



## Reviving the nation's maritime industry

By Brent Sadler

If you don't know what the U.S. Merchant Marine does, you should. Although not part of the military, this civilian organization is responsible for a fleet of U.S.-registered commercial ships that transport goods and passengers, thus serving a critical role in supporting national security and commerce.

The organization is finally receiving the attention and investment it deserves through its unique role in protecting the homeland. Recent commitments by Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffy and Maritime Administration Administrator Stephen Carmel to restore the Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, as well as the proposed SHIPS for America Act, are helping to give the fleet its due.

We need to do more, though. The U.S. must accompany the construction of shipyards and the education of merchant mariners with a greater investment in unlicensed mariner training. These are the men and women who maintain ship's machinery and operate heavy shipboard equipment—critical players in a functioning merchant marine.

The generational task of restoring America's Merchant Marine requires growing a strong pool of these skilled unlicensed mariners. Unfortunately, despite recent attention to the industry, too little has yet been done for these unlicensed mariners. As such, the momentum seen to date at the federal level must be extended to the recruitment of unlicensed mariners.

To put this training disparity in historical context, the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy was established during World War II to address the need for trained officers at the federal level. Almost simultaneously, several training stations for unlicensed roles opened. The Sheepshead Bay Maritime Service Training Station, oper-

### Jones Act waiver puts foreign corporations ahead of America's workers

On March 24, 2026, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler released the following statement on the Trump administration's decision to issue an unnecessary and ineffective 60-day waiver of the Jones Act:

*As American maritime workers risk their lives in the Middle East and around the world, it is deeply concerning that the Trump administration would open U.S. waterways to nonunion foreign competitors. This unnecessary and ineffective waiver is a giveaway to foreign shipping interests, dressed up as relief for America's families at the pump.*

*Domestic shipping costs less than 1 cent per gallon of gas. This waiver will do nothing to fix the squeeze working families are feeling when they fill up their tank while handing good union jobs to foreign corporate competitors.*

*The Jones Act exists to protect a strong, American-flagged maritime fleet that is essential to our economy, national security and military readiness. The Trump administration should reverse this decision and come up with solutions to reduce energy costs that actually work, without sacrificing the workers who keep our nation's waterways moving and our country secure.*



Pictured are incoming Honolulu Port Agent Don Ngo (2026), outgoing Honolulu Port Agent Mario Higa (2014-2026), and retired Honolulu Port Agent Bonny Coloma (1995-2014).

ated by the U.S. Maritime Service and War Shipping Administration, was opened in 1942, and accommodated roughly 10,000 recruits the same year. During the War, it was able to graduate up to 35,000 mariners annually.

Obviously, this surge in recruitment was rooted in wartime necessity and patriotism, but the U.S. cannot afford to wait for a global conflict to realize the importance of unlicensed mariner training.

A 2017 report on the shortage of mariners with unlimited ship tonnage credentials for operation was just over 1,800 vacancies. These numbers have not been updated in almost a decade, but the shortage has likely worsened since COVID-19. Case in point, in 2024, mariner shortages resulted in 17 Military Sealift Command vessels being sidelined.

While estimates vary for Military Sealift Command (MSC) vessels, most crews, including those of the Navy's *John Lewis*-class tankers used for fueling warships while underway, are around 70% unlicensed. These crews onboard long-term MSC-chartered vessels, such as the *MT Empire State*, are comprised of approximately 60% unlicensed mariners. Bottom line, ships don't sail without unlicensed mariners.

The pathway to becoming a Third Mate or Third Assistant Engineer, while difficult and justifiably more expensive than an unlicensed position, is streamlined and supported by federal and state funding. Leaving out Kings Point, which is completely funded by the federal government, the existing six state academies receive substantial funding, including approximately \$1.5 billion for five new training vessels.

An unlimited tonnage license, required for most ocean-going vessels, can be earned in several ways. The primary way is through the Merchant Marine Academy or one of the state maritime academies by enrolling in a four-year course of study consisting of Coast Guard licensing classes, training at sea, and degree courses. Or it can be earned through a private school which only offers licensing courses and training at sea and does not lead to a degree.

For unlicensed mariners, the options are less direct. The pipeline from high-school graduate to licensed officer is roughly 900 each year through the academies. The pipeline from an entry-level position to a skilled unlicensed position such as Able Seaman (AB) or Qualified Member of the Engine Department (QMED) is practically non-existent.

The imbalance in officer vs. crew training is most notable in the lack of formal apprenticeship programs dedicated to turning unskilled aspiring mariners into qualified unlicensed crew. Many schools, including private schools and community colleges, only offer stand-alone courses for entry-level positions such as Ordinary Seaman (OS), and credential upgrades. This route requires mariners to take classes on their own, in between working at-sea for months at a time.

The most attractive and promising approach to solving the unlicensed mariner shortage lies in schools with unlicensed apprentice programs, rather than schools with stand-alone courses. The former can offer young Americans, who are considering other vocational programs, a structured method of obtaining a head start in the maritime industry. There are currently over 200 institutions that provide U.S. Coast Guard approved courses, but a very limited amount of these provide organized pathways like the licensing academies.

The primary pipeline for the unlicensed mariner is the Seafarers International Union-affiliated Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship, in Piney Point, Md. Piney Point runs programs which train applicants with no prior maritime experience for the skilled unlicensed roles of the deck, engine, and stewards departments in one year.

In contrast, even under the temporarily reduced training timelines, an OS taking stand-alone courses needs 540 days of sea time before being eligible for the Able Seaman exam. The salary difference for Civilian Mariners employed by Military Sealift Command is roughly \$20,000 per year more as an AB than as an OS. Expanding the opportunity to upgrade from Ordinary Seaman to Able Seaman in one year through a vocational school would make the decision to work offshore much easier for entry-level mariners.

But even as the largest school of its kind, Piney Point supplies only 300-350 mariners to the industry annually, all of them at least initially to the commercial fleet.

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On March 9, San Francisco Business Agent Pat Gillette (center) was sworn in as a delegate to the San Francisco Labor Council.

# The Marine Fireman

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## Patriot Contract Services Wage Rates

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FOS Rating	56-Hour Base Wage Monthly	56-Hour Base Wage Daily	Supplemental Benefit Monthly	Supplemental Benefit Daily	Overtime Hourly	Money Purchase Daily
	QMED-Electrician	\$8,947.26	\$298.24	\$3,102.60	\$103.42	\$38.80
QMED-Oiler	\$6,973.73	\$232.46	\$2,433.00	\$ 81.10	\$31.02	\$30.00
Wiper	\$5,291.18	\$176.37	\$1,862.70	\$ 62.09	\$23.02	\$30.00

  

ROS/RAV Rating	40-Hour Base Wage Weekly	40-Hour Base Wage Daily	Supplemental Benefit Daily	Money Overtime Hourly	Money Purchase Daily
	QMED-Electrician	\$1,662.63	\$237.52	\$11.88	\$38.80
QMED-Oiler	\$1,303.62	\$186.23	\$9.31	\$31.02	\$30.00
Wiper	\$998.30	\$142.61	\$7.13	\$23.02	\$30.00

## Sen. Murray speaks on securing port infrastructure funds

On April 1, U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-Washington), Vice Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and ranking member of the Energy and Water Development Subcommittee, visited the Port of Seattle and delivered remarks on the importance of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund supporting the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma, while affirming her continued efforts to end Trump's tariffs. Senator Murray also highlighted securing \$8 million for the Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA) to install shore power at the Port of Seattle, securing \$2.33 million for the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Seattle Harbor project to deepen navigation channels at the Port of Seattle, and increasing the funding level for the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund to a historic \$3.47 billion, while ensuring donor ports like the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma get their fair share.

