THE MARINE FIREMAN

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

Volume 82 | SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA SEPTEMBER 11, 2026 | No.9

A new global shortage is looming — fuel for ships

The global market for petroleum products is facing the risk of a shortage of heavy fuel oil, which is used as marine fuel and for electricity generation. According to Energy Aspects' forecast, the shortage could reach 218,000 barrels per day in the third quarter of 2026 — for the first time since the third quarter of 2025, reports Reuters. This is due to a combination of military conflicts, disruptions at oil refineries and restrictions on maritime transport. At the same time, refineries are prioritizing the production of more profitable diesel, petrol and jet fuel, while reducing the output of fuel oil.

The war in the Middle East has disrupted supplies of crude oil and petroleum products from the region, while Ukraine's attacks on Russian oil refining infrastructure have reduced exports of Russian petroleum products. A further factor has been the reduction in refining capacity and exports in China.

Against a backdrop of petrol and diesel shortages, refiners have an added incentive to divert feedstock towards the production of these products. For example, the Nigerian Dangote refinery, with a capacity of 650,000 barrels per day, has increased its exports of diesel, petrol and jet fuel while simultaneously reducing its exports of fuel oil. Energy Aspects notes that record-low stocks of petrol and diesel are encouraging refineries to make greater use of fuel oil as feedstock for secondary processing, which further reduces its availability on the market.

According to Kpler, heavy fuel oil exports from Russia fell to a record low of 591,000 barrels per day in August, compared with an average of over 860,000 barrels per day in 2025. Fuel oil exports from the Middle East in March–August fell by 45 per cent year-on-year, to an average of 447,000 barrels per day. The drop in supplies from the Al-Zour refinery in Kuwait – one of the major fuel oil exporters – was particularly marked. Since March, the facility has exported just one consignment of 26,000 barrels per day, whereas in January–February the figure stood at around 191,000 barrels per day.

Marine fuel prices are already rising. The reduction in supply is already affecting stocks and prices. Heavy fuel oil stocks in the world's three major bunkering hubs – Singapore, the Amsterdam–Rotterdam–Antwerp region and Fujairah – are approximately 30 per cent below their three-year seasonal averages.

In Singapore, the world's largest bunkering center, the price of the main type of marine fuel — very low-sulfur fuel oil (VLSFO) — stood at just under $825 per metric ton on September 1, or around $130 per barrel. Since the start of the conflict with Iran, the price has risen by 76 per cent, while the price of benchmark Brent crude has increased by approximately 40 per cent over the same period.

Asia may prove to be the most vulnerable due to its high dependence on supplies from the Gulf states. In particular, Singapore imports more than half of the nearly one million barrels per day required for its bunker fuel market.

The situation is further complicated by changes to shipping routes. To avoid the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and the Red Sea due to threats from the Houthis, vessels are forced to take longer routes, which increases fuel consumption.

For shipping companies, rising bunker fuel costs mean higher operating expenses. Reuters notes that the rise in fuel prices may subsequently be reflected in sea freight rates. Consequently, disruptions to oil refining are gradually spreading beyond the energy market. A shortage of any one type of petroleum product could increase the cost of maritime logistics, particularly if restrictions on the supply of raw materials and petroleum products persist.

For the time being, Energy Aspects forecasts a fuel oil shortage of 218,000 barrels per day in the third quarter. Rystad also expects the market to remain extremely tight due to protracted supply disruptions in the Middle East.

Newsom gives shipbuilding award in Vallejo Mare Island and Cal Poly Maritime Academy

California Governor Gavin Newsom announced $48.5 million in funding to support 18 state projects at a press conference on Mare Island, including $8.2 million for shipbuilding and career development on Mare Island in partnership with Cal Poly Maritime Academy. The $8.2 million investment will be broken into three projects. Cal Poly Maritime Academy will use $4.3 million to transform Mare Island's shipyard into an applied research and technology acceleration campus. An extra $1.4 million will be used for workforce development for the students. Finally, $2.4 million will go towards creating the ecosystem and establishing regional coordination to become the Bay Area's maritime industrial base, which will be overseen by the Solano County Economic Development Corporation, a nonprofit that represents the county and various agencies.

The funding also includes $3.9 million for aerospace education at San Diego State University, $6.8 million in space and satellite improvements in Kern County, $9.7 million in quantum education at UCLA and CSU San Marcos, and $17.7 million for advanced manufacturing projects in the Central San Joaquin region.

The announcement with Cal Poly

Continued on page 8

Halls to close

Columbus Day — The MFOW hiring halls will be closed on Monday, October 13, 2026, in observance of Columbus Day, which is a contract holiday.

Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO Executive Secretary-Treasurer Jordan Esopa addressed the delegates at the September 2026 San Francisco Port Maritime Council meeting held at Marine Firemen's Union Headquarters in San Francisco. Discussion centered around the ongoing Jones Act waivers and joint organized labor-local community engagement.

The MFOW crew aboard the *CMA CGM Phoenix*: ERJ Reynato Ilona, #3901; 2nd REJ Beau Gouig, JM-4876; DJU Mark Bankofier, JM-5289; Wiper Eddie Coloma, #4032; and REJ Jogene Cerezo, JM-5350.

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

MARAD designates 16 maritime workforce training centers

The U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD) has designated 16 institutions as Centers of Excellence for Domestic Maritime Workforce Training and Education, expanding the federally recognized network used to recruit, train and upskill American mariners. The five-year designations cover training providers with programs ranging from entry-level merchant mariner pathways to STCW courses, officer training, bridge and engine-room simulation, firefighting and alternative-fuel competence. Several of the newly designated centers are already operating substantial commercial seafarer training programs.

The Maritime Institute, with centers in Washington and California, conducts more than 16,000 training sessions a year and offers 86 U.S. Coast Guard-approved courses. Its curriculum includes Basic and Advanced IGF Code LNG propulsion training, and MARAD said the institute has capacity to double training throughput to 32,000 sessions annually.

Maine Maritime Academy's Center for Professional Mariner Development has 33 STCW and USCG-approved courses and is tracking towards 1,000 active students this financial year. Its facilities include bridge and engine-room simulators, a live-fire training complex and helicopter underwater escape training equipment.

Resolve Maritime Academy in Florida has trained 3,310 professional mariners across 179 technical classes in recent training cycles. MARAD said the academy is adding lithium-ion battery fire and alternative-fuel training to facilities that already include a 105-foot training vessel, live-fire simulator ship and damage-control trainer.

Northeast Maritime Institute was also recognized, with MARAD specifically citing its role in addressing crew shortages. The Massachusetts school reports a 94 percent graduation rate, immediate job placement of between 89 and 100 percent, and long-term career retention above 80 percent.

