In addition, their design prevents water or insects to get into the container.

Machinery - Reefer machinery does not run on its own but needs to be plugged into an electrical source. This source can be at a depot, terminal, on board a vessel or a genset. Inside the container is a microprocessor, which is the electronic temperature recorder. This device stores all data, such as supply air and return air temperature, remote cargo probe temperatures, defrost activity, changes to the setpoint, power on and off time, etc.

A refrigeration unit is built to maintain a certain temperature, not to bring the load to the desired temperature. The cargo should be pre-cooled to the set point temperature prior to loading. Especially for fresh fruits and veggies, reducing the temperature after harvest to the optimal transport temperature is crucial to guarantee good quality and ensure the best possible shelf life.

Marine Firemen's Union Directory

www.mfoww.org

HEADQUARTERS

240 2nd Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
Tel: (415) 362-4592/4593/4594
Fax: (415) 348-8864
Dispatcher-Tel: (415) 362-7593
Dispatcher-Fax: (415) 348-8896

General Email: headquarters@mfoww.org

Anthony Poplawski

President/Secretary-Treasurer
Email: mfow_president@yahoo.com

Deyne Umphress

Vice President
Email: mfowvp@mfoww.org

Robert Baca

Business Agent
Email: robchili510@yahoo.com

Manita Li, Controller

Email: mli@mfoww.org

Kasia Grzelak, Secretary/Training

Email: kasia@mfoww.org

MFOW TRUST FUNDS

240 2nd Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
Tel: (415) 986-1028 / 986-5720
Fax: (415) 546-7340
General Email: welfare@mfoww.org

Herlinda Vizcarra

Medical/Dental Coverage:
Active Members
Email: hvizcarra@mfoww.org

Amanda Salinas

Optical/Medical Claims:
Dependents and Pensioners
Email: asalinas@mfoww.org

Shirley Martos

Death Benefits/
Accounts Payable
Email: smartos@mfoww.org

Stacy Bobu

Money Purchase & Pension Benefits
Tel: (415) 362-1653
Fax: (415) 348-8864
General Email: pension@mfoww.org
Email: sbobu@mfoww.org

WILMINGTON BRANCH

533-B Marine Avenue
Wilmington, CA 90744
Tel: (310) 830-0470
Fax: (310) 835-9367

H. "Sonny" Gage, Port Agent

Email: hgage@mfoww.org

HONOLULU BRANCH

707 Alakea Street
Honolulu, HI 96813
Tel: (808) 538-6077

Mario Higa, Port Agent

Email: mhiga@mfoww.org

PORT SERVICED — SEATTLE

4005 - 20th Avenue West, Suite 115
Seattle, WA 98199
Tel: (206) 467-7944
Fax: (206) 467-8119

Brendan Bohannon, Representative

Email: seattle@sailors.org

Active MFOW members

Retain your Welfare Fund eligibility

MAIL or TURN IN all your Unfit for Duty slips to:

MFOW Welfare Fund, 240 2nd Street

San Francisco, CA 94105

Port of Long Beach powers ahead with truck charging stations

The Port of Long Beach is driving toward a zero-emissions future, with a keen focus on electric trucks and the stations where they can recharge their batteries. That's why several companies are partnering with the port to meet the accelerating demand for heavy-duty electric trucks by installing charging stations within the harbor area and beyond. Their work will help the port to meet a goal of 100 public stations available in the harbor area by 2028.

Investing in charging infrastructure is essential to transitioning to zero-emissions drayage. It reduces port-related greenhouse gas emissions and puts the port on a path toward achieving an industry-leading goal of zero-emissions for cargo-handling equipment by 2030 and for drayage trucks by 2035. For trucks, it's key that charging stations become available in the harbor area, and along well-traveled truck routes in the region as well.

Phasing out older, more polluting trucks has enhanced air quality at the San Pedro Bay ports since the original Clean Truck Program was initiated in 2008. Diesel particulate emissions from trucks have been cut by as much as 97 percent compared to levels in 2005.

Heavy-duty trucks were able to plug in and power up at the Port of Long Beach for the first time in November 2022 through a partnership with EV

Connect to open one of the first publicly accessible, heavy-duty truck charging stations in the nation. Equipped with two charging units, the station is located at the Clean Truck Program Terminal Access Center, 1265 Harbor Ave. Those registered in the Ports Drayage Truck Registry can use the chargers for free, with a limit of two hours.

The port plans to eventually build additional charging units at the Terminal Access Center, along with a second depot at Pier B Street and Carrack Avenue. Additionally, long-term investments are underway to ensure energy is available to power eTruck fleets well into the future, and financial assistance is being offered to help assist drivers with purchasing electric drayage trucks.

The latest available figures show there were 213 zero-emissions trucks registered to operate at the San Pedro Bay complex by the close of 2023, but that figure is anticipated to grow exponentially over the next decade as state regulators require new trucks entering drayage to be zero-emissions.

Trucking companies and drivers serving the ports complex face a tight deadline to go emissions-free by 2035 under a mandate by the California Air Resources Board, which aligns with a longtime goal set by the Port of Long Beach and the Port of Los Angeles through the Clean Air Action Plan.

Port of Oakland year-end container volume ends strong

Port of Oakland full import and export container volumes rose in December 2023, showing signs that cargo volume at Oakland is returning. Full imports rose 16.4 percent, moving 76,347 TEU in December 2023, compared to 65,566 TEU in December 2022. This is the highest monthly total since July 2023. Full exports also climbed 12.9 percent, registering 65,801 TEU in December 2023 in contrast to 58,302 TEU in December 2022.

West coast ports are also seeing an increase in container activity due to shippers rerouting cargo originally destined to go through the Panama Canal. The drought in Panama is limiting ves-

sel traffic to U.S. Gulf and East Coast ports through the canal.

Oakland ended 2023 with a total of 2,065,709 TEU passing through the port, down 11.6 percent from 2,337,607 TEU in 2022. Full TEU declined 10.1 percent, registering 1,574,444 TEU in 2023, in contrast to 1,752,169 TEU in 2022.

Empty imports dropped nine percent, with 12,210 TEU transiting port facilities in December 2023, versus 13,419 TEU in December 2022. Empty exports declined 15.9 percent, handling 21,655 TEU in December 2022, compared to 25,741 TEU in December 2022.

Commerce allocates over \$20.6 million in fishery disaster funding

On February 1, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina M. Raimondo announced the allocation of \$20.6 million to address a fishery resource disaster that occurred in the 2023 Sacramento River Fall Chinook and Klamath River Fall Chinook ocean and inland salmon fisheries. NOAA Fisheries used revenue loss information from the commercial, processor and charter sectors to allocate funding for the disaster.