Murray was joined by Ryan Calkins, Port of Seattle Commission President, and Co-Chair of the NWSA; Dan McKisson, ILWU Washington Area District Council President; Nicholas Gauthier, President of the Container Division, SSA Marine; Bill Bloxom, Owner of F.C. Bloxom Company International; and Bryan Gonzalez, Export Sales, F.C. Bloxom Company International.

In the FY26 appropriations bill, Senator Murray secured a historic \$3.47 billion for the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund—a longtime priority for Senator Murray—to invest in the nation's port and waterway infrastructure, including in Washington state. Senator Murray also ensured the appropriations

bill included language explicitly directing the USACE to fully implement language she championed in the 2020 Water Resources Development Act that requires the USACE to provide additional funding to Donor and Energy Transfer ports, which contribute more to the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund than they can access. The Ports of Seattle and Tacoma are both Donor ports, and this language will help them get their fair share from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund.

Murray has championed provisions to more equitably provide funding from the HMTF and tirelessly worked for more than a decade to change the law so that the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma get their fair share of funding after decades of contributing far more than they are eligible to use from the HMTF on traditional operation and maintenance activities. Murray's efforts included introducing multiple pieces of legislation to reform the HMTF and securing a new provision, Section 2106, in the 2014 Water Resources Reform and Development Act and every reauthorization since to allow donor ports, like Seattle and Tacoma, to access federal funding for additional uses that were previously ineligible for support—including port infrastructure improvements and rebates to importers to help address competition from ports in Canada and Mexico that are not subject to the same fees. Senator Murray successfully secured changes to the HMTF in the Water Resources Development Act of 2020, to more equitably distribute money from the HMTF for projects at America's ports.

## Port of Portland re-opens container operations

In 2025 the Port of Portland, Oregon handled 15.53 million metric tons of cargo, a vast majority of that freight was either bulk minerals at nearly 7.5 million metric tons or grain at almost 3.6 million metric tons. The port also is a major auto handler posting a 2025 throughput of 329,639 vehicles. What the port is not, is a big handler of containers, handling 86,387 TEU in 2025. But that may be changing, starting 2026.

According to a Port of Portland announcement, on January 7, 2026, the Oregon Container Terminal (OCT) was officially launched at the port's Terminal 6 "following a seamless transition from the Port of Portland to Harbor Industrial that sus-

tains a competitive option for supply chains in Oregon, Southwest Washington and Idaho."

OCT, Oregon's only international container gateway, will be operated by Harbor Industrial Services under a long-term lease with the Port of Portland. OCT will offer direct vessel services, dual-rail connectivity via BSNF and Union Pacific and future barge services connecting with inland locations. The terminal will support agriculture, manufacturing, technology and retail shippers. Weekly container service has already begun.

The launch featured the debut of Harbor Industrial's Ship Oregon initiative aimed at encouraging businesses to move their cargo through Oregon ports as a way to reduce overall transportation costs, reduce roadway emissions and congestion and support Oregon-centric supply chains.

Signaling OCT's importance, Oregon Governor Tina Kotek said, "Global connections like these give Oregon a competitive edge and help secure our economic future. They ensure that cranberries grown along the coast, hay harvested in the Willamette Valley, wheat from Eastern Oregon, and products made in the Portland metro area can reach global markets efficiently, competitively and sustainably."

## Union members in Hawaii

In 2025, union members accounted for an estimated 24.8 percent of wage and salary workers in Hawaii, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. Regional Commissioner Chris Rosenlund noted that the estimated number of workers belonging to unions was 145,000. Nationwide, union members accounted for an estimated 10.0 percent of employed wage and salary workers.

Across states, the estimated rates of union membership varied widely, ranging from below five percent to nearly 25 percent. State union membership

data for 2025 are based on relatively few observations and only allow for broad characterizations.

In addition to union members, another estimated 7,000 wage and salary workers in Hawaii were represented by a union on their main job or covered by an employee association or contract while not union members themselves. Workers represented by unions accounted for an estimated 26.0 percent of employed wage and salary workers in Hawaii and 11.2 percent nationwide.

### Marine Firemen's Union Directory

[www.mfoww.org](http://www.mfoww.org)

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**2026 COPE Endorsement Recommendations of the  
PRE-PRIMARY ELECTION COPE CONVENTION  
California Federation of Labor Unions, AFL-CIO  
Sacramento, California  
March 16, 2026**

**Statewide Constitutional Officers**

<b>Governor</b>	-	QUADRUPLE ENDORSEMENT: Katie Porter (D) / Eric Swalwell (D) Tom Steyer (D) / Antonio Villaraigosa (D)
<b>Lt. Governor</b>	-	Fiona Ma (D)
<b>Secretary of State</b>	-	Shirley Weber (D)
<b>Attorney General</b>	-	Rob Bonta (D)
<b>Controller</b>	-	Malia Cohen (D)
<b>Treasurer</b>	-	Eleni Kounalakis (D)
<b>Insurance Commissioner</b>	-	No Recommendation
<b>Superintendent of Public Instruction</b>	-	DUAL ENDORSEMENT: Al Muratsuch (D) / Anthony Rendon (D)
<b>Board of Equalization, District 1</b>	-	Nelson Esparza (D)
<b>Board of Equalization, District 2</b>	-	Sally Lieber (D)
<b>Board of Equalization, District 3</b>	-	Mike Gipson (D)
<b>Board of Equalization, District 4</b>	-	Tom Umberg (D)

