



# THE MARINE FIREMAN

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



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## FMC investigating flagging practices; ITF supports inquiry

The Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) is conducting a non-adjudicatory investigation to examine whether the vessel flagging laws, regulations, or practices of certain foreign governments create unfavorable shipping conditions in the foreign trade of the United States. The investigation commences with a 90-day public comment period. The FMC is seeking examples of unfavorable flagging laws, regulations, and practices that endanger the efficiency and reliability of the ocean shipping supply chain. The specific topics of FMC interest are enumerated in the order announcing this investigation.

The FMC is particularly interested in receiving comments from individuals and organizations with expertise or experience in vessel operations, international trade, international law, and national security. Examples of such commenters include other governments, international organizations, standards-setting organizations, shipowners, shipping companies, shippers, and organized labor groups. Commenters may also identify actions that high-quality registries can take to lower costs and compliance burdens so long as they do not result in diluting standards.

The FMC is authorized to conduct comprehensive investigations and take vigorous enforcement measures when appropriate, including when foreign laws or practices cause unfavorable shipping conditions. The deadline for submitting comments is August 20, 2025.

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is backing the FMC's domestic investigation into vessel flagging laws, including the long-abused practice of flags-of-convenience (FOC). The FMC cited serious concerns that states operating FOCs are enabling a "race to the bottom" in global maritime regulations.

Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO President and ITF Seafarers' Section Chair, David Heindel, said, "The FMC is absolutely right in its assessment of FOCs and the permissive environments they create for unscrupulous shipowners and operators. The very existence of the FOC system continues to stain the integrity of the maritime industry. This system thrives on weak oversight, allowing bad actors to exploit seafarers and shirk responsibility. We strongly support the FMC's efforts to identify practical steps to introduce greater accountability across the world's ship registries."

The FOC system has been the subject of the ITF's longest-running campaign — launched in 1948 — due to its role in circumventing labor regulations, suppressing wages, and enabling unsafe working conditions. The ITF regularly updates its FOC list, which now includes 45 registries, following the 2025 additions of Guinea Bissau and Tuvalu.

The dangers posed by FOC vessels extend beyond labor violations. The rise of the

so-called "dark fleet" — vessels that obscure their operations to evade sanctions, engage in illicit trade or bypass safety regulations — has been greatly enabled by the lack of oversight inherent to the FOC system. These vessels often operate in the shadows, without transparency or accountability, posing a serious threat to global supply chains, maritime security and environmental safety.

The ITF's work on seafarer abandonment underscores this risk. While over half the world's fleet is flagged under FOC registries, a staggering 80 percent of abandonment cases in 2024 involved FOC ships. Last year alone, 3,133 seafarers were abandoned across 312 vessels — a sharp increase from 2023. In just the first five months of 2025, the ITF has already recorded 158 abandonment cases, affecting over 1,500 seafarers.

The FMC investigation will examine whether "the laws, regulations, and practices of foreign governments, or the competitive methods employed by owners, operators, agents, or masters of foreign-flagged vessels," violate U.S. maritime law. The FMC has warned that this regulatory race to the bottom directly undermines "efficiency, reliability and safety", threatening the ocean shipping supply chain.

The ITF continues to call for international enforcement of UNCLOS Article 91, which mandates a "genuine link" between a vessel and its flag state. Without it, FOCs — and the shadow fleets they enable — will remain a dangerous loophole in the global maritime system.

## Panama recovers \$8.5 million in owed wages for seafarers in 2024

The Panama Maritime Authority (AMP) has recovered \$8.5 million in unpaid wages for seafarers by the end of 2024, a significant jump of 52.70 percent compared to the previous year's total of \$5,593,941.82. The effort was led by the Directorate General of Seafarers (DGGM), as part of Panama's ongoing commitment to improve conditions for maritime workers sailing under its flag.

This development was announced after a recent meeting between AMP officials and a visiting delegation from the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF). The visit took place at the DGGM offices, where both parties discussed ways to strengthen collaboration and better protect seafarers' rights.

Throughout 2024, AMP handled 271 inquiries and responded to 312 maritime labor complaints. These efforts helped repatriate 368 seafarers from different nationalities who were facing issues onboard. Additionally, 343 maritime labor inspections were conducted on both domestic and international vessels to ensure compliance with labor laws.

AMP said that these achievements were made possible through close cooperation with shipowners, vessel operators, and protection & indemnity (P&I) Clubs, which played a key role in resolving complaints and ensuring crew welfare.

The authority has reaffirmed its commitment to continue monitoring the enforcement of national maritime regulations as well as international conventions ratified by Panama. These include the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW 1978), as amended, and the Maritime Labor Convention (MLC 2006), as amended, two key frameworks that safeguard seafarer training and working conditions globally.

According to AMP, these measures aim to ensure that all maritime workers under the Panamanian registry are treated fairly and as per international standards. During the meeting, the ITF praised AMP's proactive stance. The federation's Inspectorate Coordinator, Steve Trowsdale, acknowledged the productivity of the discussions and the importance of exchanging ideas to further strengthen worker protections.

The ITF delegation included Edgar Ortiz, Regional Secretary for the Americas; Vladimir Small Ortiz, National Coordinator and a member of the Union of Marine Engineers (UIM); and retired UIM member Bernardo Campos. They were received by senior DGGM officials during the visit.



The *USNS Charlton*, northbound in the Miraflores Locks of the Panama Canal on May 13, 2025, and the *USNS Watkins*, northbound in the Pedro Miguel Locks on the Panama Canal on May 23, 2025. Both ships are currently attached to the Army Prepositioned Stock 3 (APS-3) program, and functioned as floating warehouses stocked with essential military supplies, including ammunition, tanks, medical equipment, and spare parts. These floating resources complemented the land-based supplies stored in the United States, Europe, South Korea, and the Middle East. The Army plan, well underway, is to decommission APS-3 by relocating the stock ashore and transferring operational control of the ships to DOT/MARAD, homeported stateside in reduced operating status



MFOW crew members aboard *USNS Watkins* passing thru the Panama Canal are Electrician Vasily Mironchuk, #3943; Wiper Maria Calma, non-seniority; Oilier Elena Garrido, JM-5393; and Electrician Michael Drummond, JM-5349.

# The Marine Fireman

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## POLA adopts near-term clean truck spending plan

Over the next three years, the Port of Los Angeles will continue its investment in clean trucks and supporting infrastructure to help transition the drayage fleet serving the port to zero-emissions (ZE) models by 2035. The Los Angeles Board of Harbor Commissioners unanimously approved the spending plan that will guide how the Port allocates its Clean Truck Fund (CTF) revenues through June 2028.

Port funding comes from the CTF Rate. The rate was established to help operators afford ZE trucks, which are more expensive than conventional models, and build the charging and fueling depots needed to power them. The revenues come from cargo owners who pay \$10 for every loaded twenty-foot equivalent unit (TEU) hauled through the port by conventional drayage trucks, most of which run on diesel. The rate for larger containers is \$20.