Congress provided fishery resource disaster assistance funding in the 2022 and 2023 Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Acts. A positive determination makes these fisheries eligible to receive a funding allocation from those appropriations. These funds will improve the long-term economic and environmental sustainability of the impacted fisheries. Funds can be used to assist the impacted fishing communities including commercial fishermen, recreational fishermen, charter businesses and subsistence users.

Activities that can be considered for funding include fishery-related infrastructure projects, habitat restoration, state-run vessel and fishing permit buybacks, job retraining and more. Some fishery-related businesses affected by the fishery disaster may also be eligible for assistance from the Small Business Administration.

On December 29, 2022, Congress passed the Fishery Resource Disasters Improvement Act, which amended the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Since the disaster request for these fisheries was received after this date, it was evaluated under the amended statute.

In the coming months, NOAA Fisheries will work with the state of California to administer the disaster relief funds. Fishing communities and individuals affected by the disaster should work with their state or other agencies as identified by the state, as appropriate.

Strong 2023 finish for Port of Los Angeles

The Port of Los Angeles closed out 2023 on a strong note, processing 747,335 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU) in December, 2.5 percent more than 2022. It was the fifth consecutive month of year-over-year gains. December 2023 loaded imports landed at 369,477 TEU, an increase of five percent compared to the previous year. Loaded exports came in at 121,575 TEU, an increase of 26 percent compared to 2022. Empty containers totaled 256,283 TEU, an 8.5 percent decrease compared to last year.

The port finished 2023 handling 8,634,497 TEU, about 13 percent less

than the prior year. Trade declined in most categories at ports worldwide yet the Port of Los Angeles retained its position as the nation's busiest container port for the 24th consecutive year.

Port of Los Angeles Executive Director Gene Seroka recently outlined the port's priorities for 2024: community investment, sustainability progress and capturing additional market share. The port is investing in a 10-year, \$2 billion capital improvement program, and is focusing on secure technology enhancements to improve efficiency and reduce carbon footprint. All that leads to additional jobs.



Wilmington Waterfront Promenade opens to public

Led by Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass, hundreds of community members and leaders joined Port of Los Angeles officials on February 3 to celebrate the grand opening of the \$77.3 million Wilmington Waterfront Promenade, a nine-acre project creating a "window on the waterfront" for the community. Later in the day, the new venue was used as the site for the port's 10th Annual Lunar New Year Festival.

Located along the water's edge of Berths 183-186 at the Port of Los Angeles and adjacent to Banning's Landing Community Center, the new open space development features three distinct visitor experience areas: the promenade, the bluff and the upland expanse. Each visitor-friendly area includes unique seating and views of the water, convenient pet stations, drinking fountains and trash/recycling receptacles. The site has a 159-space parking lot.

The promenade measures approximately 1,300 feet in length and incorporates a variety of seating, including swing benches with shade structures, precast terraced tidal seat steps crafted of Onyx stone, and a plaza area with additional seats. Connected to the promenade is a new 5,400 square foot public pier with picnic tables over the water, and a 120-foot public floating dock to accommodate visitor-serving vessels. Lighted waterfront railings provide ambiance and visibility.

Above the promenade is the bluff and open space area, featuring swing benches with waterfront views. A high-

light of the bluff is a play area, complete with mountaineering ropes, climbing nets, rockers and a custom tower slide. Integral colored concrete and concrete pavers accent the space, with three 45-foot-tall floodlight poles illuminating the area.

The upland expanse features pedestrian and bicycle trails, and seating with elevated views of the Wilmington Waterfront. Generously landscaped with more than 200 pink trumpet, Italian stone pine, Torrey pine and palm trees — along with planters featuring California native and drought-tolerant plants — the area also includes a six-stall public restroom.

Construction of the Wilmington Waterfront Promenade entailed the realignment of Water Street between Fries Avenue and Avalon Boulevard, in addition to utilities, street work, grading, paving, striping and irrigation improvements. Extensive hardscape, landscaping and lighting are key elements found throughout the project.

Completion of the new Wilmington Waterfront Promenade project sets the stage for the next-phase public access improvement project planned for Wilmington by the Port. The Avalon Pedestrian Bridge and Promenade Gateway is slated to start construction in early 2025, and create another 12 acres of new open space for the Wilmington community, while also connecting Harry Bridges Boulevard and Avalon Boulevard to the Los Angeles waterfront.

Like us on
facebook



<https://www.facebook.com/>

Marine-Firemens-Union-121622254577986/

MFOW PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Insurance

Over the past few years, insurance premiums for the various types of Union and trust fund coverage were soaring with no end in sight. The previous insurance broker did not appear to be concerned with assisting the Union and the trust funds by securing quotes that were reasonable and appropriate.

Last summer, I initiated a project to modify and improve the various types of insurance coverage for the Union and the various trust funds. After careful consideration, I worked with a new insurance broker to review our policies and provide recommendations for less expensive and more adequate coverage. This six-month project is finally completed and the Union and trust funds are now insured at an overall lower cost with more appropriate coverage.

The Marine Firemen's Union is now insured for property, building, business personal property, business income and extra expense, commercial general liability, worker's compensation and employer's liability, employee benefits liability, automobile liability, umbrella liability, union liability, parking tax collection bond, cyber, and crime.

Likewise, the five trust funds (MFOW Money Purchase Pension Plan, MFOW Welfare Fund, MFOW Supplementary Pension Plan, MFU Training Plan, and MFU Joint Employment Committee) are now insured for property, business personal property, business income and extra expense, commercial general liability, worker's compensation and employer's liability, excess liability, cyber, and crime.

Payroll Procedures

APL Marine Services — In September 2023, the Union was informed by APL Marine Services (APLMS) that they wished to convert their payroll procedure to a bi-weekly system.

The company's rollout of the bi-weekly system did not go so well. There were several problems with late and bounced checks. Needless to say, many members were

Water level projections threaten future Panama Canal transits

Dry season in Panama is in full swing, and the impacts to trade through the Panama Canal will remain challenged in the months to come. The situation in the canal, after a wetter-than-expected November, wasn't as dire as many believed, allowing the number of daily transits to increase in January.

The Panama Canal forecast 24 daily transits in January, up from 20 previously expected for January and 18 previously expected for February. Throughout fiscal year 2023, 12,638 vessels traversed the canal, a daily average of 34 ocean-going vessels moving through the canal.