**California State Assembly**

District	Candidate	District	Candidate
1	No Recommendation	41	John Harabedian (D)
2	Chris Rogers (D)	42	Deborah Klein Lopez (D)
3	No Recommendation	43	Celeste Rodriguez (D)
4	Cecilia Aguiar-Curry (D)	44	Nick Schultz (D)
5	No Recommendation	45	James Ramos (D)
6	No Recommendation	46	Jesse Gabriel (D)
7	Amy Slavensky (D)	47	Leila Namvar (D)
8	No Recommendation	48	No Recommendation
9	Heath Flora (R)	49	Mike Fong (D)
10	No Recommendation	50	Robert Garcia (D)
11	Lori Wilson (D)	51	Rick Chavez Zbur (D)
12	Jackie Elward (D)	52	Jessica Caloza (D)
13	Rhodesia Ransom (D)	53	Michelle Rodriguez (D)
14	No Recommendation	54	Mark Gonzalez (D)
15	Anamarie Avila Farias (D)	55	Isaac Bryan (D)
16	Rebecca Bauer-Kahan (D)	56	Lisa Calderon (D)
17	Matt Haney (D)	57	Sade Elhawary (D)
18	Mia Bonta (D)	58	Clarissa Cervantes (D)
19	Catherine Stefani (D)	59	Phillip Chen (R)
20	Liz Ortega (D)	60	Corey Jackson (D)
21	Diane Papan (D)	61	Tina McKinnor (D)
22	Juan Alanis (R)	62	Jose Solache (D)
23	No Recommendation	63	No Recommendation
24	Alex Lee (D)	64	No Recommendation
25	Ash Kalra (D)	65	No Recommendation
26	Patrick Ahrens (D)	66	No Recommendation
27	Brian Pacheco (D)	67	No Recommendation
28	Gail Pellerin (D)	68	No Recommendation
29	Robert Rivas (D)	69	Josh Lowenthal (D)
30	Dawn Addis (D)	70	No Recommendation
31	Annalisa Perea (D)	71	No Recommendation
32	No Recommendation	72	Chris Kluwe (D)
33	No Recommendation	73	Cottie Petrie-Norris (D)
34	Charles Hughes (R)	74	Laurie Davies (R)
35	DUAL: Andrae Gonzalez (D)/ Ana Palacio (D)	75	No Recommendation
36	Oscar Ortiz (D)	76	Darshana Patel (D)
37	Gregg Hart (D)	77	Tasha Boerner (D)
38	Steve Bennett (D)	78	Chris Ward (D)
39	Juan Carrillo (D)	79	LaShae Sharp-Collins (D)
40	Pilar Schiavo (D)	80	No Recommendation

**California State Senate**

District	Candidate	District	Candidate
2	Damon Connolly (D)	22	No Recommendation
4	Jaron Brandon (D)	24	John Erickson (D)
6	Sean Frame (D)	26	No Recommendation
8	Angelique Ashby (D)	28	Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (D)
10	Anne Kepner (D)	30	Bob Archuleta (D)
12	Nathan Magsig (R)	32	No Recommendation
14	Esmeralda Soria (D)	34	Avelino Valencia (D)
16	Melissa Hurtado (D)	36	Chris Duncan (D)
18	Steve Padilla (D)	38	No Recommendation
20	Caroline Menjivar (D)	40	Mara Elliot (D)

**United States Representatives in Congress**

District	Candidate	District	Candidate
1	Mike McGuire (D)	27	George Whitesides (D)
2	Jared Huffman (D)	28	Judy Chu (D)
3	No Recommendation	29	Luz Rivas (D)
4	Mike Thompson (D)	30	Laura Friedman (D)
5	Michael Masuda (D)	31	Gil Cisneros (D)
6	Richard Pan (D)	32	Brad Sherman (D)
7	DUAL: Doris Matsui (D)/ Mai Vang (D)	33	Pete Aguilar (D)
8	John Garamendi (D)	34	Jimmy Gomez (D)
9	Josh Harder (D)	35	Norma Torres (D)
10	Mark DeSaulnier (D)	36	Ted Lieu (D)
11	Connie Chan (D)	37	Sydney Kamlager (D)
12	Lateefah Simon (D)	38	Hilda Solis (D)
13	Adam Gray (D)	39	Mark Takano (D)
14	Aisha Wahab (D)	40	Joe Kerr (D)
15	Kevin Mullin (D)	41	Linda Sanchez (D)
16	No Recommendation	42	Robert Garcia (D)
17	Ro Khanna (D)	43	Maxine Waters (D)
18	Zoe Lofgren (D)	44	Nanette Barragan (D)
19	Jimmy Panetta (D)	45	Derek Tran (D)
20	No Recommendation	46	Lou Correa (D)
21	Jim Costa (D)	47	Dave Min (D)
22	Jasmeet Bains (D)	48	Marni von Wilpert (D)
23	No Recommendation	49	Mike Levin (D)
24	Salud Carbajal (D)	50	No Recommendation
25	Raul Ruiz (D)	51	Sara Jacobs (D)
26	Jacqui Irwin (D)	52	Juan Vargas (D)

# Reviving the nation's maritime industry

*Continued from page 1*

Military Sealift Command offers its own courses and internal unlicensed advancement programs. However, these are mostly on-the-job and not a formal and expedited apprenticeship.

The closest resemblance of a state maritime academy for unlicensed billets, which receives government funding, are schools like the Seattle Maritime Academy. This academy also offers a one-year program resulting in a valuable unlicensed rating but differs from Piney Point in that it is a state-run program. However, this academy only graduates 35-50 mariners annually.

Previous attempts by the federal government to increase the number of mariners has not directly addressed the recruitment crisis, especially for unlicensed mariners. President Trump's 2019 executive

order on "Supporting the Transition of Active Duty Service Members and Military Veterans into the Merchant Marine" was just one step toward investing in mariner training.

While many skills are easily transferable from the military to the Merchant Marine, its unique role as a commercial industry serving the national defense requires its own focus. Recruitment for the commercial and government fleet cannot be siphoned from Department of War manpower and training resources, but it should be organically cultivated as a commercial workforce ready to support the nation as needed.

The current emphasis on licensed mariners should be balanced with increased investment in unlicensed programs mirroring the State Maritime Academies. The two listed examples, Piney Point and the Seattle

Maritime Academy, are excellent models for enticing Americans to join the maritime industry and should be replicated as the federal government expands the U.S. fleet. The existing USCG-approved course providers, whether private or state-run, should be incentivized to organize their classes into unlicensed apprentice programs.

If America's maritime comeback is to succeed, the burden needs to be lifted from American mariners seeking unlicensed training, just as it is for licensed merchant marine officers.

*Brent Sadler is a Senior Research Fellow for Naval Warfare and Advanced Technology in the Allison Center for National Security. This piece originally appeared in RealClear Defense.*

# MFOW PRESIDENT'S REPORT



## APL Marine Services

**New Tonnage and Arbitration** — In early 2025, the French shipping giant CMA CGM, parent company of APL, stated that it wished to invest \$20 billion in the United States to develop maritime infrastructure, logistics and terminals. As part of the ambitious program, CMA CGM said money would be spent to increase its U.S.-flag APL fleet from 10 to 30 vessels. This was welcome news to the unions that serve aboard APL U.S.-flag vessels, including the MFOW.

In April 2025, APL management contacted the MFOW and SUP and stated that they were committed to continue employing MFOW and SUP personnel aboard its nine-ship Maritime Security Program (MSP) fleet and the additional U.S.-flag non-MSP ship (*President LB Johnson*) under the terms and conditions of the master agreement. The company also stated that if they expand their non-MSP fleet in the Pacific trade routes, they would give the MFOW and SUP an opportunity to meet with the company to negotiate wage rates, benefits, work rules and manning.

However, the company said they were planning to use an alternate subsidiary (Osprey Ship Management) and an alternate workforce (AMO and SIU-AGLIW) to crew non-MSP vessels in the Atlantic trade routes. The MFOW and SUP expressed disappointment in that plan and requested that the company detail their plans in writing.