Ohio-based Argonaut, meanwhile, plans a waterfront training facility costing more than $7 million that will provide STCW, Able Seafarer and QMED certification programs. Other designated centers include:

- Bunker Hill Community College — Massachusetts
- Chapman School of Seamanship - Florida
- Corn Belt Ports Rural Maritime & Logistics Training & Education Consortium - Iowa, Illinois, Missouri & Wisconsin
- Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering Department — University of Michigan
- Northwest Maritime Center — Washington
- Sea School - Florida, Alabama, South Carolina & Louisiana
- Seamen's Church Institute — Kentucky & Texas
- University of West Florida
- Washington State Ferries
- Webb Institute – New York
- Western Pacific Maritime Academy — Guam & Northern Mariana Islands

Guam port board reviews fiscal year 2026 progress, approves 2027 budget

The Port Authority of Guam Board of Directors reviewed the port's fiscal year 2026 year-end report and approved the fiscal year 2027 Budget Act as part of several actions continuing the modernization of Guam's only commercial seaport while strengthening operational readiness, financial stewardship, infrastructure, and long-term institutional capacity. In addition to approving the 2027 budget, the Board elected its officers.

Management presented the 2026 year-end report as a comprehensive review of the port's operations, financial stewardship, infrastructure investments, equipment, workforce, security, technology, commercial activities, and major initiatives during the fiscal year. The report reflects a year in which the port continued its modernization while maintaining daily vessel and cargo operations through severe weather, aging equipment, changing vessel schedules, workforce demands, periods of constrained cargo handling capacity, and regional recovery requirements. It also identifies where progress was made, where challenges remain, and how those experiences are shaping priorities for fiscal year 2027.

The 2027 proposed budget projects approximately $60.4 million in cargo and non-cargo

operating revenues and $58.4 million in operating expenses, resulting in approximately $2 million in projected operating income. Including other income and expense, crane operations, and facility maintenance fee activity, the port projects approximately $8.7 million in total net income for 2027.

Compared with the 2026 approved budget, operating revenues are projected to increase by approximately $3.3 million while operating expenses increase by approximately $1.8 million.

Projected operating income increases from approximately $430,000 in the 2026 approved budget to approximately $2 million in 2027.

U.S. Navy certifies Rolls-Royce engines for autonomous ships

The U.S. Navy has certified Rolls-Royce mtu Series 4000 and Series 2000 marine engines for use aboard autonomous naval vessels following reliability testing designed to demonstrate that they can operate for extended periods without human maintenance, Rolls-Royce has announced. The certification allows Series 4000 engines to be used in autonomous applications providing up to 4,300 kW of propulsion power and 3,000 kW of electrical generation. The engine is available in V8, V12, V16 and V20 configurations.

Rolls-Royce said the Series 4000 passed two 720-hour durability tests before receiving approval. The Series 2000 was certified following component testing and thousands of hours of operational experience, with the platform capable of providing up to 1,939 kW for propulsion in V10, V12 and V16 configurations. The testing is intended to demonstrate that propulsion systems can support an unmanned vessel during a 30-day deployment without preventive or corrective maintenance to its main propulsion, fuel or oil systems.

The certification comes as the U.S. Navy expands its use of unmanned surface vessels as part of efforts to increase fleet capacity and operate platforms for longer periods without putting sailors aboard them. One of the Navy's best-known autonomous vessels, *Sea Hunter*, is already powered by two mtu 12V 2000 engines. Rolls-Royce said the vessel has accumulated tens of thousands of operational hours since its christening in 2016. *Sea Hunter* and the related *Seahawk* were operationally deployed earlier this year as part of the Navy's first division of unmanned surface vessels, according to the company.

Certification of propulsion systems is one element of the wider process required before autonomous vessels can be routinely deployed. Rolls-Royce said U.S. Navy requirements also place emphasis on control systems, cybersecurity and safety-critical functions as unmanned systems become more prominent across maritime operations.

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

Robert Baca
Vice President
Email: mfowvp@mfoww.org

Patrick Gillette
San Francisco Business Agent
Email: sfba@mfoww.org

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 N Marine Ave.
Suite B
Wilmington, CA 90744
Tel: (310) 830-0470
Fax: (310) 835-9367
Pasquale "Mike" Gazillo, *Port Agent*
Email: wilmaspa@mfoww.org

HONOLULU BRANCH
707 Alakea Street, Suite 102
Honolulu, HI 96813
Tel: (808) 538-6077
Don Ngo, *Port Agent*
Email: honpa@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

Global containership fleet set to hit record 34 million TEU

The global containership fleet is about to cross another major milestone, with capacity set to reach 34 million TEU after growing by 10 million TEU in just five and a half years, according to BIMCO. At the beginning of September, global fleet capacity stood just 8,000 TEU short of the 34 million TEU mark, meaning only a handful of the 46 containerships scheduled for delivery this month will be needed to push the fleet past the threshold.

BIMCO said the rapid growth has been driven by a combination of record newbuild deliveries and unusually low levels of ship recycling. Less than 300,000 TEU of capacity has been scrapped over the past five and a half years, despite the fleet being roughly three times larger than the last time recycling remained this low over a comparable period.

The growth has also shifted the makeup of the fleet toward larger ships. Vessels above 12,000 TEU accounted for roughly two-thirds of the 10 million TEU added since early 2021. Their share of total fleet capacity has climbed from 30 to 40 percent, while the average containership size has increased 14 percent.

Liner operators have also taken greater control of their own tonnage. According to BIMCO, carriers accounted for 85 percent of the capacity added over the period and now control 65 percent of the global fleet, compared with 57 percent in early 2021. At the same time, limited scrapping has left the industry with a growing pool of older vessels. Nearly 2,000 containerships totaling more than five million TEU are now at least 20 years old. Within five years, those vessels will have reached or surpassed the industry's historical average recycling age of about 25 years, creating a sizable pool of potential demolition candidates. Whether enough ships are actually scrapped could become increasingly important as another wave of new builds arrives.

The containership orderbook currently includes more than 14 million TEU of capacity scheduled for delivery through the end of 2030. BIMCO estimates the fleet could potentially add another 10 million TEU over the next five years, taking total capacity to around 44 million TEU.

That supply picture could become even more challenging if containerships eventually return to normal routings through the Suez Canal. Diversions around the Cape of Good Hope have absorbed significant amounts of vessel capacity by lengthening voyages, helping cushion the impact of the industry's huge newbuilding program. A return to shorter Suez routings would release that capacity back into the market just as shipyards continue delivering a historically large orderbook.

POLA awards $70 million in waterfront projects

The Los Angeles Harbor Commission has approved $66.5 million in construction contracts for the Port of Los Angeles to add new permanent parking and expanded road infrastructure along the LA Waterfront, the host site for sailing competitions during the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.

The Harbor Boulevard and 22nd Street project will develop a 17.5-acre parking area that will feature up to 2,100 new parking stalls. The new parking lot will include a public restroom, pedestrian walkways connecting to Harbor Boulevard and Miner Street, and a trolley stop.