In the first four months of the canal's fiscal year 2024, there were 3,233 transits across all vessel types, with the vast majority being Panamax vessels. The run rate for fiscal year 2024 of vessels through the canal is 9,700, 23 percent lower than the 2023 fiscal year throughput.

While container traffic receives a lot of attention, the tanker and dry bulk market will be heavily impacted as well. Through the first four months of fiscal 2024, chemical tankers have made up 25.6 percent of Panamax-class vessels that have traversed the canal. Liquefied petroleum gas carriers made up 25.5 percent of the neo-Panamax traffic through the canal.

The water levels within the Panama Canal are largely to blame, but any hope for a significant rebound in water levels to boost throughput will likely be met with a harsh reality over the next few months.

The water levels are going to remain a challenge that has the potential to continue to derail vessel throughput. Gatun Lake, the manmade lake that vessels must traverse, recently had water levels at 81.2 feet. Water levels in this critical portion of the canal have started 2024 at the lowest level on record, dating back to 1965. Projections are for even lower levels over the next two months, falling

below 80 feet in early April.

Three of the largest five ports in the U.S. rely on shipments that navigate through the Panama Canal: the Port of New York and New Jersey, the Port of Savannah, Georgia, and Port Houston. Over the past month, these three ports combined to handle 30 percent of total twenty-foot equivalent unit throughput. For reference, the two largest ports in the country: the Port of Los Angeles and the Port of Long Beach, accounted for 32 percent of the total U.S. throughput.

Import demand has picked up steam ahead of the Lunar New Year, which will provide a boost to overall imports that are trending above last year's levels. This boost is being felt by the East Coast ports, like Savannah, where the Ocean TEU Volume Index is up over 40 percent in the past month.

The water crisis is creating increased delays as backlogs around the canal remain. The limiting effects of the low water levels have created an additional six-day delay on average to the Port of Savannah from all ports around the globe. These delays are adding an extra day and a half to the scheduled transit times, which have also increased — nearly four days longer than they were this time last year. These delays are even more impactful the further up the Eastern Seaboard you go. The Port of New York and New Jersey is having similar delays, around the six-day mark, but are over three days longer than they were last year.

Comparing these East Coast ports to their West Coast counterparts, the port pair delays for the Port of Los Angeles are under three days and nearly a day less than they were this time last year. Mother Nature is outside human control, and if the water level projection holds true, the next couple of months could add to the ongoing crisis.

agitated by the situation, and rightly so. As chief executive of the Union, my immediate action was to work with the company to get everybody paid properly and up-to-date. And that is what we did: work with the company in a good faith attempt to square away all outstanding pay discrepancies. Hopefully, the new payroll system will run smoothly now that the bugs have been worked out.

Patriot Contract Services — On January 31, the Union received a notice from Patriot Contract Services (PCS) that they intended to update their payroll process. They are seeking to implement a completely paperless process; in the interest of cybersecurity and in an effort for process improvement. This would involve setting mariners up with access to ADP so that they would have direct access to their paystubs, statements, and pay history. In addition, this would provide direct access to vouchers and W-2 data through the internet or phone app which is the most secure method of delivering the data. This is an ongoing project. Will keep the membership informed.

Tanker X

On January 5, the Union was notified by PCS that they are planning to bring another shallow draft tanker under management and U.S.-flag. The company desired to complete and sign a Memorandum of Understanding covering the yet-to-be-named vessel by February 4. The terms and conditions and compensation package would be modeled after the *Allied Pacific* package:

Rating	Daily Base Wage	Daily Supplemental Wage	Hourly Overtime Rate	Daily Purchase Money
QMED – Electrician/Oiler	\$206.22	\$87.50	\$27.43	\$30.00
QMED – Pumpman/Oiler	\$188.06	\$79.78	\$27.67	\$30.00
QMED – Oiler/Utility	\$172.27	\$73.08	\$25.38	\$30.00

There shall be a three percent (3%) increase in Total Labor Cost on the first, second, third, and fourth anniversary date of the agreement. The Unions have also requested the following language be added to the MOU:

"A "Harbor Attack Bonus" and a "Vessel Attack Bonus" of one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) and one thousand five-hundred dollars (\$1,500.00), respectively, shall be paid to all Unlicensed Personnel on a per incident basis, subject to approval of reimbursement by MSC to the Company.

Warning shots across the bow in compliance with International Law does not constitute an "attack" of any kind.

It is understood that when a "Vessel Attack Bonus" is paid, no "Harbor Attack Bonus" shall be paid for that particular day."

This is an ongoing negotiation. Will keep the membership informed.

NTSB Recommendation

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) recently issued a safety alert urging vessel owners and operators to provide each crewmember with a personal locator device. NTSB notes, during an emergency at sea, a mariner's chance of survival decreases if search and rescue cannot quickly and accurately identify their location. Personal locator devices, such as personal locator beacons (PLB) or satellite emergency notification devices (SEND), can accurately pinpoint a person's location. NTSB investigations found that currently available personal locator beacons provide a location accuracy of about 300 feet and a nearly instant search and rescue notification when activated.

Red Sea

On January 19, U.S. maritime unions (AMO, ARA, MEBA, MFOW, MM&P, MTD, SIU, SUP, and TTD) penned a letter to the U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) about the attacks on commercial shipping in the Red Sea. We expressed appreciation for the military's protection of U.S. commercial ships in the volatile region; and also called for continued cooperation and information sharing, to ensure that U.S.-flag vessels and crews have all the tools needed to ensure safe transits of the area.

In a return letter, USTRANSCOM Commander General Jacqueline Van Ovost called the U.S. Merchant Marine "the backbone of our national maritime capability" and noted that the concerns forwarded by the maritime coalition remain at the forefront of their "thinking and planning efforts." She pledged to further enhance the communication flow to U.S. shippers and mariners in order to help facilitate better planning and safeguard navigation in the Red Sea and critical areas around the world.

On January 29, 19 lawmakers in the Senate and House wrote a bipartisan letter urging President Biden to take steps to prioritize maritime defense in the wake of China's expanding influence on the high seas as well as ongoing threats to U.S.-flag shipping, including the Houthi attacks in the Red Sea. The letter points to the decline of the internationally-trading U.S.-flag fleet and shipyards that can't keep pace with their foreign counterparts.

Congressman Mike Waltz (R-Florida) and Senator Mark Kelly (D-Arizona) headed up the effort calling on the President to establish an interagency maritime policy director, designate maritime infrastructure as critical infrastructure, invoke the Defense Production Act for shipbuilding, and develop a whole-of-government maritime de-risking strategy to reduce dependency on Chinese maritime infrastructure and industry.