Cargo owners who use ZE trucks are permanently exempt from the rate. Owners whose goods are hauled by certain trucks with lower nitrogen oxides emissions have a temporary exemption through December 31, 2027. The Port of Long Beach collects the same rate under its CTF Rate program.

Since April 2022, the Port of Los Angeles has collected approximately \$123 million in CTF revenues to help operators purchase ZE trucks and develop supporting infrastructure. As of March 2025, the port has spent or allocated \$93 million for deploying ZE trucks and building charging and fueling depots. The total includes funding for projects subject to final approval by the Harbor Commission and covers:

- Incentive vouchers for up to 350 ZE drayage trucks, with 103 trucks delivered and up to 247 more on order.
- An additional 22 ZE trucks through two licensed motor carriers awarded funding in the port’s first Request for Proposal (RFP), with 10 trucks in service and 12 trucks ready to be deployed this quarter when in-house charging stations are operational.
- A regional project led by the South Coast Air Quality Management District that put 100 ZE trucks into drayage service at the San Pedro Bay ports.
- A regional infrastructure project funding eight public

charging stations that provide 207 chargers for battery-electric trucks across Southern California.

- Another proposed public charging station due to be located in Wilmington and currently under environmental review.

Over the next three years, the port expects to collect about \$120 million more in CTF revenues. The actual amount will depend on cargo throughput and the growing number of ZE trucks calling at the port.

Through mid-2028, the port will continue to prioritize spending CTF revenues on vouchers that make ZE trucks more affordable, charging and fueling infrastructure projects, and future RFPs that put more ZE trucks in port service and add more infrastructure. The port will also prioritize investing in promising ZE truck technology and helping to support grant applications by others that accelerate the transition to ZE trucks. Likely grant partners include other government agencies, current port tenants, and/or licensed motor carriers registered to call at the port.

From the outset, the port has leveraged its CTF money by partnering with the private sector and regional, state and federal agencies to speed up the transition to a ZE drayage fleet. Examples including combining the port’s incentive vouchers with available funding from the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to cover as much as 90 percent of the up-front costs of buying ZE trucks. Without vouchers, the average cost of a new Class 8 truck that runs on battery-electric power costs is about \$420,000 and those fueled by hydrogen average \$750,000.

Infrastructure partnerships include collaborating with the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reductions Review Committee (MSRC) to fund the eight public charging stations across Southern California. MSRC is a regional intergovernmental agency made up of South Coast Air Basin transportation agencies, the South Coast Air Quality Management District and CARB.

Today, 546 ZE trucks are currently in service at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. A majority were purchased with the help of CTF vouchers and/or similar incentives from other agencies.

## POLB trade supports 2.7 million U.S. jobs

Trade facilitated by the Port of Long Beach, California is a key pillar of economic vitality in the United States, driving consumer spending, job creation and innovation, according to a new economic impact analysis released last month. As one of the busiest seaports in the United States, the Port of Long Beach supports 2.7 million jobs across the nation, including more than 1.1 million in California, the port-commissioned study conducted by Boston-based EBP US found. In the five-county Southern California region, more than 691,000 jobs are connected to port trade, construction and tourism, or 1 out of 17 jobs.

The study started in August of last year and examines economic activity in 2023. Among other findings:

- The port supports 2,714,707 mil-

lion jobs in the United States, providing \$176 billion in income and more than \$309 billion to gross domestic product, the final value of goods and services.

- Statewide, 1,138,156 million jobs are connected to the port, generating \$77.9 billion in income.
- Across Southern California, 691,607 jobs depend on the port, providing \$46.6 billion in income. (Five-county region including Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside and San Bernardino counties.)

- Locally, in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Statistical Area (the second-largest in the nation), the port powers 543,122 jobs providing \$38.9 billion income.
- Port activity is a major contributor to the tax base, with \$84.4 billion in local, state and federal taxes collected for 2023.
- Cargo moving to and from the port originates from or is destined for every Assembly and Senate district in California and every U.S. congressional district.

## Port of Oakland approves new renewable power purchase

The Port of Oakland, California is taking a significant step towards a sustainable future by entering into a new agreement with the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) – that allows the port to benefit from renewable energy generated from EBMUD’s wastewater treatment plant in West Oakland. Starting July 1, 2025 and for the next 10 years, the port will acquire renewable energy certificates (REC) at a fixed price of \$36 each. Each REC represents one megawatt-hour (MWh) of electricity generated from a renewable energy source and delivered to the grid. This initiative

is expected to add between 11,300 to 17,700 megawatt-hours of clean energy annually to the port’s energy portfolio, contributing to 10 to 15 percent of its total energy needs.

The port operates a publicly owned utility system, powering more than 300 utility service connections to port facilities (tenant-operated and port-operated facilities) in support of Aviation, Maritime, and Commercial Real Estate operations. The port has collaborated with EDMUD since 2012, purchasing renewable energy from the utilities’ various facilities.

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# How fuel choices are steering marine engine development

In a maritime landscape increasingly defined by climate imperatives, tightening regulations, and the pursuit of operational efficiency, the question of “which fuel to use?” has become both urgent and complex. No longer dictated by a one-size-fits-all solution like heavy fuel oil, today’s fuel decisions are pivotal to newbuilding strategies, retrofit investments, and engine development. At the heart of this multifaceted transformation is the recognition that the marine industry must adopt a flexible, multi-fuel future.

This evolution is reshaping not only vessel designs but also the very engines that power them. Engine manufacturers like MAN Energy Solutions are at the forefront, designing propulsion systems tailored to meet varying fuel capabilities— from LNG and methanol to ammonia. Understanding how fuel choices are made today requires a deep dive into technical feasibility, fuel availability, regulatory compliance, safety considerations, and long-term cost effectiveness.

**The complexity of fuel choices** —According to Dr. Uwe Lauber, CEO of MAN Energy Solutions, the shipping industry is entering an era of complexity, where “a one-size-fits-all strategy” is no longer viable. Owners, operators, and shipbuilders must now weigh a matrix of factors to determine the best fuel fit for their fleet and operations. Key influencing factors include:

- Fuel availability and supply infrastructure: Some fuels like LNG benefit from an established global supply chain. Others, like e-methanol and green ammonia, are still in the ramp-up phase.
- Safety considerations: Particularly crucial for ammonia due to its toxicity and handling risks.
- Emission targets and regulatory pressures: The IMO’s goal to reduce GHG emissions by 50 per cent by 2050 is accelerating move toward lower- and zero-carbon fuels.
- Economic feasibility: CAPEX and OPEX of dual-fuel engines, retrofit costs, and fuel prices over time.
- Vessel type and operational profile: Bulk carriers, containerships, cruise ships, and offshore vessels each have distinct fuel demands based on range, engine load, and port call frequency.