Another portion of Harbor Boulevard will be reconfigured and expanded under the project. As one of the main thoroughfares along the LA Waterfront in San Pedro, the popular roadway will be expanded to two travel lanes in each direction from the S.P. Slip to 22nd Street. A landscaped, scenic pedestrian walkway will be added to this section as part of the project.

The construction contract was awarded to general contractor Griffith Company. Work on the project is expected to begin this November and be completed by January 2028.

In a separate action, the Harbor Commission also approved a $3.7 million construction contract to add a restroom building and shade structures on the west end of Wilmington Waterfront Park. Work by project contractor CALTEC Corp. is expected to start this fall and be completed in early 2028.

The total construction award for both projects is $70.2 million with a total project cost of $86.4 million—all funded by the port's Public Access Investment Plan, an initiative that allocates 10 percent of the port's operating income toward new public access projects.

DOT and Port of Corpus Christi sign agreement to explore nuclear maritime technologies

In August, U.S. Secretary of Transportation Sean P. Duffy was joined by Maritime Administrator (MARAD) Stephen M. Carmel, U.S. Representative Michael Cloud (R - Texas) and leaders from the Port of Corpus Christi to kick off a new partnership focused on small modular reactor (SMR) technology for maritime applications. By testing the latest innovations in SMRs, the Department can help revitalize U.S. shipbuilding, cut fuel costs, and restore America's maritime dominance. This is the second agreement the Department has signed since Secretary Duffy launched the SMR initiative in May.

As the United States' largest port for petroleum exports and a national leader in liquefied natural gas (LNG) shipments, the Port of Corpus Christi is a major gateway for American energy. The port has seen an 81 percent increase in LNG exports since 2022.

"Small modular reactors have the potential to reshape America's maritime sector, lower shipping costs, and bolster our supply chains," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy.

"I'm thrilled that the Port of Corpus Christi is embracing this exciting partnership with the Trump Administration to ensure the United States leads the way in innovation. Maritime dominance starts with rebuilding America's fleet with this state-of-the-art technology."

Through a Memorandum of Cooperation, MARAD and the Port of Corpus Christi agreed to work together to explore opportunities to advance maritime energy systems, including through the potential integration of SMR technologies, resilient port microgrids, shoreside power architecture, infrastructure capable of supporting emerging vessel propulsion concepts, and related workforce development opportunities.

In May, Secretary Duffy launched the initiative to develop SMRs to drive down costs for U.S. shipping and enhance energy dominance. In June, the Trump Administration signed an agreement to establish the nation's first testing area for nuclear-powered vessels with the Port of Long Beach.

Port of Oakland July cargo holds steady

Year-to-date loaded cargo volumes at the Port of Oakland remained essentially flat through July, slightly down 1.5 percent compared to the same period in 2025. Full exports were up 0.4 percent, while full imports were down 3.1 percent. The port handled 179,999 TEU in July, essentially unchanged from June. Full imports increased 1.7 percent from June, while full exports declined 7.9 percent.

Compared to July 2025, total volume was down 11.4 percent. Full imports totaled 79,426 TEU, down 14.0 percent year-over-year, while full exports totaled 60,005 TEU, down 8.5 percent. Combined laden cargo totaled 139,431 TEU, down 11.7 percent.

Through July, the port handled 1,294,664 total TEU, down 3.8 percent from the same period in 2025. The decline in total container volume has been driven largely by fewer empty container movements. Empty volume is down 11.4% percent year-to-date, compared to the 1.5 percent decline in laden volume. Empty container volume totaled 40,568 TEU in July, down 10.2 percent from July 2025.

The port recorded 81 vessel calls during the month, compared to 95 in July 2025.

Fuel, congestion push trans-Pacific Ocean rates near $9,500

The Iran war is pushing bunker fuel prices back toward mid-year levels, setting a higher cost floor for container shipping even as trans-Pacific spot rates show early signs of cooling from peak-season highs. Climbing fuel costs are likely setting an elevated floor for container rates, but ocean prices are still largely being driven by demand trends and disruptions to capacity availability.

Tensions between Iran and the U.S. continue to climb around the Strait of Hormuz, with Iran now announcing plans to impose a wider exclusion zone on areas near the strait. Fuel rates have trended up since the ceasefire collapse in July, but recent escalations as well as an increase in Chinese crude imports have pushed bunker fuel prices back up to levels last seen in June.

Trans-Pacific Ocean rates declined slightly the first week of September, suggesting there won't be additional rate increases in what is likely the last few weeks of peak season. But elevated demand that started in late May has kept prices at peak levels since early July.

Current rates of about $7,600 per unit to the West Coast and $9,500 to the East Coast are about back to levels last seen during peak season in 2024 when seasonal demand, Red Sea disruptions to capacity and some frontloading ahead of a possible East Coast labor strike combined to push rates up sharply. Severe typhoon-driven congestion at Asia container hubs is likely also contributing to current rate levels. Carriers have increased blanked sailings, possibly to recover schedules disrupted by the storms, which could also help keep prices elevated even if demand has started to ease.

The Panama Canal Authority has postponed an additional half-foot draft reduction for neo-Panamax transits until further notice, though it is still bracing for drought conditions from the expected El Niño this year. The authority reduced daily transits by four to 32 this month, though neo-Panamax daily slots used by long haul container vessels have only been reduced by one.

Asia-Europe container rates ticked down slightly to $4,500 to North Europe and $4,700 to the Mediterranean, though Mediterranean prices have declined further to about even with North Europe. Going back to 2017, Asia-Mediterranean rates have on average been 17 percent higher than Asia-North Europe prices, though at times they have been lower.

The current sharper decline from peak season highs for Mediterranean rates — a $2,600 and 37 percent drop compared to $1,300 and 23 percent for North Europe lanes — may reflect both the recent increase in Red Sea transits for some Mediterranean services and that congestion at North Europe hubs is keeping upward pressure on rates for those lanes even after peak season demand. Still, rates for both lanes remain $1,000–$1,700 above pre-peak season levels, likely due to Far East congestion as well. Recent port worker strikes in Germany and the Netherlands are now also contributing to some of the backlog.

Active MFOW members

Retain your Welfare Fund eligibility.

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

MFOW Welfare Fund, 240 Second Street, San Francisco, CA 94105

MFOW President's Report

Jones Act

On August 10, the Trump Administration extended the Jones Act waiver for a second time, a further 90-day period running through November 15, 2026 — despite providing no evidence that the waiver addressed an "immediate adverse impact on military operations" or has produced benefits to the consumer. The new waiver extension is narrower than its predecessor in both scope and process, a response to the sustained pressure from the domestic maritime industry and a bipartisan bloc in Congress to end the waiver.

The list of covered products was cut substantially, removing hundreds of products covered by the previous waiver. The new waiver requires a voyage-by-voyage approval process, including a U.S.-flag availability review by MARAD.

The American maritime industry has been clear: The waiver should end. The waiver has hurt American mariners, American shipbuilding, and the entire maritime industry, while failing to provide any relief at the gas pump. However, while disappointed that the waiver was extended, the case-by-case review of each waiver is an improvement upon the previous waiver.