On January 30, SIUNA President Dave Heindel delivered testimony to the House Subcommittee on Coast Guard & Maritime Transportation to discuss approaches to mitigate threats against commercial shipping in the Red Sea. He noted that mariners have a long history of delivering the goods, often sailing into harm's way in unarmed vessels. But with attacks in the Red Sea involving technologically sophisticated threats such as attack drones, anti-ship cruise missiles, and anti-ship ballistic missiles, commercial vessels are reliant on the U.S. Navy and allies to protect them as mariners perform their jobs in this turbulent area.

Heindel pointed out there is great concern that the dissemination of operational security information related to shipping movements is overly available to the public, often in real-time, which helps arm adversaries with information that can be used to carry out mayhem against commercial vessels. In other words, "Loose lips sink ships."

On February 5, I participated in a hybrid in-person/teleconference with Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. This was an unclassified listening session with U.S. Marine Transportation System stakeholders regarding the ongoing crisis in the Red Sea; and an opportunity for stakeholders to share experiences and concerns both operating and manning vessels in the region directly with Secretary Buttigieg.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It's the same old story here at HQ. I'll save readers the trouble and simply say that the hiring hall is empty but the job board looks pretty full. We've had some success in bringing in a few new faces but there's still much work to do.

I spent some time in Wilmington giving Sonny much needed relief. The membership working down at the reefer shop would like to see the union meetings moved back to noon. I believe the intent behind moving meetings to right after job call was to promote greater attendance from the membership aimed at retaining those who make the 1000 job call. I'll leave this one for Sonny to

discuss with Wilmington membership and shoregang as he's seen the attendance numbers since 2014. A port autonomy ruling should include the input of the general membership, not just those working at the reefer shop.

APL's new payroll system has been... interesting. Many members expressed their displeasure with the initial results. I'm hoping that they've smoothed out the bumps as of this writing.

That's all I have this month. The weather has been terrible lately so stay dry. Drive safely, work safely, and keep your documents in order.

Fraternally, **Deyne Umphress**

First ship-to-ship green methanol bunkering for box ship is successful

The world's first ship-to-ship (STS) bunkering of green methanol for the 16,200 TEU container ship *Ane Maersk* was accomplished at Ulsan Port in South Korea. The Ulsan Port Authority and the Korean Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries supervised the operation, a significant step in the worldwide maritime industry's shift to sustainable fuels.

The Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries had already laid the necessary institutional foundation, such as the *Guidelines for Approval of Self-Safety Management Plan for Methanol Supply*, before this significant event. Essential knowledge was gathered through two methanol supply trials with the Ulsan Port Authority in July and November of the previous year.

The Minister of Oceans and Fisheries, Kang Do-Hyung, highlighted how foreign ports are increasingly competing to be the first to supply sustainable marine fuel. He highlighted the global shipping industry's overarching objective of reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 and also committed to all-out efforts to boost Korea's competitiveness and establish the country as a pioneer in the transition to sustainable fuels.

Ulsan Port Authority President Kim Jae-gyun vowed to adjust to the paradigm shift in ship fuel proactively. Building on the success of the world's first green methanol ship-to-ship bunkering for container ships in July of the

previous year, he believed Ulsan Port would become a sustainable marine fuel supply center.

Ane Maersk is the first of 18 massive container ships ordered by the Danish shipping company, fueled by methanol, and was involved in the historic bunkering operation. The ship bearing the name of Ane Maersk Mc-Kinney Uggla, the Chair of the AP Moller Foundation and AP Moller Holding, will be utilized on Maersk's AE7 route connecting Asia and Europe.

According to Maersk, "green fuels" are defined as having either very low (80-95 percent) or low greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (65-80 percent life cycle GHG reductions compared to fossil fuels) GHG emissions. The CEO of AP Moller-Maersk, Vincent Clerc, expressed confidence that this fleet of methanol-powered ships would substantially contribute to the company's lofty climate targets.

One of the distinctive features of the *Ane Maersk* is the accommodation block and bridge's front positioning, which improves fuel-efficient operations. Although using methanol to power container ships is becoming more common, there are still issues with the restricted supply of blue or green methanol for fuel use. Maersk is committed to obtaining sustainable fuels for its ships by 2024 and 2025, having pioneered this cutting-edge strategy.

BUSINESS AGENT'S REPORT

Here is the vessel rundown for January 2024:

Matson Navigation Company

On the Pacific Northwest triangle run: *MV Manulani* — delegate ERJ Steve Mohlin, #3831, shipped an REJ for time up, no beefs. *MV Maunawili* — delegate REJ Thomas Dunn, #3803, no beefs, shipped a DJU for time up.

On the Pacific Southwest triangle run: *MV Mokihana* — delegate REJ Dale Cunningham, #3597 shipped a DJU for time up, no beefs. *MV Mahimahi* — no beefs. *MV R.J. Pfeiffer* activated for approximately 21 days, delegate REJ Edward Tokarz, #3770, no beefs. Matson shoreside mechanic Enrique Maiden, #3808 no beefs.

APL Maritime Services

On the EX1 run: *MV President Truman* — shipped an REJ and additional REJ, no beefs. *MV President R.D. Roosevelt* — delegate REJ Alexander Reyer, JM— 5336, no beefs. *MV President Wilson* — delegate REJ Yasin Berber, JM— 5267, no beefs. *MV President Cleveland* — shipped an additional REJ, no beefs.

Patriot Contract Services

USNS Charlton — shipped an Oiler. *Cape Orlando* — shipped a one-year Electrician. *MT Haina Patriot* — shipped two Oilers. *Golden Bear* — training ship returned from dry dock in Portland, Oregon after approximately seven days, the MFOW Oiler's are back at the union hall.

Fraternally, **Bobby Baca**



January 19, 2024

General Jacqueline D. Van Ovost, USAF
United States Transportation Command
VIA EMAIL

Dear General Van Ovost:

On behalf of the undersigned American maritime labor unions who serve aboard MSP vessels, we are writing in regard to the ongoing attacks from the Houthi rebels of Yemen on international and U.S.-flag shipping in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait of the Red Sea.

First, we wish to thank you and United States Transportation Command (TRANSCOM), the Secretary of Defense, the United States Central Command (CENTCOM), the United States Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT), and other relevant components of the United States military for the efforts you have made to date to protect U.S.-flag merchant shipping in the region. The level of cooperation and communication between these agencies and the ship operators and labor unions involved has been good, and we hope to see it continue while this crisis continues.