**Methanol** — Methanol has emerged as a highly promising fuel option for the medium term. With over 180 methanol dual-fuel engine orders placed in just the last 18 months and more than 500,000 operating hours logged, the fuel is transitioning rapidly from concept to commercial reality. Why methanol?

- Proven Technology: MAN’s methanol engine technology has matured quickly, with successful deployments on methanol carriers and, notably, the launch of the Laura Maersk, the world’s first large containership running on green methanol.
- Simpler Retrofit Pathway: Compared to ammonia or LNG, methanol is easier to retrofit into existing vessel designs.

- Lower Emissions Profile: Methanol significantly cuts SOx, NOx, and particulate matter. When derived from biomass or renewable electricity, it also offers a path to carbon neutrality.
- Safer Handling: While flammable, methanol is less toxic and easier to store than ammonia.

Methanol’s primary limitation today lies in the supply side. The demand for green methanol is outpacing current production capabilities, creating a gap that the industry must bridge through investments in fuel production capacity.

**LNG** — Despite a slowdown in new LNG dual-fuel orders, LNG still maintains a strategic role in decarbonization. As Dr. Lauber notes, “we have the infrastructure available for LNG,” which offers an immediate 20% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions when switching from heavy fuel oil.

LNG engines have been widely adopted in the past decade, especially for large containerships and LNG carriers. However, concerns about methane slip—the unburned methane released during combustion—have somewhat tarnished its image as a “clean fuel.” MAN addresses this issue through high-pressure injection systems that can significantly reduce methane slip, albeit with increased capital expenditure. The long-term viability of LNG will likely depend on the availability of bio-LNG or synthetic LNG to reduce lifecycle emissions. Until then, it serves as a crucial “bridge fuel” in the transition to zero-carbon options.

**Ammonia** — Ammonia, long hailed as a zero-carbon fuel with great promise, is now making significant strides in engine development. However, its widespread use remains a few years away due to critical safety, regulatory, and technical challenges.

**Progress in ammonia engine development** — MAN Energy Solutions’ ammonia project reached a landmark milestone in early 2025 when its prototype ME-LGIA (liquid gas injection ammonia) engine successfully ran at 100% load. The company expects to deliver its first operational ammonia dual-fuel engine by Q1 2026, to be installed on a 93,000-cu m Very Large Ammonia Carrier (VLAC) being built by HD Hyundai for Eastern Pacific Shipping. These achievements follow a year of successful single-cylinder ammonia testing that demonstrated favorable emissions and performance characteristics. With Mitsui OSK Lines onboard as a launch customer and WinGD racing to deliver its own ammonia dual-fuel engines by late 2025, the competition is heating up to establish ammonia as a mainstream marine fuel. Why ammonia matters:

- Zero carbon emissions when produced using green hydrogen and renewable energy.
- High energy density (by volume) compared to hydrogen.
- Existing industrial handling infrastructure due to its use in fertilizer and chemical sectors.

- Ammonia challenges:**
- Safety concerns due to its high toxicity and corrosiveness.
  - Limited regulatory framework for onboard ammonia use.
  - Complex retrofit demands: Retrofitting a ship to run on ammonia is “almost like building a new ship,” says Dr. Lauber. He predicts large-scale adoption post-2028, when fuel supply, engine technology, and safety protocols are expected to mature in parallel.

**Newbuild vs. retrofit vs. fuel-ready** — The decision to install a dual-fuel engine now, opt for a “fuel-ready” design, or wait for a future retrofit depends on strategic vision, ship type, and budget.

- Newbuild Dual-Fuel: Best for shipowners ready to operate on alternative fuels from day one. Allows optimal system integration but requires certainty on fuel availability.
- Fuel-Ready Design: Offers flexibility by completing 40%–50% of the system work during construction. Particularly effective for methanol-readiness, where future retrofitting can be streamlined.
- Retrofit: While interest is high, only 3,000 to 5,000 ships globally are viable candidates based on age, engine control systems, and vessel size. MAN expects to complete 50 retrofits annually, scaling up to 70–80 as workforce capacity improves.

**The turbocharger revolution** — To support these evolving fuel strategies, MAN’s PBST turbochargers are helping engines achieve peak efficiency across a wide range of fuel types. From single-stage high-pressure systems like the TCP series to smart, sensor-enabled turbochargers equipped with PrimeServ Assist, the technology is evolving fast. These turbochargers are not merely accessories — they are enablers of low-emission, high-performance marine propulsion. Optimized for methanol and ammonia, they help compensate for challenges like lower calorific values and corrosive combustion byproducts.

**Looking ahead** — The pathway to marine decarbonization is not linear. Instead, it is shaped by a patchwork of fuels, technologies, and timelines. While methanol leads today, LNG provides a robust transitional base, and ammonia promises a zero-carbon future.

Marine engine development must therefore remain agile, modular, and ready for adaptation. As Dr. Lauber aptly puts it, “The future will be complex,” but with strategic foresight and investment in fuel-flexible propulsion technologies, the shipping industry can navigate this complexity— and thrive within it. Fuel choice is no longer just a technical decision—it is a strategic one. Whether shipowners invest in dual-fuel engines, opt for retrofits, or prepare for ammonia-readiness, success will depend on aligning today’s actions with tomorrow’s energy landscape.

## Port of San Diego wins Green Port Award at Breakbulk Europe

The Port of San Diego won the Green Port Award at the 2025 Green World Awards presented at the Breakbulk Europe Conference on May 13, 2025. This international recognition celebrates the port’s leadership in sustainable maritime operations through the implementation of the port’s Maritime Clean Air Strategy (MCAS), advancing zero-emission (ZE) technologies, and helping improve community air quality. To date, the port and its partners have committed more than \$227 million toward ZE initiatives. The award highlights the port’s green achievements and innova-

- tion including:
- Deployment of North America’s first all-electric mobile harbor cranes.
  - A 700-kilowatt solar-powered microgrid with 2,700-kilowatt-hour battery storage at the Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal.
  - Crowley Marine’s deployment of the first all-electric tugboat in the U.S. which services San Diego Bay and supports Port of San Diego operations.
  - Expanded shore power for cruise and cargo vessels.
  - Renewable diesel fueling across all

- three fueling docks in San Diego Bay.
- Community-driven investment, with four percent of maritime revenue reinvested in local air quality projects.
- These projects are supported by multiple port staff and teams including maritime and operations, sustainability and innovation, and government and public relations. The port also collaborates with tenants and service providers such as Dole Fresh Fruit Company, SSA Marine, Terminalift LLC, and The Pasha Group to advance these initiatives and support the electrification of cargo handling

equipment. The port will celebrate these accomplishments and more during its annual Green Port Month in September.