Members of Congress expressed disapproval with the extension of the waiver, reinforcing that any waiver of the Jones Act is a national security threat. Ranking Members Rick Larsen (D-Washington) and Salud Carbajal (D-California) stated that "by extending the current Jones Act waiver for another 90 days, the Administration continues to threaten national security, economic security and American maritime jobs."

The new framework is only as strong as its enforcement, and the details of the extension make oversight essential. Before any foreign-flag voyage, the company must file a Vessel Availability Request with the Department of War, MARAD, and CBP. MARAD then conducts a coastwise-qualified vessel market survey, and the Department of War determines whether a U.S. vessel is available or the waiver applies. As such, there must be a rigorous review of all waiver applications before they can be approved.

The concern is that the Department of War — not MARAD — retains final authority over each determination, and market participants said that the Department of War will issue a waiver if it wants to, regardless of vessel availability.

American Mariner Tax Fairness Act

On August 27, Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pennsylvania), joined by Representatives Tom Suozzi (D-New York), Nicole Malliotakis (R-New York), and Brendan Boyle (D-Pennsylvania), introduced the bipartisan American Mariner Tax Fairness Act: legislation to strengthen America's merchant mariner workforce by providing targeted tax relief to qualifying U.S. mariners serving aboard U.S.-flag vessels in international trade.

The U.S.-flag deep-sea fleet has declined from roughly 1,100 oceangoing vessels in 1950 to fewer than 200 today, shrinking with it the pool of credentialed mariners available to crew commercial vessels and sustain the sealift capacity our nation depends on. Federal maritime readiness reviews have consistently identified recruitment and retention as a central challenge to maintaining that capability.

The American Mariner Tax Fairness Act, if signed into law, would extend the existing foreign earned income exclusion to qualifying U.S. merchant mariners who spend at least 90 days during a 12-month period working aboard qualifying U.S.-flag vessels engaged in foreign trade. The exclusion would apply only to income earned during qualifying periods of service, providing targeted tax relief that better reflects the international nature and unique demands of maritime work while helping address the recruitment and retention challenges facing America's maritime workforce.

Pay Increases

MT Allied Pacific — In accordance with the MOU between Patriot Contract Services and the SIU Pacific District, effective September 5, 2026, there shall be a three percent total labor cost increase on all wages and benefits for unlicensed ratings serving aboard the *MT Allied Pacific*.

USNS Seay* and *USNS Pililaau — In accordance with the MOU between Patriot Contract Services and the SIU Pacific District, effective September 29, 2026, there shall be a three percent total labor cost increase on all wages and benefits for unlicensed ratings serving aboard the *USNS Seay* and *USNS Pililaau*.

MT Haina Patriot — The MOU between Patriot Contract Services and the SIU Pacific District covering the *MT Haina Patriot* expires on September 30, 2026. The parties will meet to negotiate terms and conditions of contract extension beginning October 1, 2026.

APL Marine Services — Under the collective bargaining agreement between APL Marine Services and the SIU Pacific District, the following increases will become effective October 1, 2026:

- All offshore wages and wage related items shall be increased by three percent (3.0%).
- A cost-of-living increase shall be made on the basis of comparing the August 2026 Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor (1982-1984 = 100) to the August 2025 Consumer Price Index. A cost-of-living adjustment equal to that portion of such percentage increase of the index above four percent (4%), not to exceed five percent (5%), shall be added to the base wage and wage-related items.
- The Supplemental Benefit shall be increased from 18 to 19 days per month.
- Contributions to the MFOW Welfare Plan set forth above shall be increased by the percentage increase in the medical care services component of the Consumer Price Index (United States City Average for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers), or its agreed upon successor, during the most recent previous 12-month period for which such index has been calculated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor.
- Contributions to the MFOW Training Plan will be increased by $0.50 per manday.

Under the collective bargaining maintenance agreement between APL Marine Services and the MFOW covering shore mechanics, the wage increases, cost-of-living adjustment, and Welfare contributions shall be increased in the same manner as the offshore rates.

NLRB orders Saltchuk to bargain with licensed deck officers

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ordered both Alaska Tanker Company (ATC) and Overseas Shipholding Group (OSG), both Saltchuk Resources subsidiaries, to immediately recognize the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots (MM&P) and bargain in good faith with more than 125 Licensed Deck Officers.

The officers voted decisively for MM&P representation in separate NLRB-certified elections in 2024, winning 70 percent at OSG and 80 percent at ATC. Instead of beginning first-contract negotiations, ATC and OSG challenged the results and unlawfully refused to bargain. Following union unfair labor practice charges, the NLRB issued a formal bargaining order against ATC on May 19, 2026, followed by a second bargaining order against OSG on August 4, 2026.

The bargaining units cover Chief, Second, and Third Mates aboard 17 U.S.-flag oil tankers carrying critical energy cargo and militarily useful supplies. The risks these mariners face are increasingly direct: on August 18, Iranian state media reported that an Iranian military official identified OSG among shipping companies under scrutiny for supporting U.S. military logistics and warned of potential retaliatory measures.

Saltchuk subsidiaries receive millions in federal subsidies through the Tanker Security Program. MM&P maintains that companies benefiting from taxpayer support should not be permitted to violate federal labor laws while denying basic bargaining rights to the American mariners risking their lives at sea.

While Saltchuk seeks to drag the dispute into federal court and further delay compliance with the NLRB, pressure mounts with numerous politicians and labor federations including Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal (D – Washington) and the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, calling on corporate leadership to end its stalling tactics and begin good-faith negotiations immediately.

Vice President's Report

There were 34 registrants dispatched in the month of August: 21 in Class A, two in Class B, six in Class C and five Non-Seniority.

There are 40 members registered: 14 in Class A, 12 in Class B, and 14 in Class C.

Fraternally,
Robert Baca Vice President

Business Agent's Report

Brothers and Sisters,

Shipping in San Francisco continued to ebb and flow this month. We filled the regular Matson Standby Reefer jobs at each port call, along with occasional Standby Wiper jobs. Most other shipping consisted of normal reliefs for completed assignments.

Several Patriot Electrician jobs remain unfilled. Members interested in these positions should continue upgrading their credentials and technical knowledge. Patriot jobs can provide a good opportunity to build experience and practice your craft at a steadier pace than the rapid in-and-out port schedule of the commercial fleet.

Once again, **check your documents and make sure they are current.** You can do this at home; there is no need to come to the hall. Do not wait until a job is called to discover that a required document is missing or near expiration. For fly-out jobs, companies expect at least six months of validity remaining. If your documents are not ready, you may lose the job.

We are also seeing recurring errors on discharge paperwork, and those errors can affect your pay, Coast Guard upgrades and renewals, and supplemental benefits. Before signing your discharge, confirm that your name, MMC reference number, sign-on and discharge dates, and the rating you actually sailed are all correct. When sailing above Wiper and below Third Engineer considered a Qualified Member of the Engine Department, or QMED. However, the discharge must also identify the actual position sailed: **Electrician, Refrigerating Engineer—not "Reefer"—Junior Engineer, or Oiler.** This is especially important when applying for supplemental benefits.