In June 2025, the company notified the unions that they had just received permission to move the MSP operating agreement from the *APL Oceania* to the *President LB Johnson* and that this move had no effect on their commitment to utilize the MFOW and SUP on the current 10-ship fleet or future Pacific trade route non-MSP vessels. Nonetheless, the MFOW and SUP did not receive any document or memorandum of understanding concerning these commitments.

In June 2025, the Masters, Mates and Pilots (MM&P) alleged that AMO had signed a Licensed Deck Officer agreement with Osprey to crew a future U.S.-flag vessel, the *CMA CGM Phoenix*, in violation of Article XX of the AFL-CIO Constitution. On July 24, 2025, the *CMA CGM Phoenix* was reflagged to U.S.-flag at Charleston, South Carolina, operated by Osprey and crewed by the alternate workforce.

On July 30, 2025, an impartial umpire of the AFL-CIO ruled that the Licensed Deck Officer jobs aboard the *CMA CGM Phoenix* fell within MM&P's broad contractual jurisdiction.

The umpire also ruled that AMO violated Article XX, Sections 2 and 3 of the AFL-CIO Constitution when it entered into an agreement to crew those positions with AMO deck officers.

Responding to the manning of the unlicensed engine and deck departments with an alternate workforce, in August 2025, the MFOW and SUP filed grievances against APL stating that the company was in violation of Sections 3(a) and 3(b) of the General Rules in the Agreement between the SIU Pacific District and APL Marine Services, Limited.

The MM&P had previously filed a similar grievance. On March 4, 2026, Arbitrator Randi H. Abramsky concluded that American President Lines LLC and its affiliate, APL Marine Services Ltd., violated the collective bargaining agreement when the company did not crew the *CMA CGM Phoenix* with Licensed Deck Officers represented by MM&P.

In response to this development, the MFOW and SUP requested a meeting with APL to discuss a grievance settlement in lieu of going to scheduled arbitration on July 1. The parties met on March 23-24 and reached the following tentative memorandum of understanding:

- Tentative MOU applies to all non-MSP containerships regardless of size, design or propulsion.
- The MOU shall remain in force through September 30, 2029.
- MFOW and SUP Welfare contribution rates shall be reduced by \$45 per manday.
- MFOW and SUP agree to forego Welfare CPI increase effective October 1, 2026.
- No pyramiding of overtime on covered vessels (already in MFOW Work Rules).
- MFOW and SUP agree to forego October 1, 2027, three percent wage increase.
- Non-MSP ships not covered under severance provisions.
- One-time lump sum payment of \$100,000 to MFOW Training Plan.
- One-time lump sum payment of \$125,000 to SUP JEC to improve the Andrew Fureseth School of Seamanship.
- Replace one Watch AB with one STOS.

This tentative agreement locks in jurisdiction on new non-MSP containerships brought into APL's U.S.-flag fleet, regardless of trade route, with modest concessions to allow for operation of ships without the benefit of MSP payments. I recommend membership approval of the MOU.

**Safer Seas** — As previously reported, the Safer Seas Act, passed in December 2022, addressed the need to reduce incidents of sexual assault and sexual harassment on vessels. Shipping companies and vessels, including the Coast Guard, are now implementing safety requirements. These include recent updates requiring surveillance equipment on certain vessels.

On March 7, APL labor relations provided the following information regarding the Safer Seas program:

- Safer Seas program cameras have been installed on the *APL Oceania* and *APL Islander*.
- The install on the *CMA CGM Phoenix* is underway.
- Each of the remaining ships will have cameras installed prior to their next dry-docking.

- Each system will be basically the same with just the locations different based on the construction of the vessel.
- All cameras are in plain sight, and have signage.
- The system does not require any maintenance or interaction from the crew.
- The footage cannot be viewed or accessed onboard.
- Only the vendor can access the footage remotely or download on site.
- The company cannot access footage remotely or download on site.
- Footage overwrites after 390 days.
- In the event footage is accessed for a SASH investigation, the data will be removed by the vendor and given to APL legal department and Coast Guard for proper chain of custody.

**Persian Gulf** — On March 9, the MFOW and APL Marine Services signed a Letter of Agreement (LOA) regarding compensation to members serving aboard vessels in the Middle East, specifically the Southern Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Persian Gulf, Straits of Hormuz, and Gulf of Oman. The LOA basically restates the War Risk Bonus provisions of Section 21 of the General Rules and adds Harbor and Vessel Attack Bonus provisions.

## California Labor Federation

On March 16, attended the California Labor Federation Pre-Primary COPE Convention in Sacramento. The purpose of the event was to decide labor's endorsements for State Senate, State Assembly, State Constitutional Officers, and U.S. House of Representatives. Primary election endorsements were concluded after robust debate and will be printed in the April issue of *The Marine Fireman*.

## Matson Navigation Company

**W-2 Forms** — On March 17, Matson provided the Union with a Notice of Correction regarding 2025 W-2 forms. Labor relations informed that updated W-2 forms would be in the mail by March 31, 2026.

**California Know Your Rights Notice** — Matson labor relations sent a reminder that it is important the membership keeps their emergency contact information updated with Matson. In addition, California law requires that the company provides the membership with the option to designate an emergency contact specifically for notification in the event of an arrest or detainment in the workplace. Matson emergency contact information forms are available at all hiring halls.

**2026 MFOW Convention** — The collective bargaining agreement with Matson Navigation Company expires on June 30, 2026. Article II, Section XIII of the MFOW Constitution, states that it is "the policy of the Union to hold, in the year in which the principal collective bargaining agreement or agreements are to be renegotiated and prior to such negotiations...a Convention comprised of the President/Secretary-Treasurer, Vice President, Branch Port Agents, three elected delegates from Headquarters and one elected delegate from each other Branch."

The purpose of the Convention is to consider ways and means of bettering the collective bargaining agreements of the Union, make reports pertaining to the good and welfare of the Union and take up matters referred to it by the membership for consideration.

We were originally planning an in-person Convention at Headquarters on April 27, but with several scheduling conflicts, the current TSA airport situation, and the new Honolulu and Wilmington Port Agents settling into their offices, I am recommending that we hold a Zoom meeting Convention on Monday, April 13. This will be a condensed convention with all business completed in one day.

At today's meeting, three Headquarters Delegates shall be elected. One Delegate shall be elected at the April Wilmington and Honolulu Branch meetings. One Delegate shall be elected at a Special Meeting at the Seattle – Port Serviced. Log-in information will be made available to all participants.

## Jones Act Waiver

In early March, amid concerns that the Trump Administration was considering waiving the Jones Act, seven maritime unions, including the MFOW sent a joint letter to President Trump opposing Jones Act waivers tied to energy price concerns.

The message was simple: waivers won't lower gas prices. The primary driver of fuel costs is crude oil — not domestic shipping. Studies show the impact on nationwide fuel prices is negligible, and any marginal savings would be unlikely to reach consumers. An analysis from the Center for American Progress, a policy institute, estimated that waiving the law would reduce gas prices by three cents per gallon.