The Breakbulk Green World Awards program celebrates the people and projects across the project cargo and breakbulk industry contributing to a sustainable future. Specifically, the Green Port Award recognizes ports and terminals implementing sustainable approaches to operations and advancing environmental responsibility within the maritime and logistics sectors. The awards were judged independently by an industry-wide esteemed panel of experts.

## Zero-emission SF Bay Ferry trio will have Wartsila electric propulsion

Wartsila has been selected to supply the electric propulsion system for the three fully battery-electric, high-speed ferries that All American Marine (AAM) is to build for San Francisco Bay Ferry. The zero-emission vessels will be the first fully electric high-speed ferries to operate and be built in the U.S. The propulsion system order was placed with Wartsila by AAM, on behalf of San Francisco Bay Ferry.

Wartsila notes that it has supplied more battery power to the marine in-

dustry than any other electrical propulsion provider in the world and says that, in awarding the contract, the company’s extensive global experience in developing and supplying integrated systems and solutions for zero-emission high-speed vessels was a key consideration.

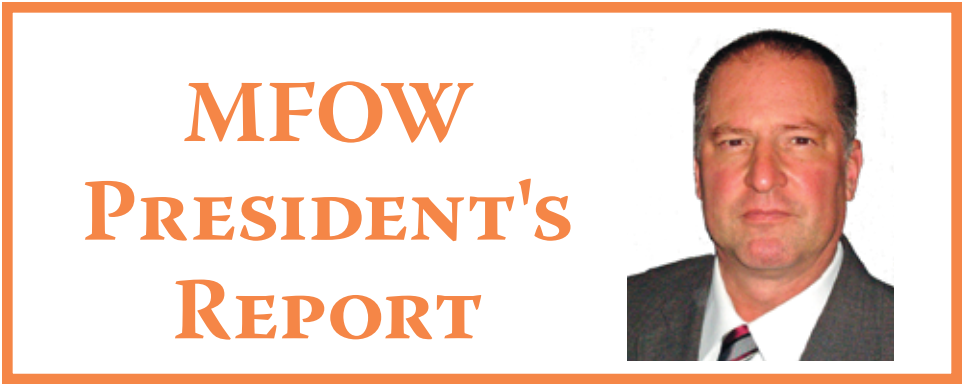
The three zero-emission vessels will be the first delivered as a part of San Francisco Bay Ferry’s Rapid Electric Emission Free (REEF) Ferry Program and will operate on new routes that connect two of San Francisco’s fast-

est growing neighborhoods, Treasure Island and Mission Bay, to SF Bay Ferry’s downtown ferry hub. Wartsila will work within the REEF project team to finalize the vessel and charging system concepts.

Wartsila’s scope of supply is for the full electric propulsion system. This includes the energy and power management system, the integrated automation system, batteries, D.C. hub, transformers, electric motors, and the shore power supply. The Wartsila equipment is

scheduled for delivery commencing in 2026, and the first vessel is expected to join the ferry fleet in early 2027.

Aurora Marine Design in San Diego delivered the initial concept design of the vessels to SF Bay Ferry. Teknikraft is then responsible for the detailed design of the vessels which will be built to USCG Subchapter T standards. The vessels will operate at 24 knots, powered by dual 625-kilowatt electric motors. The ferries will be 100 feet long with 26-foot beam and a 5.9-foot draft.



MTD Executive Board Meeting

As reported in the May issue of *The Marine Fireman*, on May 7 I attended the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO Executive Board meeting held at AFL-CIO Headquarters in Washington D.C. This was a productive meeting that resulted in five policy statements being adopted:

- Support for shipbuilding and the SHIPS Act
- Support for the Jones Act
- Support for U.S. Trade Representative actions to fight China targeting maritime, logistics and shipbuilding sectors
- Support for cargo preference laws
- Support for federal workers and to restore their collective bargaining rights

T-AGOS Bid

On May 13, the Union was notified by Patriot Contract Services that they have advanced in the bidding process to operate and maintain five Transportation Auxiliary General Ocean Surveillance (T-AGOS) vessels and one Transportation Auxiliary General Missile Range Instrumentation (T-AGM) vessel; and were invited to submit an updated bid per Amendment 6 of the Request for Proposal no later than May 23, 2025.

The T-AGOS vessels are the *USNS Able*, *USNS Effective*, *USNS Impeccable*, *USNS Loyal*, and *USNS Victorious*. The T-AGM vessel is the *USNS Howard O Lorenzen*. The T-AGOS vessels 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 (SURTASS) operations. The T-AGM vessel is a government-owned ship also under operational and administrative command of COMSC, and exercises TYCOM functions and supports the U.S. Air Force Dual Band Radar efforts in monitoring worldwide missile launches.

The Union submitted a wage and benefit package to the company that adheres to the Wage Determination in the Service Contract Act set forth by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment Standards Administration.

Watson-class Vessels

Back in April 2024, I reported that the Military Sealift Command (MSC) Program Manager for the *Watson*-class contract had given preliminary notification that the U.S. Army planned to wind down their pre-positioning requirements for cargo aboard six *Watson*-class vessels. The Army plan was to download the six Army Prepositioned Stock 3 (APS-3) vessels and move toward a land-based prepositioning model. The plan would affect the *Charlton*, *Pomeroy*, *Red Cloud*, *Soderman*, *Watkins* and *Watson*.

On May 21, 2025, I participated in a maritime industry teleconference to get an update on the plan. We were informed that the Department of Defense had recently signed a memo for full disinvestment of the APS-3 ships. Three of the ships are to be turned over to the Navy on October 1, 2025, and placed in reduced operating status (ROS). Then, one ship per quarter, over the following three quarters, are to be turned over to the Navy in the same fashion. Eventually, all six ships are to be transferred from the Navy to the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD) Ready Reserve Force. All six ships are currently berthed in East Coast U.S. ports, so it appears as though the plan is well underway.

Maritime labor and management remain engaged with the House and Senate on this matter, questioning the impact on readiness and sealift requirements for the United States Indo-Pacific Command. With the end of the program, the Army will no longer have ready-to-sail vessels in standby status and will instead rely on MARAD to activate ROS vessels in the continental United States when the call to arms arises.

WPMA

On May 23, I met with SUP President Matt Henning and Western Pacific Maritime Academy (WPMA) Executive Director Captain Michael W. Bacher at MFW Headquarters. WPMA is working with Guam and the Commonwealth Northern Marianas Islands (CNMI) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to develop an apprenticeship program that could feed graduates into maritime labor unions, including the MFW and SUP. The program could possibly financially subsidize entry-level training and upgrades.

We discussed many of the contractual, legal and logistical barriers to implementing such a program. The idea is in its early stages and discussions will continue.