Any position that you sail requires maintaining accurate paperwork from checking daily readings, completing Reefer Reports, ordering parts, or documenting maintenance. Make a habit to take that extra minute to review your work. Accuracy supports safe operations and helps ensure that you receive the compensation you earned.

Fraternally,
Patrick Gillette, SFBA

A look into Great Lakes cargo

The massive cargo ships of the Great Lakes transported 71.3 million short tons of freight in 2025, and iron ore was by far the largest category at 39.1 million short tons, comprising most of America's supply. Known as lakers, these massive ships can exceed 1,000 feet in length. The largest are actually too big to pass through the Welland Canal, the waterway linking Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, and instead operate on the upper four Great Lakes. Smaller-sized vessels can pass through the canal. By moving enormous quantities of iron ore, lakers help supply the Midwest steel industry and remain an important part of the industrial supply chain.

Iron Ore – Iron ore is a basic raw material needed to make steel. A large portion of the iron ore used by American steelmakers comes from mining regions around Lake Superior, especially Minnesota's Mesabi Range and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The logistics issue is that the mines and the steel mills are often hundreds of miles apart. Instead of moving millions of tons of material by truck, which would require enormous amounts of fuel and create heavy traffic, companies can load the ore onto large freighters and move it by water.

From Ore to Taconite Pellets – A substantial amount of the iron ore shipped on the Great Lakes is processed into small, round taconite pellets. Taconite is a low-grade iron-bearing rock that is crushed and processed to concentrate its iron content before the material is formed into pellets. The resulting pellets are well suited to bulk transport and use in steelmaking.

After processing, the pellets are moved to ore docks and loaded into a freighter's large cargo holds. The biggest lakers can carry more than 70,000 short tons in a single trip, delivering the material to facilities where it will eventually be turned into steel. A single laker can take tens of thousands of tons of cargo on one voyage. Moving that same amount by road would require hundreds of trucks, while rail transportation would require several long trains and extensive coordination.

Water Efficiency – Water transportation is especially useful for materials such as iron ore, limestone, and coal because these products are heavy but do not require individual packaging. Ships can load them directly into their cargo holds and unload them at specialized docks. Water transportation is also highly fuel-efficient compared with moving the same amount of freight by road. This makes the Great Lakes an effective delivery route for industries that constantly need enormous quantities of raw materials.

Origin and Destination – Minnesota supplies much of the iron ore shipped through the Great Lakes, with Duluth-Superior acting as a major transportation hub on the Minnesota-Wisconsin border. Iron ore pellets from Minnesota's mines are often moved by rail to ports along Lake Superior, where they are loaded onto large freighters that transport them through the Great Lakes to industrial areas farther east and south.

Michigan's Upper Peninsula also has a long history of iron mining and continues to contribute to the trade. The active Tilden Mine near Ishpeming produces iron ore pellets that are moved by rail to the port at Marquette. Lake freighters then carry iron ore through the system toward major steelmaking centers in Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio.

How Iron Ore Voyages Work – A typical voyage might begin with a freighter arriving at a Lake Superior port. The vessel loads thousands of tons of taconite pellets before heading east. The ship passes through the Great Lakes system and eventually reaches an industrial port near a steel-producing region.

Once it has reached its destination, unloading equipment removes the pellets from the cargo holds. Many Great Lakes freighters are self-unloaders equipped with conveyor systems that can discharge cargo without relying entirely on shoreside equipment. The ship can then return toward Lake Superior, often in ballast, to load another shipment, creating a continuous cycle that keeps raw materials moving throughout the region.

Limestone, Coal and Other Cargo – Limestone is another major bulk commodity carried by Great Lakes freighters. U.S.-flag lakers moved about 20.1 million short tons of limestone in 2025, making it the second-largest cargo category behind iron ore. In steelmaking, limestone can be used as a flux to help remove impurities. It is also widely used in cement manufacturing and construction. Large quarries in Michigan help meet this demand by supplying limestone to industrial facilities throughout the Great Lakes.

Great Lakes freighters also transport coal, with U.S.-flag vessels carrying about 6.5 million short tons in 2025. Much of the coal shipped on the lakes is used for electricity generation, while a smaller share serves metallurgical and industrial purposes. Although coal's role in the region has declined over time, it remains part of the bulk shipping industry. Other cargoes include cement, salt, and sand. Because these products are heavy, relatively inexpensive per ton, and required in large quantities, transporting them by water is especially practical.

Why They Matter – Great Lakes freighters may not receive as much attention as massive ocean container ships, but their job is equally important for many industries around the lakes. They move enormous quantities of essential materials along a transportation route that has served the region for generations.

Iron ore remains the defining cargo of the U.S.-flag Great Lakes fleet, accounting for the majority of America's supply. In 2025, lakers carried nearly twice as much iron ore by weight as limestone, the next-largest cargo category. These ships connect Lake Superior mining regions with steelmaking centers elsewhere in the Great Lakes while also carrying stone, coal, and other bulk materials needed by industries and communities across the region.

U.S. Navy expands ship repair capacity at Guam

The U.S. Navy awarded Cayuse Native Hawaiian Veterans LLC a $249 million contract to repair Military Sealift Command vessels in Guam, the Department of War announced August 12, 2026. The contract adds Cayuse as a new awardee under a previously established multiple-award contract vehicle, a process the Navy calls a rolling admission. Work will take place in Guam and is expected to run through November 2027, with a five-year ordering period built into the contract. Military Sealift Command, headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia, is the contracting activity overseeing the award.

The contract was set aside for companies certified under the HUBZone program, a Small Business Administration designation reserved for firms based in historically underutilized business zones. The Navy solicited the work through the Government Point of Entry website and received two proposals before selecting Cayuse. Only $3,500 in fiscal 2026 Navy operations and maintenance funds will be obligated at the time of award, covering the contract's minimum guarantee. The Navy said all remaining funding will be released through individual delivery orders as specific repair jobs are assigned over the life of the contract.

Military Sealift Command operates a fleet of civilian-crewed ships that move military cargo, fuel and supplies for the Navy, and Guam has functioned as one of its central repair and logistics hubs in the western Pacific for decades. The command's Ship Support Unit in Guam, based at Naval Base Guam, coordinates pier-side services, re-arming, re-supply and repair work for Military Sealift Command's fleet.

Guam Shipyard, a private facility built at the site of a former Navy repair yard that closed in 1997 under a base realignment decision, has provided the island's primary drydock and overhaul capability since then. The facility supports visiting Seventh Fleet units, submarines assigned to Commander Submarine Squadron 15, and Military Sealift Command vessels, along with authorized repair work for Jones Act commercial ships. The nearest full-capability commercial U.S. repair facility outside Guam sits in Hawaii, more than 3,000 miles away, a distance that has shaped how the Navy plans ship maintenance scheduling across the Pacific for years.