The unions pledged to stand ready to work with the Administration to find meaningful solutions that protect American workers and our maritime industrial base. However, on March 18, President Trump issued the 60-day waiver of the Jones Act. On March 18, a coalition of nine U.S. maritime labor organizations, including the MFOW, issued a statement expressing alarm regarding Administration's decision to issue a the 60-day waiver of the Jones Act.

## Patriot Contract Service

**RRF** — On March 19, the Union was informed by Patriot Contract Services (PCS) that the three Cape H ship operating agreements (*Cape Henry*, *Cape Horn* and *Cape Hudson*) would be transferred to TOTE Services. On March 31, the following turnover dates were given:

<u>Vessel</u>	<u>Anticipated Turnover Date</u>
<i>Cape Henry</i>	April 15, 2026
<i>Cape Hudson</i>	June 1, 2026
<i>Cape Horn</i>	August 15, 2026

Apparently, the switch was made because PCS will keep the *Pomeroy*, *Red Cloud* and *Watkins* under future MARAD agreement. As of now, the *George Watson*, *Cornelius Charlton*, and *William Soderman* remain with PCS under MARAD agreement, as do the *ADM WM Callaghan*, *Cape Orlando*, *Cape Victory* and *Cape Vincent*.

**T-AGOS Vessels** — On March 31, the Union was notified by PCS that the company has been awarded the contract to operate and maintain five Transportation Auxiliary General Ocean Surveillance (T-AGOS) vessels and one Transportation Auxiliary General Missile Range Instrumentation (T-AGM) vessel. PCS will provide personnel, operational and technical support, equipment, tools, and supplies to operate and maintain the fleet.

The T-AGOS vessels (*USNS Victorious*, *USNS Loyal*, *USNS Effective*, *USNS Im-*

*Continued on page 6*

## BUSINESS AGENT'S REPORT

Brothers and Sisters,

Marine Firemen's Union members seeking to renew, upgrade, or test for a Merchant Mariner Credential are being directly affected by the Department of Homeland Security funding lapse, which has shut down the National Maritime Center and Regional Examination Centers. For our members, this is not just an administrative delay, it is creating a situation where members cannot get to work. Although, the NMC has processed STCW medical certifications and delivered these, as long as no waivers are required.

At the same time, the Coast Guard has moved to a new format for submitting MMC and STCW applications. Members now need to go to the National Maritime Center website and use the online application portal to send in their paperwork. Before uploading anything, make sure you have completed the right forms and all required supporting documents ready, course certificates, medical forms, drug test paperwork, and any other records needed for the endorse-

ment you are seeking. Under this new process, it is very important that every document be saved and uploaded in PDF format. Scan your papers clearly, save them as PDFs, and make sure your package is complete before sending it in.

Even with these obstacles, Marine Firemen's Union members should not be discouraged. Members should continue taking the steps needed to protect and advance their careers by completing required training, obtaining necessary certifications, and submitting their applications and supporting documents to the Coast Guard. When the shutdown ends and the National Maritime Center reopens, members who stayed on top of their certifications and submissions will be in the best position to move forward as quickly as possible. If any member needs help with the forms, with scanning paperwork, or with turning documents into PDF files for submission, come into the hall and we will help get your package together.

Fraternally,  
Patrick Gillette, SFBA

## California labor divided on next state governor

The California Federation of Labor endorsed not one, but four separate Democrats in March — former Congresswoman Katie Porter, East Bay Congressman Eric Swalwell, billionaire Tom Steyer, and former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. Lorena Gonzalez-Fletcher, president of the California Federation of Labor, explained endorsing four candidates was the only way for the federation to reach a two-thirds consensus.

Meanwhile, Swalwell clutched the endorsement from Service Employees International Union, or SEIU California. A recent Emerson College poll shows Swalwell as the leading Democrat at 17 percent.

The mixed labor endorsements are rolling in on the heels of California Democratic Party Chair Rusty Hicks calling on low-polling gubernatorial candidates to drop out. At least one political observer said the lack of unified

labor support for one Democratic candidate makes it harder for a clear front runner to emerge.

This year's gubernatorial race is unprecedented with no apparent front-runner at this point in the process. Governor Gavin Newsom and former Governor Jerry Brown earned widespread labor support much earlier on in past elections, but this year's high volume of candidates is the main reason behind the break in that trend.

Former Representative Katie Porter secured endorsements from the Teamsters, the United Auto Workers, and the National Union of Healthcare Workers. The California Nurses Association endorsed Tom Steyer. Former LA Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa won over the State Building and Construction Trades. Former Attorney General Xavier Becerra is endorsed by the California State Council of Laborers.

## U.S. doubles Persian Gulf maritime cover to \$40 billion

The U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) has doubled its Gulf maritime facility capacity to \$40 billion, with the addition of six new insurers. The new participating firms are Travelers, Liberty Mutual Insurance, Berkshire Hathaway, AIG, Starr and CNA. The facility executes President Trump's directive to secure maritime trade through the Strait of Hormuz and stabilize global commerce amid ongoing regional tensions.

Chubb was named the lead underwriter for the initiative in March. It will run the facility, set terms and pricing, take on risk, issue policies for qualifying vessels and cargo, and administer claims. The firm, alongside its six new partners, have pledged \$20 billion to the facility, in addition to the \$20 billion in rolling coverage from the DFC.

Cover will be available for war-related marine risks, including hull and liability and cargo. Products will include insurance for war risks to hulls, war-re-

lated protection and indemnity exposures, and war risks affecting cargo.

DFC, working with other US government bodies, will decide whether vessels qualify for the scheme. Decisions will be based on information supplied by applicants, sanctions and Know Your Customer checks, and any other material DFC and its partners consider relevant.

Applicants will be asked to provide data including vessel name and operator, origin and destination, International Maritime Organization number, flag, details of the operator and crew.

They are also required to provide major beneficial owners and their domiciles, registered owner and domicile, as well as type, quantity, origin, destination and value of cargo, information on the cargo owner and domicile, and details of lenders with exposure to the vessel.

DFC plans to issue a separate notice to confirm when the application portal will open and to set out further guidance on the process.

## VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**Deaths:** The following deaths were reported since the last meeting: Octino M. Cabrito, #3940, Robert J. Barnett, #3644/P#2683.

There were 30 registrants dispatched in the month of March: 21 in Class A, five in Class B, two in Class C and two

Non-Seniority.

There are 39 members registered: 18 in Class A, 11 in Class B, and 10 in Class C.

Fraternally,  
Robert Baca  
Vice President



March 12, 2026

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

On behalf of the undersigned American maritime labor unions, we write to express our strong opposition to any administrative waivers granted under the Jones Act in response to rising energy price concerns.

As you know, Jones Act waivers are granted only in rare, exceptional circumstances, typically on national security grounds where U.S.-flag vessel capacity is unavailable. Should concerns exist regarding tanker capacity, Congress has already addressed this through the Tanker Security Program, which ensures the availability of U.S.-flag vessels crewed by American mariners to move critical energy supplies when needed. Domestic tanker rates remain stable under long-term charters, while international shipping markets are highly volatile, with foreign-flag tanker rates often exceeding Jones Act rates due to global instability, including disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz. Waiving the Jones Act would do nothing to reduce gasoline prices. In fact, the primary driver of gasoline prices is the cost of crude oil, not domestic shipping costs. Several studies have shown the impact of domestic shipping on nationwide fuel prices is negligible, and any marginal savings would be unlikely to reach consumers. A Jones Act waiver would instead create opportunities for foreign-flag operators that avoid paying U.S. taxes, rely heavily on low-wage labor, and operate under regulatory regimes that circumvent international labor and vessel safety standards in direct conflict of America's national security and economic interests.