APL Marine Services

On June 2, the Union was notified that APL Marine Services had received permission to move the Maritime Security Program (MSP) operating agreement from the *APL Oceania* to the *President LB Johnson*. The company cited commercial reasons, to make sure they can carry aid cargo on the *President LB Johnson*. There is a three-year wait rule on aid cargo that does not apply to ships enrolled in MSP. The move has no effect on the current collective bargaining agreements or the company's commitment to continue to operate 10 ships with SIU Pacific District manning.

MFW Election

Nominations to elect officers of the Marine Firemen's Union for the 2026-2028 term of office will open September 1, 2025, and continue through September 30, 2025. Nominations may be made in person at the regular September meetings at Headquarters and branches or handed in to the officials at Headquarters and branches. They may also be made by mail any time during the month, provided that mailed nominations are received at MFW Headquarters by September 30, 2025. The following official positions will appear on the ballot this year:

1. President/Secretary-Treasurer
2. Vice President
3. San Francisco Business Agent
4. Wilmington Port Agent
5. Honolulu Port Agent
6. Trustee (three positions)
7. SIUNA Convention Delegate (one position if required by SIUNA formula for delegates)

New leadership announced for Solano Campus, Cal Poly Maritime Academy

Cal Poly has appointed two new leaders to guide the future of the Cal Poly, Solano Campus and the Cal Poly Maritime Academy as part of its ongoing integration efforts. Dr. Corey Cook has been named vice president and chief executive officer of Cal Poly, Solano Campus, while Rear Admiral (Retired) Eric C. Jones, USCG, has been named superintendent of the Cal Poly Maritime Academy. Cook and Jones were appointed to their new posts after a national search. Both roles are effective July 1.

Cal Maritime will officially merge on July 1, when it becomes Cal Poly, Solano Campus, housing the Cal Poly Maritime Academy. This comes after California State University Board of Trustees voted in November to approve a CSU Chancellor recommendation to integrate the two schools. The integration would be complete by the start of the 2026-27 academic year.

The decision of the merger was made after Cal Maritime experienced a 31 percent enrollment decline over the last

seven years — going from approximately 1,100 students in 2016-17 to just over 750 in 2023-24, according to a CSU statement. There are 81 members of faculty, with 176 staff. The rising employment and operational costs have contributed to the fiscal crisis for Cal Maritime, which has an annual budget of \$53 million.

The Cook and Jones appointments are the next step in an integration approved in November by the CSU Board of Trustees in order to build on Cal Poly's strong track record in admissions and enrollment; unite two institutions that share a hands-on, immersive educational approach; and create administrative efficiencies. As superintendent, Jones will serve as the administrative leader and chief academic officer of the Cal Poly Maritime Academy. He will oversee the academy's merchant mariner license-track programs, training vessels, the Corps of Cadets, port facilities, and other associated programs.

Jones joins Cal Poly following more than 35 years of distinguished service in the U.S. Coast Guard. His leadership roles included assistant commandant for human resources and commander of the Seventh District, where he oversaw operations across the Southeastern U.S. and Caribbean and managed workforce

systems for over 57,000 members. He also coordinated multi-agency responses during Hurricanes Dorian, Irma, and Maria, as well as the COVID pandemic.

Jones is a graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, holds a master's degree from MIT, and is a fellow of Harvard's National Preparedness Leadership Initiative and MIT's Seminar XXI on Foreign Policy and International Relations.

As vice president and CEO, Cook will lead Cal Poly, Solano Campus, providing strategic vision, executive leadership, and operational oversight for all programs and initiatives. He is widely respected for his commitment to student success, inclusive innovation and institutional transformation.

Cook recently served as executive vice president and provost at Saint Mary's College of California. He previously served as founding dean of the School of Public Service at Boise State University and has led strategic planning, accreditation, and academic reform initiatives. He holds a doctorate and a master's degree in political science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

POLITICAL ACTION FUND

Voluntary donations for May 2025:  
Henry Disley, P-2617.....\$100.00

IBF agrees 2026-2027 pay rise for seafarers

The International Bargaining Forum (IBF), which is comprised of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) representing seafarers and the Joint Negotiating Group (JNG) representing ship managers and owners, has agreed to a pay increase for hundreds of thousands of seafarers around the world. The IBF is the forum at which negotiations are held for the world's only global collective bargaining agreement, which applies to more than 250,000 seafarers who work on flag of convenience vessels covered by an ITF-IBF collective bargaining agreement.

Workers' representatives have agreed to accept an offer from employers which means that seafarers, officers and ratings will receive a 3.5 percent increase in wag-

es and compensations in 2026 and a further 1.5 percent in 2027. This agreement comes in addition to the recent landmark increase in the global minimum wage for seafarers agreed at the International Labor Organization (ILO)'s Joint Maritime Commission (JMC) Subcommittee on Wages of Seafarers. The ILO's JMC and the IBF are distinct entities with different roles in the maritime industry. The JMC advises on setting international labor standards for seafarers, including the minimum wage. The IBF is a collective bargaining forum between the ITF and the International Maritime Employers' Council. IBF agreements are specific to the participating companies and their vessels and may exceed the minimum standards set by the ILO.

Active MFW members

Retain your Welfare Fund eligibility.  
MAIL or TURN IN all your Unfit for Duty slips to:  
MFW Welfare Fund, 240 2nd Street, San Francisco, CA 94105

## VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

There were 42 registrants dispatched in the month of May: 23 in Class A, five in Class B, five in Class C and nine Non-Seniority.  
There are 31 members registered:

15 in Class A, four in Class B, and 12 in Class C.  
Fraternally,  
**Robert Baca**  
Vice President



## New inscription honors merchant mariners lost in WWII

In 1992, an inscription was approved to be added to the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) West Coast Memorial to recognize the merchant mariners who lost their lives off the Pacific Coast in World War II. For unknown reasons, the addition to the memorial was never completed, but on May 22, 2025, National Maritime Day, that oversight was rectified.

ABMC's East Coast and West Coast memorials have similar purposes — to memorialize those lost in the coastal waters during World War II. The East Coast Memorial in the Battery in New York City, carries an inscription, added in 1991, honoring the Merchant Marines.

Dru DiMattia, president of the American Merchant Marine Veterans, a non-profit dedicated to gaining recognition for Merchant Marine accomplishments in war and peace, reached out to ABMC about the inscription on the West Coast Memorial located within the Presidio in San Francisco. ABMC staff found the prior authorization for the memorial addition and set to work.

"Today — on this spectacular site in the Presidio, overlooking the Pacific Ocean and the Golden Gate entrance to San Francisco Bay, through which so many Merchant Mariners have sailed — we correct that oversight," said ABMC Historian Ben Brands during his welcoming remarks.

"It is appropriate, in this 80th anniversary year of our victory in World War II — a victory won in large part

through the service and sacrifice of our nation's Merchant Mariners—that both of our commission's coastal memorials now commemorate that sacrifice," Brands said.