That distance has made Guam increasingly central to Navy logistics planning as the Pentagon has shifted more attention toward the Indo-Pacific region.

Cayuse Native Hawaiian Veterans LLC is a Native Hawaiian Organization-owned company, a designation that allows it to compete for certain federal set-aside contracts alongside its HUBZone certification. The Navy's announcement did not specify which Military Sealift Command vessels will receive repairs under this contract or how many individual delivery orders it expects to issue over the five-year ordering period.

27,500 TEU container ships in sight

Container lines might soon be tempted to order container ships of up to 27,500 TEU, according to Alphaliner. The prediction comes amid reports that Chinese shipyards are already fielding enquiries for vessels that would surpass today's largest box ships.

Such a move would mark a break from conventional industry thinking over the past decade, during which vessels of around 24,000 TEU were widely regarded as the practical upper limit. However, Alphaliner said that sustained growth in global container trades, coupled with mounting cost pressures, could pave the way for a new generation of ultra-large vessels.

Carriers could theoretically deploy the next-generation container ships on the major east-west trades from 2030 onwards. Factors such as rising fuel costs and the introduction of carbon-emissions taxes will strengthen the economic case for larger ships over the long term.

Dubbed the *Gigamax*, the proposed vessels would be delivered after 2030, replacing the first generation of ultra-large ships operating on key liner routes. Given improvements in ship design over the past five years, vessels could be shorter than earlier estimates.

Despite having a footprint of around 414 meters in length, equivalent to 25 bays, and 63.3 meters in beam, or 25 container rows, the design could carry more than 27,000 TEU. Vessels of this class could be ordered quite soon, as the first generation of 400-meter container ships may begin leaving service during the first half of the next decade.

American tuna gets a boost

In a major win for America's fishing industry, NOAA Fisheries is implementing increased bluefin tuna quotas after historic negotiations by the United States at the 2025 annual meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). The action — alongside additional quota increases for bluefin tuna, North and South Atlantic swordfish, and North Atlantic albacore— will dramatically expand access, create new fishing opportunities, and provide greater flexibility for U.S. fishermen.

U.S. pelagic longline fishermen who incidentally catch Atlantic bluefin tuna will also benefit from significantly greater operational flexibility. Through successful negotiations, the U.S. ICCAT delegation also secured a substantial increase in the bluefin tuna bycatch set-aside quota. It accounts for the catch of eastern Atlantic-origin bluefin tuna by U.S. vessels operating in the vicinity of the ICCAT bluefin tuna management area boundary and adjacent areas (i.e., western Atlantic exclusive of the Gulf of America). NOAA Fisheries has incorporated this increased allocation into its Individual Bluefin Tuna Quota program, providing additional opportunities for the fleet.

Bluefin by the numbers — The baseline annual bluefin tuna quota increases from 1,316.14 to 1,509.58 metric tons. The pelagic longline bycatch set-aside quota increases from 25 to 62.5 metric tons. This represents a total increase of 17 percent.

Building on these historic outcomes, NOAA Fisheries is also increasing 2026 annual quotas for North and South Atlantic swordfish, and North Atlantic albacore to account for 2025 underharvests. Together, these actions maximize available fishing opportunities, ensure U.S. fishermen can fully benefit from sustainable fisheries management, and reflect the strong results achieved through U.S. leadership in international negotiations.

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 mfoww.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.

October 12-15 November 9-12 December 14-17

Military Sealift Command (MSC) Readiness Refresher

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

October 29-30 December 10-11

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.

October 26-27 November 16-17 December 14-15

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.

November 2-6

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.***

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.***

October 5-9 November 9-13

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.***

Returning in 2027

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.***

October 19-23 December 7-11

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.***

October 26-30 November 16-20 December 14-18

Additional Courses

Maritime Institute: 1130 West Marine View Drive, Everett WA

QMED Oiler: October 5-23

STCW Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch: October 26-30

STCW Able Seafarer-Engine: *Returning in 2027*

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: October 23, October 30, November 6, November 20, December 11

Maritime Institute, Honolulu, HI: October 9, December 4

Maritime Institute, Everett, WA: September 28, October 15, November 12, December 16

Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA: September 9-10, October 6-7, November 18-19

MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA: October 17-18, November 12-13, December 7-8

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: October 14-16, November 23-25

Maritime Institute, Everett, WA: November 30-December 2

Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA: December 14-16

MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA: December 7-9

HOWZ SHIPPING?

August 2026

San Francisco

Electrician	1
Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer	2
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer	4
Junior Engineer	3
Oiler	1
Wiper	4
Standby Electrician/Reefer	11
Standby Wiper	8
TOTAL	**34**

Honolulu

Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer	3
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer	3
Junior Engineer	2
Oiler	1
Wiper	1
Standby Electrician/Reefer	19
Standby Junior Engineer	1
Standby Wiper	32
TOTAL	**62**

Wilmington

Electrician	2
Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer	2
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer	3
Junior Engineer	3
Oiler	5
Wiper	3
Shore Mechanic	9
Standby Electrician/Reefer	19
Standby Wiper	22
TOTAL	**68**

Seattle

Standby Electrician/Reefer	2
Standby Wiper	7
TOTAL	**9**

Hanwha eyes bigger U.S. Navy role at Philly Shipyard

Hanwha's push into U.S. naval shipbuilding was recently on display as Acting Secretary of the Navy Hung Cao toured the company's Philadelphia shipyard and met with executives about expanding domestic shipbuilding capacity. Cao visited Hanwha Philly Shipyard with leaders from Hanwha Defense USA, discussing planned investments in the facility, workforce growth and the company's ambitions to build more ships for the U.S. Navy. The visit comes as South Korea's Hanwha rapidly expands its footprint in the U.S. maritime and defense sectors.

Hanwha acquired the former Philly Shipyard in late 2024 and has since positioned the facility as a key part of its plans to compete for U.S. government and naval work. The company wants to revive the Philadelphia Navy Yard's long history of naval construction and help the Navy increase fleet capacity. The yard is currently finishing the Maritime Administration's five-ship National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV) program. Four NSMVs have been delivered, with the fifth scheduled for delivery next year. The lead ship, *Empire State*, was activated by MARAD this month for a federal mission supporting the U.S. Navy in the Indo-Pacific. Hanwha says the Philadelphia workforce has more than doubled since 2024 to nearly 2,500 employees as the company invests in training and expands production capacity.

Hanwha Philly Shipyard has a commercial backlog stretching through at least 2029, including three LNG-powered containerships for Matson, two LNG carriers for Hanwha Shipping and four firm MR tanker orders, with options for six more.

The company has already begun moving beyond commercial shipbuilding. In July, Hanwha Philly Shipyard and TOTE Services were selected to build the Missile Defense Agency's next-generation Missile Range Instrumentation Vessels, including the future *Golden Defender*, which is scheduled for delivery in 2030 and will support the Trump administration's Golden Dome missile defense initiative.