Second, we fully support the recent strikes made against the Houthi rebels in Yemen via American and international forces over the last week. It is critical that the Houthi rebels understand the consequences of attacking U.S.-flag shipping and that the United States will continue to protect its sovereignty when that sovereignty is threatened by illegal attacks. These attacks represent the most significant attacks on the United States Merchant Marine in more than half a century.

Third, we are writing to ask for continued cooperation and information sharing, to ensure that our vessels and their crew have all the tools needed to ensure safe transits of the area. Especially critical are secure communication links between vessels transiting the Red Sea and the naval vessels deployed in the area to deter and defend against Houthi attacks. While we understand that procedures are being developed and so far, the joint efforts of our vessel operators, mariners and naval personnel have resulted in no casualties to U.S.-flag ships, we cannot rest on past success. Continued communication, especially at the tactical level, is crucial. Whether this is in the form of specialized equipment, U.S. naval officers from the NCAGS Shipping Control Teams, U.S. civilian mariners with the proper security clearance and COMSEC certification, or other naval liaisons being embedded on the vessels, having access to secure communications between our ships, CENTCOM, the combatants in the area and access to timely intelligence will ensure the level of cooperation and coordination necessary to keep these ships safe and secure as they continue to bring commercial, military, and foreign aid cargoes into the region.

As you are well aware, it is critically important that U.S.-flag vessels carrying commercial, military and foreign aid cargoes are provided the necessary protection from the United States military as they transit the increasingly treacherous waters of the Red Sea. The support and protection that your forces have provided have instilled confidence and pride in our crews as they operate our vessels in this area of the world. The United States Merchant Marine has operated side-by-side with the United States military in virtually every conflict in the history of the United States. We provide the materiel and supplies to the warfighter and they, in turn, have protected our vessels and crews as they sail into harm's way. While the current conflict involves the Houthi rebels, we may well face in the future more sophisticated adversaries. The critical communication support we request will demonstrate to the U.S. citizen mariners who are in harm's way that U.S. naval and other military personnel continue to stand with them. Working again together now will strengthen the bond between the U.S. Merchant Marine and the military and should deter other adversaries from taking unwise action against American targets. Moreover, your protection of U.S.-flag assets in this situation has demonstrated to other carriers that the United States is committed to protecting its shipping, which we hope will incentivize other carriers to put their vessels under the U.S.-flag, enhancing the United States Merchant Marine.

We very much appreciate the outreach and meetings that have already occurred on this topic. We are especially thankful for the Maritime Administration and Administrator Ann Phillips, whose strenuous and significant support during this crisis has been very helpful. Our members aboard ship and our organizations ashore stand ready to cooperate and coordinate with you, the various combatant commanders and fleet assets in the region as we continue to deliver the goods, as the United States Merchant Marine has done, in peace and war, since 1775.

Many thanks for your urgent attention and action in response to this on-going threat.
Sincerely,

Kelly Anderson, President, American Radio Association
Mark Clements, President, Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO
Dave Connolly, President, Sailors' Union of the Pacific
Paul Doell, President, American Maritime Officers
Dave Heindel, President, Seafarers International Union
Don Marcus, President, Masters, Mates & Pilots
Anthony Poplawski, President, Marine Firemen's Union
Greg Regan, President, Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO
Adam Vokac, President, Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association

cc: LGEN John P. Sullivan, USA, USTRANSCOM

VACATION
Most travelers plan their summer vacation in the month of February. The Union Label and Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO, wants to help you plan your next union-made get away. Search our database for more information.

DO BUY

HOTEL
Find your union hotel by visiting the UNITE HERE Fair Hotels website: www.fairhotel.org

COCKTAILS
Celebrate the warm breezes by sharing a tropical union-made cocktail. In a large pitcher, stir together Doie pineapple juice, Captain Morgan spiced rum, and Del Monte fresh lime juice. Refrigerate until chilled. Serve over ice.

PACKING
Whether heading to the beach or having a staycation by the pool, be sure to pack your union-made Coppertone or Bain De Soleil sunscreen, some Chapstick for your lips and some Solarcaine, just in case.

TICKETS
Book your flight on a union airline. Most U.S. airlines are union staffed from pilots and crew to mechanics and reservation call centers.

ROUTES
Amtrak operates inter-city rail service in 46 of the 48 contiguous U.S. states and three Canadian provinces. Its trains are operated, staffed and maintained by union members. Greyhound buses are operated and maintained by members of the ATU which also represents the operators, drivers and support workers for the DC Metro transit system. As well, Avis and Budget Rental are union.

DESTINATIONS
Many family-friendly destinations from national and state parks and landmarks, American's favorite baseball stadiums, Disney World and most other theme parks are union staffed. Union members can find discount admissions tickets to select theme parks from Union Plus online at www.unionplus.com. Other union destinations include Broadway shows, sporting events, Smithsonian galleries, museums, and zoos, and the Grand Ole Opry, just to name a few.

U.S. Passports
are issued through your union staffed post offices. TSA Agents at Airports are AFGE members.

2 LABEL LETTER J491 FEB 2024

MARINE FIREMEN'S UNION TRAINING PROGRAM — 2024

Interested members who meet the Training Program eligibility requirements and prerequisites outlined for each course may obtain an application online at 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

Courses are conducted at 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.

March 11-14 April 15-18 May 13-16

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.

February 29-March 1 April 4-5 May 2-3

QMED Fireman/ Oiler/Watertender

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.**

April 22-May 17, July 8-August 2
September 9-October 4

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.**

May 20-24 August 5-9 October 7-11

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.**

April 22-May 31 July 15-August 23
September 16-October 25

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.**

April 8-12 June 10-14 August 19-23

QMED Pumpman/Machinist

A member who successfully completes the five-week QMED Pumpman/Machinist course will satisfy the requirements needed for the national endorsement as QMED Pumpman/Machinist. **Prerequisites:** 360 days or more of MFOW-contracted sea time while holding the endorsements as QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer, QMED Fireman/Oiler/Watertender, RFPEW and AS-E.

September 30-November 1

High Voltage Safety

This five-day course is comprised of classroom lectures, simulator-based training, and assessments on our state-of-the-art TRANSAS TechSim 5000 High-Voltage (HV) Circuit Breaker Simulator. Students will be exposed to the principles behind shock hazards, and arc flash/arc blast phenomena. Practical exercises will help students understand how shock and arc flash boundaries are calculated, and most important, Incident Energy calculations to determine selection of required arc flash PPE. The assessment will incorporate all aspects of training including the proper use of PPE, live line tools, multimeters, other test equipment, and an implementation of a sample checklist for a Job Safety Analysis plan dealing with HV. **Prerequisites:** QMED Electrician-Refrigerating Engineer/Junior Engineer/RFPEW and Able Seafarer-Engine endorsements.