Six U.S. Merchant Marine veterans from World War II - John Laughton, Frank Mendez, Charles Mills, Claude Perasso and Dave Yoho - were on hand to witness the dedication ceremony.

Yoho and DiMattia placed a wreath on the memorial under the new inscription, which reads:

"1941-1945, in addition to the 413 American servicemen honored here who lost their lives in her service and who sleep in the American coastal waters of the Pacific Ocean the United States of America honors the U.S. Merchant Mariners, their shipmates from the U.S. Navy Armed Guard, and the Seamen of the U.S. Army Transport Service who lost their lives during World War II maintaining vital supply lines in the Pacific Theater."

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation Maritime Administration, during World War II more than 250,000 members of the American Merchant Marine served their country, with more than 6,700 giving their lives, hundreds being detained as prisoners of war and more than 800 U.S. merchant ships being sunk or damaged.

Besides the East and West Coast memorials, ABMC honors more than 500 Merchant Mariners at its cemeteries in Europe and the Pacific.

## Bipartisan bill aims to modernize Coast Guard's mariner credentialing system

U.S. Representatives Salud Carbajal (D-California) and Mike Ezell (R-Mississippi) have introduced the Mariner Exam Modernization Act: legislation aimed at overhauling the Coast Guard's Merchant Mariner Credentialing exam system. The current licensing process has faced criticism for being outdated and burdensome, requiring candidates to demonstrate competencies multiple times through both hands-on assessments and a seven-part written exam. This redundancy has been identified as a barrier to entry for new mariners and takes time away from more contemporary training needs, such as cybersecurity. The proposed legislation directs the Coast Guard to develop and implement

a modernization plan within 270 days of receiving recommendations from a dedicated working group.

The initiative has gained support from key maritime organizations, including the Transportation Institute and the Navy League of the United States. The Consortium of State Maritime Academies has specifically highlighted how the legislation will reduce redundancy between the STCW Code and the National Exam, while eliminating outdated subject requirements. The bill comes at a critical time when the maritime industry faces a workforce shortage, with the current exam system including obsolete content and lacking a modern review system.

## Website for the U.S. Center for Maritime Innovation is Live!

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration announces that the MARAD-supported U.S. Center for Maritime Innovation website went live on May 2, 2025. The Center and its Secretariat, the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) will promote the study, research, development, assessment, and deployment of emerging marine technologies and practices related to the maritime transportation system. It will be critical for

engaging industry, academia, government, and other stakeholders in setting and executing multi-year research priorities that drive innovation in support of the priorities of the Trump Administration Restoring America's Maritime Dominance. The website facilitates the dissemination of information and communication with the U.S. shipping community regarding activities associated with maritime innovation projects. It can be found at [www.uscmi.org](http://www.uscmi.org).

## Louisiana residents pack contentious meeting on proposed \$2 billion container ship terminal

A standing room-only crowd of St. Bernard Parish residents turned out on May 27 at the Val Riess Sports Complex, hoping to weigh in on the proposed \$2 billion Louisiana International Terminal (LIT). The Port of New Orleans and state officials have proposed building the new container shipping port in Violet. But first, developers need key environmental permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

USACE organized the meeting in an effort to hear directly from the public. Many turned out with shirts, signs and buttons expressing opposition to the project, which proponents say is vital to the state's economic future. Port of New Orleans officials also spoke, giving the crowd a chance to hear directly from officials about their vision for the terminal.

"The project will add 18,000 jobs and more than \$1 billion in tax revenue by 2050," said a Port of New Orleans spokesperson.

Many terminal opponents spoke out against the port officials' claims.

"They won't guarantee that the people

of St. Bernard will get the jobs. They are just saying that people will get the jobs. But will we get them? I doubt it seriously," said a Violet resident.

The Port of New Orleans said LIT is needed to keep Louisiana competitive in the shipping industry, offering an alternative port for bigger shipping container vessels unable to pass under the Crescent City Connection bridge farther up the Mississippi River. But many citizens said they opposed the project, because of increased traffic, pollution and environmental concerns they said the development would bring.

USACE officials stressed the project is still in its early stages and would need the agency's approval before moving forward. USACE officials took notes and transcripts of each speaker, with the goal of reviewing the most-pressing questions from the crowd. The Port of New Orleans will have to respond to those concerns in its effort to get the green light permits from USACE. USACE did not give a timeline for when it will submit the questions to the port, nor when a decision will be made on permits for the terminal.

### SIU PACIFIC DISTRICT PENSION PLAN

730 Harrison Street, Suite 400 • San Francisco, CA 94107  
Telephone 415.764.4990 Fax 415.495.6110

\* \* \* \* \*

SIU Pacific District Pension Plan  
Notice to Contributing Employers and Employee Organizations  
May 19, 2025

The following information regarding the SIU Pacific District Pension Plan (the "Fund") is being provided to you as required by the Pension Protection Act of 2006, with respect to the Plan Year ended July 31, 2024 (the "Plan Year").

(A) Monthly benefit formulas vary according to a schedule based on retirement age and Years of Qualifying Time (YQT). Effective July 1, 2023, the maximum monthly long service benefit for participants retiring at age 60 or older with 25 YQT is \$2,670; reduced benefits are available based on decreased YQT and/or earlier retirement ages.

The contribution rate for plan members who are covered by the Collective Bargaining Agreement is \$20.00 per day for all days. Contributions for SUP and MFOW officials are capped at 200 days per calendar year.

(B) The number of employers obligated to contribute to the Fund for the Plan Year: 6

(C) The following employers contributed more than 5 percent of the total contributions to the Fund during the Plan Year:

- (1) Patriot Contract Services LLC
- (2) Matson Navigation Company, Inc.
- (3) APL Marine Services Ltd.

(D) The following is the number of participants for whom no contributions were made to the Fund by any contributing employer for the last three plan years:

- (1) The current Plan Year (2023): 67
- (2) The immediately preceding Plan Year (2022): 72
- (3) The second preceding Plan Year (2021): 80

(E) The Fund was not in critical or endangered status for the Plan Year.

(F) No employers withdrew from the Fund during the prior plan year.

(G) The Fund has not merged with, or received any assets or liabilities from, any other plan during the Plan Year.

(H) The Fund has not sought or received an amortization extension under Section 304(d) ERISA or Section 431(d) of the Internal Revenue Code for the Plan Year. The Fund has not used the shortfall funding method for the Plan Year.

(I) As a contributing employer or participating employee organization you have the right to request a copy of the Fund's annual report, summary plan description, and summary of any material modification. You are entitled to only one copy in every 12-month period and the Fund may charge for the cost of providing such documents (including copying and postage)

# MARINE FIREMEN’S UNION TRAINING PROGRAM — 2025

Interested members who meet the Training Program eligibility requirements and prerequisites outlined for each course may obtain an application online at [mfoww.org](http://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.