Hanwha has also made a preliminary offer valued at up to $1.2 billion to acquire Austal USA, which would give the Korean company control of another major American naval shipbuilder and significantly expand its exposure to Navy and Coast Guard programs. The expansion comes as the Trump administration looks for ways to increase U.S. naval shipbuilding capacity and bring more foreign shipbuilding expertise and investment into the domestic industrial base.

A presidential memorandum issued in August established a pathway for foreign shipbuilders to initially construct certain vessels overseas before shifting production to the United States, provided they invest in U.S. facilities, train American workers and transfer shipbuilding technology.

Hanwha Philly Shipyard occupies 115 acres at the confluence of the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers inside the historic Philadelphia Navy Yard. The yard says it has built roughly half of all large oceangoing Jones Act vessels delivered in the United States since 2000 and operates two of the largest graving docks on the East Coast.

Senator Chris Coons (D— Delaware) said increasing Navy construction at the Philadelphia yard could help the United States respond to China's rapidly expanding shipbuilding capacity.

U.S. maritime nuclear push gathers pace

U.S. maritime nuclear startup Bluecore Energy has raised $50 million to accelerate development of floating nuclear power systems as Washington's push to bring atomic energy into commercial shipping gathers momentum. The Silverton Partners-led seed round follows $10 million raised when Long Beach-based Bluecore emerged from stealth in July.

Bluecore is developing compact water-cooled reactors mounted on floating platforms, with its first system designed to produce around 10 megawatts of continuous electricity for ports and other coastal infrastructure. The company has secured its first barge and is working with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and U.S. Coast Guard on the regulatory pathway towards commercial deployment.

Bluecore founder Kofi Asante said the company now has "the capital, the team, the hardware" to move towards deployment. The fundraising comes amid a burst of American activity around maritime nuclear power.

In May, the Trump administration launched a formal initiative directing the Maritime Administration to investigate how small modular reactors could be deployed across U.S. commercial fleets. MARAD has since signed agreements with the ports of Long Beach and Corpus Christi to explore nuclear propulsion, port power and resilient microgrids. Bluecore is headquartered inside the port of Long Beach.

Last month MARAD teamed up with the UK's CORE POWER to work towards a U.S.-flagged fleet of nuclear-powered merchant ships, with first construction targeted from 2028.

Scorpio Tankers' $10 million investment in U.S. reactor developer Ampera, while the International Atomic Energy Agency recently launched its ATLAS initiative in Washington to help develop rules for civilian nuclear shipping.

Port of L.A. invests $4 million in *USS Iowa* park and pavilion

The Port of Los Angeles will invest $4 million toward development of the Pacific Battleship Center's Freedom of the Seas Park and Pavilion, a new waterfront destination adjacent to the Battleship *USS Iowa* that will provide space for events, education, veterans and community gatherings. The Los Angeles Board of Harbor Commissioners approved the funding through a recent amendment to Battleship Iowa's lease, supported through the port's Public Access Investment Plan (PAIP), which is funded entirely through port revenues, with no tax-payer contributions.

The Freedom of the Seas Park and Pavilion will feature a 17,500-square-foot building that will serve as a multipurpose venue accommodating up to 550 people with meeting rooms and other resource spaces. The surrounding park will include gathering spaces, memorials, and public art. The approximately $17 million project is being developed by Pacific Battleship Center, the non-profit organization that operates the Battleship *USS Iowa*. The initial phase will focus on completion of the pavilion building, followed by development of additional waterside features including Liberty Point and Freedom Plaza.

The pavilion will address a need for larger event and gathering space in San Pedro, providing new convening space for community organizations and expanded capacity for educational, veterans and community programming. The project has received broad community support and was prioritized for PAIP funding following a community input process in 2025.

Established in 2015, the port's PAIP provides a sustainable source of funding for public access projects throughout the LA Waterfront. The program dedicates 10 percent of the port's annual operating income to projects that enhance public access and create recreational, community and visitor-serving opportunities in San Pedro and Wilmington.

Report shows Georgia ports bring in $181 billion, support more than 600,000 jobs

Georgia's ports were involved in $181 billion in economic activity in the last fiscal year, according to a study from the University of Georgia's Terry College of Business. The report concludes that port activity supports more than 600,000 jobs in the state.

An economist at Emory University's Goizueta Business School, warns to be wary of these numbers, as they are based on assumptions about which jobs are related to port activity,

"You say, this is a number of container ships that come in over the course of a quarter. So, we can estimate this is the number that come in over the course of the year. This is, broadly, the number of people working in this area," said Smith.

And that things can change quickly because of tariffs.

"Is that going to impact the number of people who are needed to unload those containers, move those containers around, the number of people who're going to be involved in transportation, shipping those containers across the country? Yes," the economist said.

Despite disruptions from ever-changing tariff policies, Georgia's two main ports boosted the local economy by four percent in fiscal year 2025, up from the previous year. Jobs that are supported by the port include a wide array of positions, from truck drivers who haul the cargo around to yard operators and the supply chain that's using whatever was shipped. Since fiscal year 2025, the study shows that employment supported by port activity has increased by almost 45,000 jobs.

Georgia Ports is currently adding five container berths in Savannah and one berth for roll-on/roll-off cargo in Brunswick as it undergoes a $5 billion port and inland infrastructure plan.

Port of Houston activity supports nearly $1 trillion in U.S. economic value

Port Houston announced findings from a new Martin Associates economic impact study showing marine cargo activity through the public and private facilities along the Houston Ship Channel, collectively known as the Port of Houston, supported $986.9 billion in total U.S. annual economic value in 2025 and 3.53 million jobs.

Outside of the strong U.S. impact, the report found marine cargo activity along the Houston Ship Channel supported $537.7 billion in annual economic value in Texas alone, equivalent to 18.5 percent of the state's GDP. Further, economic benefits reach statewide and are seen in 98 percernt of Texas counties. Activity at the public and private facilities also supported 1.89 million Texas jobs and generated $15.6 billion in state and local tax revenue.

The findings reflect significant growth since the previous Martin Associates report. Between 2022 and 2025, the economic value supported by maritime activity in the region increased by $98.4 billion, while the number of Texas jobs supported by port activity grew by 345,755.

Summary of Key Findings

- $986.9 billion in total economic value supported across the U.S., increase of nine percent compared to 2022
- 3,526,686 jobs supported nationwide, increase of five percent compared to 2022
- $537.7 billion in total economic value supported in Texas, increase of 22 percent compared to 2022
- 1,886,172 jobs supported across Texas, increase of 22 percent compared to 2022
- $15.6 billion in state and local tax revenue supported in Texas, increase of 47 percent compared to 2022

The findings reflect the enormous role the Houston Ship Channel plays in connecting Texas producers, manufacturers, and energy companies with domestic and global markets. The study found economic impacts in communities across Texas and throughout the United States, underscoring the broad reach of industries that depend on goods moving through the Houston Ship Channel.