At a time when the Administration is working to strengthen our nation's shipyards and expand the international U.S.-flag fleet under the recently unveiled Maritime Action Plan (MAP), a Jones Act waiver would undermine these core policy objectives. The Jones Act is foundational to maintaining a strong merchant marine, sustaining maritime employment, supporting shipbuilding capacity, and preserving the domestic industrial base essential to national security. Waiving this law when U.S. vessels are available would outsource American jobs and weaken the long-term resilience of the maritime industrial base. While we genuinely share the collective goal of lowering energy costs for consumers, such waivers would do little to achieve that outcome while harming American workers and domestic industrial capacity.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. We stand ready to work with you to identify meaningful solutions to rising energy prices that protect American workers and strengthen our maritime and industrial base.

Sincerely,

Willie Barrere, American Maritime Officers  
Kelly Anderson, President, American Radio Association  
Don Josberger, President, International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots  
Anthony Poplawski, President, Marine Firemen's Union  
Adam Vokac, President, Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association  
Matt Henning, President, Sailors' Union of the Pacific  
Greg Regan, President, Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2026

### Maritime Labor Leaders Push Back on 60-Day Jones Act Waiver

**Washington, D.C.** — A coalition of U.S. maritime labor organizations, including the American Maritime Officers; American Radio Association; International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots; Marine Firemen's Union; Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association; Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO; Sailors' Union of the Pacific; Seafarers International Union; and the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, today expressed alarm regarding the Trump Administration's decision to issue a sweeping 60-day waiver of the Jones Act in the following statement:

*"America's maritime labor unions are deeply concerned about the Administration's broad Jones Act waiver, which undermines our national security, weakens military readiness, and hands critical maritime work to foreign vessel operators. Jones Act waivers are intended to meet a strict legal standard and are traditionally granted only in narrow, clearly defined national security emergencies where U.S.-flag capacity is unavailable. Maritime labor has supported narrowly tailored Jones Act waivers in the past when they were obviously justified in the national interest, but this sweeping action does not meet that standard."*

*"At a time of heightened global instability where American sailors are being targeted in the Persian Gulf and surrounding areas, opening U.S. waterways to foreign adversaries through an expansive Jones Act waiver further jeopardizes America's safety and security in open waters. Such action only permits more abuse of our nation's cabotage laws and sends a damaging signal about the nation's commitment to sustain a strong U.S. maritime industry and workforce."*

*"To be clear, this decision will not provide meaningful relief at the gas pump. It has been plainly shown that the primary driver of gasoline prices remains the global cost of crude oil, and multiple analyses demonstrate that domestic shipping accounts for less than one cent per gallon. Any marginal savings will not reach consumers but will instead reward foreign shipping interests at the expense of American workers."*

*"Maritime labor calls on the Administration to reverse course and work with stakeholders on real solutions that address energy costs without sacrificing American jobs, national security, or the long-term strength of the U.S. maritime industrial base."*

# MARINE FIREMEN'S UNION TRAINING PROGRAM — 2026

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

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.

May 11-14                      June 8-12                      July 20-23

### 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.

April 30-May 1                      May 28-29                      July 9-10

### Basic IGF Code

Any applicant who has successfully completed your Basic IGF Code Operations (MARINS-805) course will satisfy: The training and standards of competence required by STCW Code Section A-V/3 and Table A-V/3-1, as amended 2010, for original or renewal of STCW endorsement for Basic IGF Code Operations. A course certificate may be used for one application which results in the issuance of an endorsement and may not be used for any application transactions thereafter.

April 27-28                      May 18-19                      June 15-16

### IECEX CoPC Certification

Training is based upon the IECEX 05 CoPC Scheme and is broken down into various customized modules. The following modules are covered:

- Ex 001 — Apply basic principles of protection in explosive atmospheres
- Ex 003 — Install explosion — protected equipment and wiring systems
- Ex 007 — Perform visual & close inspection of electrical installations in or associated with explosive atmosphere
- Ex 008 — Perform detailed inspection of electrical installations in or associated with explosive atmosphere

**Prerequisites:** QMED Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer, AS-E and Basic IGF Code.

July 6-10,                      September 14-18

### QMED Oiler, Boiler Technician/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.

July 6-31                      September 7-October 2                      October 12-November 6

### 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 11-15                      August 3-7                      October 5-9

### 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.

July 13-August 21                      September 14-October 23

### 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 1-5                      August 24-28                      October 19-23

### 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.

April 13-17                      May 18-22                      June 8-12

## Additional Courses

**Maritime Institute:** 1130 West Marine View Drive, Everett WA

**QMED Oiler:** July 6-24, October 5-23

**STCW Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch:** July 27-31, October 26-30

**STCW Able Seafarer-Engine:** May 25-29, June 22-26, August 10-14

### 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:** May 1, May 15, May 29, June 19, June 26, July 17, July 31

**Maritime Institute, Honolulu, HI:** April 10, June 5, July 31, September 4, October 9

**Maritime Institute, Everett, WA:** April 27, May 22, June 5, July 20, August 24

**Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA:** April 8-9

**MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA:** March 30-March 31, May 18-19, June 16-17, July 20-21, August 3-

### 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:** May 20-22, June 10-12, August 19-21

**Maritime Institute, Everett, WA:** April 20-22, May 13-15, August 5-7

**Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA:** Pending

**MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA:** May 18-20, December 7-9

## MORE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*Continued from page 4*

*peccable* and *USNS Able*) are government-owned ships under the operational and administrative command of the Commander Military Sealift Command (COMSC), who also exercises Type Commander (TYCOM) functions and supports the Navy's Surveillance Towed Array Sensor System operations.

The T-AGM is comprised of public vessel *USNS Howard O Lorenzen*, which is a government-owned ship under the operational and administrative command of COMSC, who also exercises TYCOM functions and supports the U.S. Air Force's Dual Band Radar efforts in monitoring worldwide missile launches.

In Full Operating Status, the fleet should provide 18 QMED and Engine/Utility billets (QMED-Oilers or higher) and two QMED-Electrician billets for MFOW members. Will keep the membership informed of possible turnover dates, contract protests, etc.

Recommend acceptance of the MOU covering the one T-AGM and five T-AGOS vessels.

Like us on facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/Marine-Firemens-Union-121622254577986/>



# Public hearing held on Guam port master plan

On March 26, the Port Authority of Guam held its public hearing on the Master Plan 2025, as part of the Bureau of Statistics and Plans review process. The hearing marked another milestone in the Port's long-term modernization and resiliency strategy.

Port leadership provided an overview of the Master Plan's phased capital improvements, sustainability framework, and readiness initiatives designed to support Guam's economic growth and national defense mission. Attendees were briefed on the Port Improvement Program, which integrates the Port Readiness Plan and the Sustainability Plan into a coordinated roadmap for implementation over the next five to ten years.