March 25-29 April 15-19 May 20-24

New in 2024

Maritime Institute: 1130 West Marine View Drive, Everett WA

QMED Oiler: June 3-21, September 9-27

STCW Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch:
April 8-12, June 24-28

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.

Maritime Institute, San Diego, CA: March 22, March 29, April 19, April 26, May 3, May 17, May 31

Maritime Institute, Honolulu, HI: April 12, June 7, August 2, October 11, December 6

Maritime Institute, Everett, WA: April 26, May 28, June 17, July 12, October 4, November 8, December 20

Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA: 2024 Schedule Pending

Compass Courses, Edmonds, WA: February 20-21, March 14-15, March 19-20, April 16-17

MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA: March 25-26

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.

Maritime Institute, San Diego, CA: March 13-15, April 10-12, May 22-24, June 12-14

Maritime Institute, Everett, WA: May 29-31, July 1-3, September 18-20, November 25-27

Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA: February 29-March 1

Compass Courses, Edmonds, WA: March 19-21, April 16-18, May 14-16

MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA: Returning in 2024

Alabama Port Authority and CSX to build new ICTF

The Alabama Port Authority and CSX have announced plans to build an intermodal container transfer facility (ICTF) in Decatur, Alabama. This collaboration aims to enhance rail connectivity and logistics infrastructure in the region, driving economic growth and creating new opportunities for efficient transportation of goods. The project will significantly enhance rail connectivity from the ICTF at the Port of Mobile to the central and northern regions of Alabama.

The North Alabama ICTF is expect-

ed to begin operations within the next two years, marking a new chapter in the region's logistics landscape.

The new North Alabama ICTF builds upon the successful inland rail partnership established by the Alabama Port Authority and CSX in Montgomery. Since its inception in 2022, this venture has attracted over \$2.28 billion in private investments, serving as a powerful testament to the transformative potential of strategic partnerships in driving economic growth.

The North Alabama ICTF is poised

to create a ripple effect of opportunities for job creation and economic development in Decatur and its surrounding areas. By linking the Port of Mobile to the central and northern regions of Alabama, the facility will not only alleviate truck traffic on interstate and highway systems but also unlock new avenues for businesses to transport their goods efficiently and cost-effectively.

With the North Alabama ICTF, the Alabama Port Authority reaffirms its dedication to promoting regional economic growth and enhancing logistics

infrastructure. This expansion underscores the Port Authority's confidence in the local economy and its commitment to meeting the evolving needs of its customers while fostering community development.

The North Alabama ICTF is not merely a local triumph; it represents a significant stride in the nation's logistics landscape. By connecting markets and streamlining transportation solutions, this facility will contribute to the broader goal of propelling economic progress on a national scale.

Biden-Harris Admin invests nearly \$16 million to advance marine energy

On February 6, in support of the President's Investing in America agenda, the Department of Energy (DOE) announced two innovative marine energy projects will receive a combined \$6 million to develop a tidal energy research, development, and demonstration pilot site in the United States. In addition, a community-led river current energy research and development project was selected to receive \$9.5 million. Tides and currents are incredibly predictable, meaning these resources could help balance other sources of renewable energy and be important contributors to a 100 percent clean energy grid. This funding, supported by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, encourages U.S. leadership in tidal and current energy development, supporting the Biden-Harris Administration's goals to help communities meet their energy priorities and develop the marine energy sector's supply chain and workforce.

Over the past decade, the U.S. Department of Energy's Water Power Technologies Office has supported several tidal energy deployment projects. This investment reflects that the industry is now at a phase in development that requires moving from single device testing to array testing with several devices grouped together.

The recent announcement marks the first of five phases in a \$35 million total investment from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to support the development and installation of one or

more tidal energy devices that can be transitioned to a commercial project. The selected projects are:

- A team led by Orcas Power and Light Cooperative (OPALCO), based in Eastsound, Washington, proposes to deploy a tidal energy turbine in Rosario Strait in the San Juan Islands in Washington State. The device is expected to be capable of producing about 2 megawatts of power. OPALCO aims to develop a pilot tidal power program to provide a reliable and resilient local power supply for San Juan Islanders.
- A team led by ORPC, based in Portland, Maine, aims to deploy two tidal energy devices at a location in the Cook Inlet in Alaska off the coast of the remote area of East Foreland on the Kenai Peninsula. The devices are expected to be able to produce between 1 and 5 megawatts of power. The team aims to demonstrate the feasibility of tidal energy projects in Cook Inlet, which is the United States' largest tidal energy resource.

During the competitive first phase, expected to last one year, these two projects will evaluate proposed sites and create plans for licensing, environmental monitoring, site health and safety, site commercialization, stakeholder engagement, community benefits, supply chain procurement, and technology selection and qualification. This phase will culminate in the projects submit-

ting the necessary license and/or permit applications to regulators. At the conclusion of the first phase, DOE will select one project to proceed through the remaining four phases and receive up to an additional \$29 million, concluding with testing and operation of the tidal energy devices.

The community-led river current energy project aims to balance community energy priorities and technology innovation. This investment of \$9.5 million will help accelerate the development of current energy technologies and promote resilience and economic development in Yukon River and Alaska Native communities. Many communities on the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers are powered by local microgrids where the river current potential resource is an order of magnitude greater

than average electrical loads.

The selected project is led by the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Alaska Center for Energy and Power, which plans to develop a replicable, community-led current energy research and development project in the Yukon River at Galena, Alaska. The primary goal is to identify and develop a technology appropriate for the community. This project will help remove barriers to the development of river-based hydrokinetic energy projects (or those that capture power from the natural flow of water) in Alaska's more than 90 communities with microgrids on or near rivers.

These projects were selected as part of the Water Power Technologies Office's U.S. Tidal Energy Advancement funding opportunity.

Tahiti to host five trans-Pacific undersea cables

French Polynesia is set to host as many as five of the recently-announced trans-Pacific Google undersea cables. One will link Tahiti to Chile, one coming from the U.S. West Coast, a third one to Guam, a fourth one to Fiji and the fifth one to Australia. Under the same project, the cost of building landing stations and data centers for those cables is to be taken care of by Google.

As part of the so-called South Pacific Connect initiative, which aims to enhance reliability and resilience of digital connectivity, work should begin in the next few months and are set to be completed by 2026. Other plans include building a digital engineers' academy to train future IT specialists with possible ramifications in artificial intelligence.