July 21-24                      August 11-14                      September 15-18

### 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.

July 10-11                      July 31-August 1                      September 4-5

### 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.

July 14-15                      August 25-26                      September 22-23

### QMED Fireman/ Oiler/Watertender

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

July 7-August 1                      September 8-October 3  
October 20-November 14

### 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.*

August 4-8                      October 6-10                      November 17-21

### 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 14 – August 22,                      September 15-October 24

### 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.*

August 25-29                      October 27-31

### QMED Pumpman/Machinist

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

September 29-October 31

### 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.*

July 7-11                      August 25-29,                      September 8-12

## New in 2025

Maritime Institute: 1130 West Marine View Drive, Everett WA

QMED Oiler: July 7-25, September 29-October 17

STCW Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch: July 28-August 1, August 11-15

### 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: June 20, June 27, July 18, August 1, August 15, August 29

Maritime Institute, Honolulu, HI: August 1, October 10

Maritime Institute, Everett, WA: June 19, July 18, August 22, October 17

Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA: June 30-July 1

MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA: June 16-17, July 14-15, July 28-29, September 22-23

### 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: June 11-13, August 20-22, September 10-12

Maritime Institute, Everett, WA: June 30-July 2, July 23-25, August 27-29, November 17-19

Cal Maritime Academy, Vallejo, CA: June 2-4g

MITAGS-PMI, Seattle, WA: July 14-16, October 20-22, December 1-3

## NOAA’s PORTS system to improve maritime safety in Pearl Harbor-Honolulu

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)’s first Physical Oceanographic Real-time System, or PORTS, at Pearl Harbor-Honolulu, Hawaii, is now operational. Installed by NOAA’s National Ocean Service, data from the new publicly available observation system advances NOAA’s ability to better serve Hawaii’s coastal communities and secure maritime safety in the Pacific Islands.

Pearl Harbor-Honolulu PORTS is NOAA’s 40th system in this national network of precision marine navigation sensors concentrated in busy U.S. seaports and is the result of a partnership between NOAA and U.S. Navy Region Hawaii. Data from the system will be used to assist in the Navy’s planning and monitoring during daily operations and hazardous weather situations in Pearl Harbor and on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam — home to more than 55,000 military members and civilians, contributing more than \$2 billion annually to the local economy.

Commercial and local mariners traveling to Honolulu Harbor, the principal seaport of Hawaii, will also have access to these publicly available

real-time observations. They will enable safer vessel movement; help determine the amount of cargo a vessel can carry and reduce transit delays for commercial traffic. Honolulu Harbor handles more than 11 million tons of cargo annually. National Weather Service forecasters in Honolulu will use PORTS water level observations to anticipate and communicate coastal flooding impacts to the community so preemptive actions can be taken.

The Pearl Harbor-Honolulu PORTS consists of one water level and meteorological station located in Pearl Harbor (Ford Island) and a buoy-mounted current meter at Ford Island Channel, Lighted Buoy #1, sponsored by the U.S. Navy. The new stations will collect data on wind, air temperature, air pressure, and tidal currents to help mariners plan for safe docking in high winds, adverse weather, and heavy ship traffic.

The system also integrates data from a long-standing NOAA National Water Level Observation Network station at Honolulu Harbor, as well as a Coastal Data Information Program wave buoy at the entrance to Pearl Harbor.

# CA Assembly votes to approve AB 288, giving workers a real right to organize

California workers are one step closer to having a real right to a union, protected by state law, after California Assemblymembers voted overwhelmingly to approve Assembly Bill 288 by Assemblymember Tina McKinnor (D-Inglewood).

## NWSA year-to-date 2025 TEU volumes up 15.9 percent

Strong volumes via the Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA) continued in April as shippers brought orders forward. Full international imports in April increased 8.8 percent, marking 14 consecutive months of month-over-month growth. Full international exports decreased 1.7 percent. Total container volume (international and domestic) for the month reached 277,828 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU), up 7.4 percent compared to April 2024. Year-to-date (YTD) volumes are up 15.9 percent, with full imports growing 21.7 percent and full exports declining 0.5 percent. Domestic container volumes increased 2.5 percent compared to YTD 2024. Alaska volumes increased 1.5 percent, and Hawaii volumes increased 7.9 percent.

The bill, sponsored by the California Federation of Labor Unions and California Teamsters, passed off the Assembly floor by a vote of 68-2, with both Democrats and Republicans voting to send the bill to the Senate.

Other cargo stats:

- Total breakbulk volume decreased 40.2 percent for 101,142 metric tons YTD. High interest rates are having a significant impact on agricultural, mining, and construction equipment sales.
- Auto volumes were 100,082 units, down 17.1 percent YTD. Volumes reflect the slowing down of auto sales nationwide.

The NWSA is a marine cargo operating partnership of the ports of Seattle and Tacoma. Combined, the North and South harbors are a major North American gateway for containerized trade and the handling of non-containerized commodities (bulk, breakbulk, project/heavy-lift cargoes, and automobiles).

“Today Assemblymembers did the right thing and stood with working Californians who want to unionize against union-busting billionaires,” said Lorena Gonzalez, President of the California Labor Federation of Labor Unions. “This isn’t a Democratic issue or a Republican issue; this is a working-class issue. I am pleased to see lawmakers on both sides of the aisle standing up for what’s right. We will keep fighting for AB 288 and Californian’s Right to Organize until it is an enforced law.”

“When major corporations like Amazon violate workers’ rights with impunity, the right to a union is meaningless,” Peter Finn, President of the Teamsters Joint Council 7. “California cannot stay on the sidelines. It’s time to ensure that working people who build this country and make our economy run have their rights protected and have a voice on the job.”

AB 288 works to protect workers’ right to organize in two ways: If the NLRB is unable to act or workers lose coverage under the National Labor Relations Act, AB 288 gives the state the ability to enforce worker’s fundamental rights to organize, to come together with their co-workers, and to exercise

control over their own labor. If workers attempt to have their rights enforced by the NLRB, but the NLRB fails to provide a timely remedy, AB 288 gives the state the ability to enforce workers’ rights.

Workers’ inalienable right to freely assemble, form a union, and collectively bargain is rooted in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and also protected by state and federal law. However, billionaires like Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk are working to undermine the federal law by having the NLRA declared unconstitutional and by creating and exploiting immense delay, allowing them to quash organizing drivers before workers can benefit from their choice to unionize. These billionaire corporations regularly and routinely retaliate against workers, and workers are often left without any recourse after having to wait years before a decision even issues in their cases.

The State of California has a responsibility to act to protect working people when their rights are violated whether due to corporate legal attacks at the federal level or due to agency inaction. AB 288 ensures California workers’ right to organize is enforceable.