The plan outlines strategic investments including ship-to-shore gantry crane replacement, long-term wharf and fuel pier rehabilitation, digital transformation initiatives, tariff simplification, and climate adaptation measures. These initiatives are designed to strengthen operational efficiency, financial sustainability, and infrastructure resiliency.

During the hearing, port officials emphasized that the plan balances commercial growth

with environmental responsibility and national security readiness, particularly in support of

Indo-Pacific Command's Pacific Deterrence Initiative. The port master plan goals are:

- Provide a comprehensive over-

view of the port's current conditions including governance, financial, operational, and physical attributes;

- Assess the current and projected cargo opportunities based on Guam's market drivers, which consist of military realignments, tourism, transshipment and organic growth;
- Determine near-term resiliency improvements and operational adjustments to accommodate the peak of the military build-up, support Indo-Pacific Command's PDI and ensure maritime posture for future deployments of military assets;
- Estimate the port's capacity and ability to meet the projected demand and tenant requirements;
- Identify long-term port improvement efforts targeted towards continuing operational and economic sustainability;
- Establish optimal requirements for operations, maintenance and repair, and capital improvement projects;
- Validate the efficient and effective use of the port's resources and assets;
- Present commercial strategies for the port to diversify its revenue base and enhance its financial self-sufficiency including a comprehensive tariff simplification and associated benefits to the port and port users;
- Assess the impact of the recommended strategies on Guam's eco-

nomical conditions;

- and
  - Prepare implementation programs to support a coordinated approach of continuous port improvements balanced with sustainability.
- The port master plan key elements are:
- Ship-to-Shore Gantry Crane Replacement
  - Rehabilitation of Area A Fuel Storage Facility
  - In-Water Infrastructure Study
  - Wharves and Fuel Piers Long Term Replacement
  - Financial Management System
  - Guam Customs Inspection Facility

- Solar Power Study
- Tariff Simplification
- Terminal Operating System Information Technology Study
- Port Users Group Initiative for System Integration
- Financial Feasibility Analysis
- Economic Impact

With the public hearing completed, the Master Plan will proceed through the remaining

BSP review process before recommendation to the Governor of Guam for submission to the Guam Legislature pursuant to law.

## Evicted floating cranes could be sent to Saipan in port's \$55 million lawsuit

Saipan could be the new home for a pair of floating cranes that the Port Authority of Guam wants off its property, now the subject of a \$55 million lawsuit against evicted former tenant Guam Shipyard. Parties appeared before District Court of Guam Magistrate Judge Michael Bordallo in the case. A shipyard attorney told the judge that the cranes were "not sunk exactly" on port property but were "sort of up on the rocks."

Port management moved to evict the former longtime tenant last May, alleging past-due rent, lease violations, and the company's unauthorized occupation of property at the Jose D. Leon Guerrero Commercial Port. Shortly after, the Port Authority sued Guam Shipyard in federal court for \$55 million. The lawsuit alleges a pair of floating cranes operated by the company broke loose from their moorings at Hotel Wharf during Typhoon Mawar in 2023 and damaged Golf Pier, a critical fuel offloading point, and a seaplane ramp. Parties have been exploring a settlement in the case, but the port wants a plan for the cranes to be removed.

There has been minimal progress on getting a home for floating cranes YD 120 and YD 223 at Naval Base Guam. The company wants to cut a deal with the Navy for the cranes, but meetings late last year were delayed due to the federal shutdown, and February at-

tempts to meet

Meanwhile, the floating cranes need to be re-floated and moored elsewhere so that holes can be permanently patched and the machines made seaworthy again. Saipan could have a space for the cranes and a Philippines-based tugboat company is being considered to move the two.

Attorneys for Guam Shipyard have argued that the port used its 2025 eviction to shortcut complex issues over the company's lease of Hotel Wharf, alleging thousands of dollars of advance payments were made over the lease. The eviction is on appeal to the Supreme Court of Guam. While local Supreme Court justices weigh the eviction appeal, filings show lawyers for the port and shipyard have asked for a number of continuances in federal court as they discuss a potential settlement in the \$55 million lawsuit.

Last May, the port board firmed up a four-year, \$10.5 million lease with Black Construction Corp. for Hotel Wharf. The area, since vacated by Guam Shipyard, is expected to serve as one of a number of staging areas for Black Construction's \$571 million contract with the Navy to repair the Glass Breakwater. Encircling Apra Harbor, the Glass Breakwater is a three-mile-long structure protecting ships that deliver 90 percent of Guam's goods while they are in port.

## Port receives Gold Award for protecting blue whales and blue skies

The Port of Oakland, California will receive a special Gold Award by the organization Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies (BWBS) on April 22 for participation in the 2025 Vessel Speed Reduction (VSR) Season. The port joined BWBS last year as one of its Program Ambassadors to help protect migrating whales and coastal air quality. Ambassadors work with participating shipping lines and help encourage greater industry participation in voluntary efforts that reduce fatal strike risk to endangered whales, air and underwater noise pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions.

BWBS is a voluntary VSR verification and recognition program, formed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Marine Sanctuaries, Bay Area Air District and California coastal county-based air pollution control districts. Participating shipping companies' fleets travel at 10 knots or less in the VSR zones from May to December, which coincides with peak ozone and endangered whale presence. Traveling at decreased speeds signifi-

cantly reduces whale and environmental impacts.

As an ambassador, the Port of Oakland helps raise awareness of the program and encourages full participation from all shipping lines calling the port. Carriers CMA CGM, MSC, Evergreen, Cosco, Hapag-Lloyd, Hyundai, Maersk, ONE, Wan Hai, and Yang Ming—which represents 82 percent of all vessel calls to the Port of Oakland last year—participate in the program. The port award level is determined by the percent of calls by participating shipping lines.

The Port of Oakland will receive the special Gold Award recognition at a BWBS awards ceremony on Earth Day, April 22, in Jack London Square.

## Modernization of Don Young Port of Alaska underway

A multi-year modernization program estimated to cost about \$2.25 billion is underway for the Don Young Port of Alaska in Anchorage, Alaska with aspirations to commission the new Terminal 1 dock by 2029. The Port of Alaska Modernization Program (PAMP), a dock replacement program that aims to replace aging docks and related infrastructure before they fail, is expected to take about a decade. It will improve operational safety and efficiency, accommodate modern shipping operations and improve the port's resiliency to survive extreme seismic events and Cook Inlet's harsh marine environment.

The port supports over \$18 billion in commercial activity in Alaska, as the state's main inbound, containerized freight and fuel distribution center. Kodiak and Dutch Harbor are, by comparison, small markets that get regularly scheduled container service from Matson vessels sailing between Anchorage and Tacoma, Washington.

The final PAMP score is still being determined based on user needs and funding. Initial funding has come through the Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP), through which new funds are available every year. State and local dollars will pay for one-third of each project within the overall program.