The study was conducted by Martin Associates and measured the economic impacts generated by cargo and vessel activity at Port Houston's eight public terminals as well as the more than 200 private facilities located along the Houston Ship Channel. The analysis is based on data collected from more than 1,000 firms involved in cargo movement, transportation, logistics, manufacturing, and related industries.

This study was based on 2025 data. In 2026, tonnage along the Houston Ship Channel is up 16 percent year to date through June. For the latest insights on cargo activity, vessel traffic, and regional trade performance, visit the Houston Ship Channel Region monthly trade and market report here.

Wilmington Notes

During the month of August, visited most of the vessels, no beefs to report. The *Lurline* is a good feeder with Chief Steward Rudi running the Galley. Job numbers have not changed much from last month. The registration list is at 33 A-, 12 B-, and 28 C-seniority members as of August 31.

Just a friendly reminder that members who get pre-approval from the Training Plan and pay out of pocket for upgrade courses (such as Oiler, Pumpman/Machinist, and Electrician/Refrigerating Engineer) are eligible for reimbursement once the corresponding endorsements have been added to their Merchant Mariner Credential. We understand that, due to the previous government shutdown, the U.S. Coast Guard is experiencing a backlog, and processing times may take several months. We appreciate your patience during this process. Keep in mind that by completing your training now, you are already moving forward with your qualifications while others may be waiting months, or even years, for training opportunities through the union. Your initiative and commitment to upgrading your credentials will put you in a stronger position when those endorsements are issued.

Respectfully,
Pasquale "Mike" Gazillo
Port Agent

Honolulu Notes

Honolulu dispatched a total of 62 jobs during the month of August: three Electricians, three Reefers, one Oiler, two Junior Engineers, one Wiper, one Standby Junior Engineer, 19 Standby Electrician/Reefers, and 32 Standby Wipers. The current Honolulu registration list consists of 22 A-, five B-, and 12 C-seniority members.

Workforce Development and Community Outreach — I participated in the Labor-Community Services Council meeting and follow-up planning for future workforce-development activities. The Hawaii Department of Education is developing a hands-on Construction Trades Teacher Externship for early 2027. Organizers are seeking participation from unions, apprenticeship programs, and union contractors.

I also attended Senator Brian Schatz's union leader meeting, where I discussed the possibility of having the Honolulu U.S. Coast Guard Regional Examination Center offer scheduled appointments and walk-in services. Providing these local services would make it easier for Hawaii mariners to receive assistance with their Merchant Mariner Credentials. I also discussed eliminating Jones Act waivers in order to protect U.S.-flag vessels, American maritime jobs, and the domestic maritime industry.

Office Operations — The Honolulu office continued serving members and coordinating with employers throughout the month during the temporary harbor and weather disruptions associated with Tropical Storm Lala. The storm caused power outages throughout the Hawaiian Islands. Some communities were fortunate to have power restored within a few hours, while portions of other counties remained without electricity at the time of this report.

Overall, August was a productive month focused on maintaining employment opportunities, assisting members with dispatch and pay concerns, strengthening relationships with labor and industry partners, supporting workforce development, and proudly representing the Marine Firemen's Union throughout Hawaii.

Member Reminder — MFOW crew members have been signing off Matson and Patriot vessels with discharges that were completed incorrectly by the vessel's captain. Before leaving the vessel, members should carefully review their discharge and make sure it shows the correct employment start date and end date. Any error should be brought to the captain's attention and corrected before signing off.

Members are reminded to review their dispatch, pay voucher, and time sheet promptly after an assignment. If there is a question involving hours, overtime, a minimum guarantee, travel, or the classification of an assignment, please contact the Honolulu Branch and provide the relevant documents as soon as possible. Timely documentation helps the Union investigate and resolve pay issues efficiently.

Last Remarks - It was with great sadness that I learned of the passing of Benjamin O'Donnell, #3642. Benjamin had only recently begun his retirement. He will be truly missed. We extend our sincere condolences to his family, friends, and fellow members.

Mahalo and aloha from Hawaii,
Don Ngo, Port Agent

Three massive all-electric cranes arrive at Honolulu Harbor

Three massive all-electric container cranes arrived at Honolulu Harbor last month after a nearly 2,600-mile journey across the Pacific. The Noell ship-to-shore cranes traveled from the Port of Long Beach over three weeks, shipped fully upright and intact on an open barge. Each crane stands between 230 and 250 feet tall — about the height of a 20-story building — and weighs roughly 3.5 million pounds.

The cranes will be installed at the Kapalama Container Terminal as part of phase two of the $555 million terminal project. The project is a public-private partnership between the state Department of Transportation Harbors Division, The Pasha Group and Hawaii Stevedores, Inc.

Once complete, the 84-acre terminal will serve as the new operational hub and primary facility for Hawaii Stevedores. Officials say the terminal is expected to improve the efficiency, safety and reliability of cargo operations while expanding capacity and supporting newer port technology. Phase two is expected to be completed by the end of 2026, according to the DOT Harbors Division.

Newsom gives shipbuilding award in Vallejo Mare Island and Cal Poly Maritime Academy

Continued from page 1

Maritime came just a day after the Solano County Board of Supervisors tabled a shipbuilding proposal from California Forever for Solano County. The supervisors voted to oppose legislation, called the Solano Maritime and Manufacturing Act, that would have allowed California Forever to use a nearly 20-year-old environmental report to build a shipbuilding facility on the land it owns in Collinsville, a small community at the mouth of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. The 3-2 vote ended any chance of the proposal getting passed before the end of the legislative session. This is the second setback for California Forever's shipbuilding plans in Collinsville. In July, California Forever lost a bid with defense technology company Saronic, which proposed building a $3.2 billion shipyard there. The company decided to instead build in Texas.

At the press conference, Newsom expressed frustration that the county supervisors voted down California Forever's proposal. But Newsom added that the board "delayed it, they didn't deny it," and said he believes that the supervisors "will ultimately embrace the tenets of the project."

When asked about whether he widely supports California Forever, Newsom said he's "not attaching himself to any specific proposals," but he is interested in moving California's economy forward. "We've got to step up our game. We want to compete," he said.

Regular membership meeting dates 2026

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 —August 2026:
Lee Jorgensen, P-2693..................$10.00
Bonny Coloma, P-2763............. $ 50.00
Jameala Hagens, JM-5499 .... $ 20.00
Eeric White, #3925 .... $100.00

Political Action Fund

Voluntary donations for August 2026:
Mario Higa, #3738 ....$300.00
Vicente Cacacho, #3828............ $30.00

MFOW members pensioned

Name	Book Number	Pension Type	Sea Time	Effective
Mario Higa	3738	SIU PD Only, Basic L/T	28.325	9/1/2026
Eric Torstensen	3675	SIU PD Only, Basic	20.365	9/1/2026

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