Chinese fishing fleet under the limelight in Latin American waters

The massive presence of the Chinese fishing fleet in the waters of Latin America has contributed to making China one of the world's leading seafood exporters, but also the worst when it comes to illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. The situation took a turn in late 2023 as Chinese vessels have been subjected to inspections from the U.S. Coast Guard and partner nations to address their questionable practices in the Pacific Ocean.

Thanks to measures implemented by the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO), the U.S. Coast Guard has been conducting inspections of several Chinese vessels. SPRFMO is a 14-member intergovernmental organization that seeks to ensure sustainable fisheries in the South Pacific Ocean.

The measures allow member states, including Peru, Chile, and Ecuador, to monitor one another's fishing and shipping activities to combat overfishing in international waters. In October, the U.S. Coast Guard conducted its first boardings and inspections on the high seas off the coast of Peru, focusing primarily on Chinese fishing vessels.

China has the world's largest distant water fishing fleet, with more than 17,000 fishing vessels. Each year, some 400 vessels navigate close to the exclusive economic zones of Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Argentina, and Brazil to fish for squid. The Chinese fleet actions in the oceans include turning off satellite tracking devices, using twin vessels, or hoisting flags of Latin American countries, to evade detection or control and keep up their illegal activities. In addition to illegal fishing, other crimes have been recorded on these vessels such as slavery, forced labor, smuggling, and human trafficking.

In one operation off the Peruvian coast, a U.S. Coast Guard search plane took Peruvian officials to observe the extensive offshore fishing fleet. During a nighttime flyover, the magnitude of the Chinese fleet was evident, with illuminated decks pulling squid from the depths of the ocean. Supply ports and transshipment of squid to huge refrigerated cargo ships allow vessels to remain in Pacific and Southwest Atlantic waters for months at a time.

The United States has made it a priority to assist South American countries such as Peru police their coastlines to ensure responsible and equitable fishing.

Over the past five decades, there has been a 50 percent decline in ocean life. 90 percent of the world's fish stocks are fully exploited, overfished, or depleted, with the Chinese fleet being the largest significant contributor to this depletion.

Chinese vessels report only one-twelfth of their total catch. An emblematic case of illegal fishing occurred in Ecuador in 2017, when the Chinese vessel *Fu Yuan Yu Leng* illegally entered the Galápagos Marine Reserve with some 500 tons of fish, including vulnerable species such as hammerhead sharks.

One reason China might comply with U.S. inspections of illegal catches is its trade with the United States, one of the world's largest importers of legal seafood. China's amenability in recent U.S. inspections of its fleets in South American seas won't stop it from keeping up with IUU fishing. Given the magnitude of illegal fishing and its repercussions, the backing of the U.S. Coast Guard is a sound measure to establish forms of control that can limit the expansion of IUU fishing or those activities that go beyond regulated fisheries, such as overfishing by the Chinese fleet.

Letter Of Understanding

This Letter of Understanding is made as of **January 23, 2024**, between the MARINE FIREMEN'S UNION (the "Union") and APL MARINE SERVICES, LTD. (the "Company"), known collectively as "the parties".

WHEREAS, the parties hereto hold collective bargaining agreements covering ocean-going U.S.-flag vessels, and shoreside maintenance operations effective **October 1, 2022**, as amended and supplemented from time to time by agreement, and;

WHEREAS, the parties seek to establish procedures for the issuance of shore maintenance and standby personnel pay checks.

NOW, THEREFORE, the parties hereto agree as follows:

1. Los Angeles shore mechanic checks and direct deposit pay stubs shall be sent by priority mail to the following address:

ATTN: REEFER SHOP FOREMAN
FENIX MARINE SERVICES
614 TERMINAL WAY
SAN PEDRO CA 90731

2. Standby personnel checks for work performed in Southern California (Los Angeles) shall be sent by priority mail to the following address:

ATTN: PORT AGENT
MARINE FIREMEN'S UNION
533-B NORTH MARINE AVENUE
WILMINGTON CA 90744

3. Standby personnel checks for work performed in Northern California (Oakland) shall be sent by priority mail to the following address:

ATTN: BUSINESS AGENT
MARINE FIREMEN'S UNION
240 2ND STREET
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94105

4. Standby personnel checks for work performed in Washington State (Seattle) shall be sent by priority mail to the following address:

ATTN: REPRESENTATIVE
MARINE FIREMEN'S UNION
4005 20TH AVENUE WEST SUITE 115
SEATTLE WA 98199

5. Standby personnel checks for work performed in Hawaii (Honolulu) shall be sent by priority mail to the following address:

ATTN: PORT AGENT
MARINE FIREMEN'S UNION
707 ALAKEA STREET
HONOLULU HI 96813

Agreed on **January 24, 2024**:

Michael Labonte

Michael Labonte
Director Labor Relations
APL Maritime LTD

Anthony Poplawski

Anthony Poplawski
President/Secretary-Treasurer
Marine Firemen's Union

State assembly pushing to build giant wind turbines at Port of Long Beach

California voters may have to consider another bond issue on the November ballot that promises to boost efforts to build massive new offshore wind turbines in California ports. Reps. Rick Chavez Zbur (D-Hollywood), Jim Wood (D-Healdsburg) and Josh Lowenthal (D-Long Beach) introduced AB 2208, a bill that would ask voters to approve a \$1 billion bond to fund infrastructure improvements that will ultimately require power-generating turbine plants in ports like Long Beach.

"These jobs will help our state meet its climate goals and create countless new green, good-paying union jobs in my district," Lowenthal said at a news conference in Sacramento.

Proponents of the bill say California's shift toward electric cars, public transportation and manufacturing will require more and cleaner electricity.

"To achieve our climate goals, we must produce enough offshore wind energy to power up to 25 million households by 2045," said Zbur. "The cost of upgrading our ports to allow them to mount these huge turbines is a multi-billion-dollar effort. This \$1 billion bond sends the signal that the state is committed to offshore wind energy and seeks to spur the public and private investment needed to finance these turbines to fully implement port improvements.

According to the California Energy Commission, \$11 billion to \$12 billion is needed just to prepare port infrastructure for the turbines.

Port of Seattle prioritizes community, restoration, and opportunity along the Duwamish River

The Duwamish River provides the Puget Sound region with important community assets, recreational fishing and tribal cultural heritage resources, and a critical estuarine environment for fish and wildlife. The river has played a crucial role in developing the region's economy for over a hundred years; today local maritime and industrial businesses employ over 100,000 people and support more than 25 percent of the manufacturing in King County.