Former Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and his staff did a lot of the advance work on the program, which got an initial \$68.7 million grant. Buttigieg was in Anchorage in 2023 to tour the facility and see firsthand the corrosion and seismic risks faced by the port, which handles 90 percent of the state's essential goods.

On March 18, Anchorage Mayor Suzanne LaFrance issued an announcement to officially break ground on the project to ensure a functional, efficient

port to serve Alaskans for the next 70 years. Initial work includes setting up contractor offices and site delineation to manage the massive scale of the Terminal 1 build, plus demolition of the existing Terminal 1. The mayor said the project would reach its next milestone in May, when the first barges carrying 240-foot pilings are expected to arrive at the North Extension of the port. Marine operations are expected to begin in mid-May or early June with piledriving at the north side of the new terminal.

The program will provide for about 175 union jobs all summer for four years, according to Joelle Hall, president of the Alaska American Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO.

The original port, formerly the Port of Anchorage, was built in the late 1950s and officially began operations in Sept. 1961. Construction began around 1959, with the first barge docking in April 1961. The port survived the 1964 earthquake and became the primary shipping hub for Southcentral Alaska. In the aftermath of the earthquake, the port expanded throughout the 1960s to meet increased cargo demands.

Currently, about 40 percent of Alaskans live in Anchorage, and 60 percent of state residents live within a two-hour drive of the port. Port docks leverage and are leveraged by hundreds of millions of dollars of freight-related, private and public sector infrastructure. These include 125 acres of cargo-handling infrastructure, including intermodal cargo transport connections: 3.1 million barrels of liquid fuel storage, 60,000 tons of cement storage and dock cranes, roll on/roll off ramps, dockside cement-handling system, pipelines and more.

The port connects Alaska's primary cargo distribution systems, from air, marine, rail and pipeline to roadways.

### Active MFOW members

Retain your Welfare Fund eligibility.

**MAIL** or **TURN IN** all your Unfit for

Duty slips to:

**MFOW Welfare Fund,**

**240 2nd St., San Francisco, CA 94105**



The Honolulu membership sent outgoing Port Agent Mario Higa off with a potluck party.



Former Honolulu Port Agent Mario Higa (center) received a plaque for his work associated with the Marimed Foundation in Hawaii.

## HONOLULU NOTES

The Honolulu hiring hall dispatched a total of 77 jobs for the month. The breakdown is as follows: 23 Standby Electrician/Reefers, 37 Standby Wipers, four Junior Engineers, two Shore Mechanics, and one Standby Junior Engineer. Dispatch activity remained steady throughout the month, with continued demand for standby personnel supporting vessel operations and maintenance requirements. The current Honolulu registration list consists of 19 A-, five B-, and 10 C-seniority members.

I attended the Honolulu Port Council Meeting, discussing port operations

and coordination.

As I transition into my role as Port Agent, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Mario Higa for his many years of dedicated service and for his guidance during this transition. His leadership and experience have been invaluable, and I am grateful for his continued support. Stepping into this position has been both an honor and a learning experience, and I continue to learn every day. I look forward to serving the membership and ensuring the continued efficient operation of the Honolulu hiring hall.

Aloha,  
Don Ngo, Port Agent

### Regular membership meeting dates 2026

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

## HONOR ROLL

**Voluntary donation to General Treasury — March 2026:**  
 Bonny Coloma, P-2763.....250.00  
 Eric White, #3925.....100.00  
 Sharon Barnett, in Memory of Robert Barnett, P-2683 ..... 300.00

## POLITICAL ACTION FUND

**Voluntary donations for March 2026:**  
 Bonny Coloma, P-2763.....50.00

**FINISHED WITH ENGINES**

**Octino M. Cabrito, #3940.**  
 Born November 11, 1962, Philippines. Joined MFOW March 12, 2012. Died March 16, 2026, Los Angeles, California.

**Robert J. Barnett, #3644/P2683.** Born August 16, 1939, West Virginia. Joined MFOW June 15, 1990. Died December 6, 2025, Vancouver, Washington.

## SEATTLE NOTES

During the month of February Seattle shipped one REJ, one 2nd REJ, one Junior Engineer and eight Standby Reefer/Electricians. Seattle currently has seven A-, four B-, and four C-seniority members registered for shipping.

If you are found Not Fit for Duty, whether from injury aboard or ashore, or from a prolonged serious illness, it is important that you immediately contact

the Welfare Plan or your Branch of registration. You are part of a Union, and there are benefits through our Welfare Plan that are available to you while you are healing. Please ask about it the next time you are in the hall.

Fraternally,  
**Brendon Bohannon,**  
 Representative

## Hollywood studios reach a tentative agreement with writer's union

After less than a month of negotiations, the Writers Guild of America and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers announced their first steps toward a deal. On April 4, the WGA Negotiating Committee unanimously approved a four-year tentative agreement with the AMPTP for the 2026 Minimum Basic Agreement, with increased company contributions across many areas and long-needed increases to health contribution caps. The new contract also builds on gains from 2023 and helps address free work challenges.

In 2023, the WGA went on a strike that lasted an entire summer and cramped production schedules for months. The AMPTP said that it looks forward to "building on this progress as we continue working toward agreements that support long-term industry stability."

Word of the agreement arrived a few weeks before the expiration of the union's current contract on May 1. It

also comes amid an ongoing dispute between the Writers Guild of America West and its own staff union. The staff union includes workers in fields such as legal and communications. Dozens of them in Los Angeles went on an independent strike in mid-February. The employees allege WGA West management was engaging in unfair labor practices, union-busting activities and bad faith bargaining. The staff union said striking members had lost health insurance coverage. WGA canceled its annual West Coast award show in March as a result of the staff union strike.

The new four-year contract between the WGA and Hollywood studios is expected to contain new rules around the use of artificial intelligence, such as licensing for AI training. It will also include pension increases and extra compensation for streaming video on demand. The proposed deal, which is a year longer than the usual agreements.

## HOWZ SHIPPING?

March 2026

San Francisco	Wilmington
Electrician..... 1	Electrician..... 1
Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer..... 1	Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer..... 2
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer..... 5	Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer..... 2
Junior Engineer ..... 1	Junior Engineer ..... 2
Oiler ..... 1	Oiler ..... 1
Wiper ..... 1	Wiper ..... 3
Standby Electrician/Reefer ..... 13	Shore Mechanic..... 13
Standby Wiper ..... 7	Standby Electrician/Reefer ..... 13
<b>TOTAL .....30</b>	Standby Junior Engineer ..... 1
<b>Honolulu</b>	Standby Wiper ..... 18
Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer..... 3	<b>TOTAL .....56</b>
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer..... 4	<b>Seattle</b>
Junior Engineer ..... 4	Electrician..... 4
Wiper ..... 3	Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer..... 3
Shore Mechanic..... 2	Wiper ..... 1
Standby Electrician/Reefer ..... 23	Standby Electrician/Reefer ..... 5
Standby Junior Engineer ..... 1	<b>TOTAL .....13</b>
Standby Wiper ..... 37	
<b>TOTAL .....77</b>	

## MARINE FIREMAN SUBSCRIPTIONS, AND VOLUNTARY PAF DONATIONS

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 240 2nd Street, San Francisco, CA 94105