2024 will see an increase in the Port of Seattle's commitment to people along and near the Duwamish River. Since 2017, the Port Community Action Team has worked with communities to ensure their voices are heard at all levels of decision-making that could impact their neighborhoods. The Green Jobs Program has provided instruction and training at thirteen shoreline sites, including the Lake Washington Ship Canal, Elliott Bay, and Duwamish Waterway locations.

The Port of Seattle has spent more than \$80 million to date under the Superfund program alone for cleanup and restoration projects, including soil and in-water sediments cleanup at Duwamish River People's Park, formerly known as Terminal 117, and subsequent habitat restoration; Lower Duwamish Waterway and East Waterway sediments investigation and cleanup design; and cleanup and source control activities at adjacent upland facilities.

While none of the Lower Duwamish Waterway's most contaminated areas are attributable to the Port of Seattle or its tenants, the port has made significant investments to improve conditions in the Duwamish River and surrounding community. The Port of Seattle's work includes financially supporting federal Superfund and state cleanups, restoring critical habitat, developing public access spaces, establishing the Duwamish Valley Community Benefits Commitment, and investing in the next generation of leaders through job training, internships, and partnership with the Highline School District's Maritime High School.

The port looks ahead to continuing these successes in 2024 with progress on several upland investigations to identify legacy contamination and identify cleanup options at T25, T108, and T115 and planning for bank line softening projects at Centennial Park and T5 Southeast as well as ongoing habitat stewardship work across habitat sites along the Duwamish River.

HONOLULU NOTES

In the month of January, the Honolulu Hall dispatched a total of 64 jobs. There were seven steady billets, 22 Standby Electrician/Reefer jobs, and 35 Standby Wiper jobs. Pretty much our new monthly average. Presently, the Honolulu registration list has 18 A-, six B-, and 10 C-seniority members on it.

In January, I participated in the annual Marimed Foundation Maritime Career Expo & Job Fair. It's a well-organized and well-attended event. All the maritime industry companies were there manning their tables (labor unions, shipping companies, shipyards, NOAA, USCG REC, U.S. Navy, U.S. Army, NCL cruises, TRL, and Sailor's Home). Many of the guests were middle or high schoolers along with the general public.

I attended two board meetings in January, one with the Honolulu Sailor's Home and the other with the AFL-CIO Executive board. The Honolulu Sail-

or's Home meeting was one of the longest most involved meetings that I ever had, and the AFL-CIO meeting was one of the shortest meetings I ever had; very different.

At the end of the month the Hawaii Nurses Association held a seven-day strike. Their main reason for striking is that they would like to see better contract language regarding nurse-to-patient ratios. This is really a stand for everyone, nurses are understaffed, and the patients are not getting the care that is needed. This is a nationwide problem and affects all of us.

This is a warning: at work sexual harassment has taken a very large step to the fore front of everyday life. Everyone should be taking this seriously and I know for sure the companies are. So should you.

Aloha,
Mario Higa, Port Agent

SEATTLE NOTES

During the month of January Seattle shipped the following: two Electricians; eight Standby Reefers; five Standby Wipers. Seattle currently has 12 A-, four B-, and seven C-seniority members registered for shipping.

This month, the SUP, along with other maritime unions, organized and hosted a fund raiser for Senator Jon Tester of Montana at the MMP hall. Senator Tester is the prime Democratic sponsor of the American Farmers Feed the World Act (AFFWA). The AFFWA as introduced will bolster the Food for Peace program and require the full 50

percent mandate of U.S. food aid be shipped on U.S.-flagged and crewed vessels.

SUP, MMP, and ILWU engaged with all members of the Washington Congressional delegation, and successfully secured support from regional labor councils, along with many unions outside our scope in pursuit of this legislation. It is our goal that this legislation will be included in the upcoming Farm Bill.

Fraternally,
Brendon Bohannon,
Representative

Regular membership meeting dates 2024

March	6	S. F. Headquarters	August	7	S. F. Headquarters
	12	Honolulu		13	Honolulu
	13	Wilmington		14	Wilmington
April	3	S. F. Headquarters	September	4	S. F. Headquarters
	9	Honolulu		10	Honolulu
	10	Wilmington		11	Wilmington
May	1	S. F. Headquarters	October	2	S. F. Headquarters
	7	Honolulu		8	Honolulu
	8	Wilmington		9	Wilmington
June	5	S. F. Headquarters	November	6	S. F. Headquarters
	12	Honolulu		12	Honolulu
	12	Wilmington		13	Wilmington
July	3	S. F. Headquarters	December	4	S. F. Headquarters
	9	Honolulu		10	Honolulu
	10	Wilmington		11	Wilmington

MARINE FIREMAN SUBSCRIPTIONS, AND VOLUNTARY PAF DONATIONS

Please use the following form.

NAME (Print) _____ PENSION or BOOK NO. _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Check box: U.S. & POSSESSIONS OVERSEAS

Yearly Subscriptions: First Class \$20.00 Air (AO) Mail \$25.00

Voluntary Political Action Fund Donation \$ _____

Please make checks payable to:

MARINE FIREMEN'S UNION
240 2nd Street, San Francisco, CA 94105

HOWZ SHIPPING?

January 2024 San Francisco

Electrician.....	1
Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer.....	3
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer.....	5
Junior Engineer	3
Oiler	1
Wiper.....	1
Standby Electrician/Reefer	17
Standby Wiper.....	6
TOTAL	37

Wilmington

Electrician.....	3
Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer.....	4
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer.....	2
Junior Engineer	4
Oiler	1
Wiper.....	4
Shore Mechanic.....	14
Standby Electrician/Reefer	19
Standby Wiper.....	26
TOTAL	77

Honolulu

Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer.....	2
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer.....	3
Oiler	1
Wiper.....	1
Standby Electrician/Reefer	22
Standby Wiper.....	35
TOTAL	64

Seattle

Electrician.....	2
Standby Electrician/Reefer	8
Standby Wiper.....	5
TOTAL	15

HONOR ROLL

Voluntary donation to

General Treasury — January 2024:

Edward Tokarz, #3770.....	\$100.00
Marcos Almazan, JM-4933.....	\$100.00
Eeric White, #3925	\$100.00

POLITICAL ACTION FUND

Voluntary donations for January 2024:

Judith Moore, in Memory of Jerry Kimball, P-2543.....	\$1,000.00
David Hooper, P-2818.....	\$100.00
Joe Rubio, P-2757.....	\$100.00
Shadow Moyer, #3822	\$50.00
Junoe Savea, JM-5363.....	\$10.00