## Food for Peace transfer to USDA

June 7, 2025

The Honorable Andy Harris  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Agriculture  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sanford Bishop  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Agriculture  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Harris and Ranking Member Bishop:

We would like to express our utmost gratitude for your inclusion of the Food for Peace transfer to USDA provision in the FY26 agriculture spending bill. The undersigned organizations represent U.S. agriculture, maritime shipping, and labor union organizations, and are one of the broadest coalitions of American stakeholders for international food assistance programs. In particular, we are all long-time participants in and strong supporters of the P.L.480 Food for Peace program. Given the current opportunity to restructure the program, we believe that the best home for Food for Peace is with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

At its core, the Food for Peace program is an America First trade policy. It supports substantial purchases from American farmers and millers that are shipped overseas in U.S. flagged vessels, creating value across the agricultural supply chain and strengthening our U.S. Merchant Marine. Moreover, sending American food to countries around the world builds consumer preferences for the products we produce best. This builds long-term commercial trade opportunities, turning humanitarian donations into some of our strongest commercial agricultural export markets. Food for Peace similarly offers critical support for the existing U.S. flagged vessel fleet and American union workers that move cargo, load, and crew the ships that transport our commodities across the globe.

For years, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has ignored the explicit concerns of American farmers, mariners, longshoremen, and other American constituencies who have sought an efficient and effective delivery of food assistance that puts American interests first. USAID has diverted Food for Peace away from simply delivering American food on American ships to starving people and has operated competing missions that are detrimental to American stakeholders. Under USAID management, only about 30 percent of the Food for Peace program budget went toward American food purchases and less than 8 percent of the budget is used for shipping U.S. commodities on U.S. ships. Entrenched philosophies have repeatedly attempted to cut out American grown food and American ships entirely from our international food assistance programs. Even with the much-needed changes to USAID under the Department of State, we firmly believe the only successful pathway to an America First Food for Peace program is under the management of USDA.

The USDA is perfectly positioned to take on this lifesaving program in the interest of American citizens. USDA is purpose-built to serve the farmers that grow the food that feeds our country and the world, including through the Food for Peace program. No agency better understands America’s essential role in global food production, with a critical contingency of Foreign Agricultural Service officers around the world. USDA already conducts the food procurement process for Food for Peace and has historically managed the entire program under Title I of P.L. 480, in addition to fully operating its two key food assistance programs: Food for Progress and McGovern-Dole Food for Education. USDA also has a positive track record of putting its cargoes on U.S. ships instead of our foreign-flag competitors. It is time to bring America’s international food assistance programs back in line with their most direct domestic stakeholders: the American farmers, millers, and mariners, ensuring it advances American interests at home and abroad.

As mentioned, the Food for Peace program is truly America First. With U.S.-grown

food, American flagged vessels, crewed by Americans, the donated commodities proudly display “From the American People” on each of its packages. Food for Peace is the one and only baseline for foreign aid that puts America First. There is no better home than USDA for this agriculture appropriated, farm bill authorized program, to rebuild and restore Food for Peace in a way that is more effective at putting America First. Thank you again for your support of this critical provision to move Food for Peace to USDA in the FY26 agriculture spending bill.

Sincerely,

American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Maritime Congress  
American Maritime Officers  
American Maritime Officers Service  
American Soybean Association  
APL  
Bunge Milling Inc  
California Wheat Commission  
Clarksons EAST LLC  
Colorado Wheat Administrative Committee  
Didion Milling, Inc  
Dry Bulk America LLC  
Grain Millers — Agricor  
Heartland Goodwill Enterprises  
Hopkinsville Milling Company  
Idaho Grain Producers Association  
Idaho Wheat Commission  
ILWU Washington Area District Council  
Inland Cape Fine Grind LLC  
Inlandboatmen’s Union of the Pacific, Marine  
Division ILWU  
International Dairy Foods Association  
Intl. Org. of Masters, Mates & Pilots  
Kansas Association of Wheat Growers  
Kansas Farm Bureau  
Kansas Sorghum Producers  
Kansas Wheat Commission  
Liberty Maritime Corporation  
LifeLine Foods  
Lone Star Integrated Distribution  
Marine Engineers’ Beneficial Association  
Marine Firemen’s Union  
Maritime Institute for Research and Industrial Development  
Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO  
Midwest Dry Bean Coalition  
Montana Grain Growers Association  
National Association of Waterfront Employers  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Council of Farmer

Cooperatives  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Shipping of America  
National Sorghum Producers  
Navy League of the United States  
Nebraska Dry Pea and Lentil Commission  
Nebraska Wheat Board  
Nebraska Wheat Growers Association  
North American Millers’ Association  
North Dakota Grain Growers Association  
North Dakota Wheat Commission  
Northarvest Bean Growers Association  
Northeast Chartering Group, LLC  
Ohio Corn & Wheat Growers Association  
Oklahoma Wheat Commission  
Oregon Wheat Growers League  
Pacific Northwest Waterways Association  
Port of Lake Charles  
REPCO  
Sailors’ Union of the Pacific  
Seafarers International Union  
SeaTac Packaging  
SEMO Milling LLC  
South Dakota Wheat Commission  
Southern Gulf Packaging & Logistics  
Texas Wheat Producers Association  
Tiger Soy LLC  
Transportation Institute  
Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO  
TVS, Inc  
U.S. Dairy Export Council  
U.S. Peanut Federation  
U.S. Wheat Associates  
UNISHIPPING SAS  
US Dry Bean Council  
US Ocean  
USA Rice  
Washington Association of Wheat Growers  
Washington Grain Commission  
Wyoming Wheat Marketing Commission

## SEATTLE NOTES

During the month of May Seattle shipped one Electrician and 10 Standby Reefers. Seattle currently has 11 A-, one B-, and four C-seniority members registered for shipping.

With the impending drawdown of the six Army Prepositioned Stock *Watson*-class vessels, those looking to upgrade their endorsements should take advantage of the available FOS time that

remains. Shipping jobs that will gain day for day sea time credit for entry level is going to be greatly reduced and I recommend you do the full extent of your dispatch to apply towards upgrade. You should consider cutting your vacation short and return to work earlier than planned as well.

Faternally,  
**Brendon Bohannon**, Representative

## Nominations open September 1

Nominations to elect officers of the Marine Firemen’s Union for the 2026-2028 term of office will open September 1 and continue through September 30, 2025.

Nominations may be made in person at the regular September meetings at Headquarters and branches or handed in to the officials at Headquarters and branches. They may also be made by mail any time during the month, provided that mailed nominations are received at MFW Headquarters by September 30, 2025.

The following official positions will appear on the ballot this year:

1. President/Secretary-Treasurer
2. Vice President
3. San Francisco Business Agent
4. Wilmington Port Agent
5. Honolulu Port Agent
6. Trustee (three positions)
7. SIUNA Convention Delegate

The President/Secretary-Treasurer and Vice President shall be members of the Board of Trustees by virtue of their office.

The President/Secretary-Treasurer is an SIUNA Convention Delegate by virtue of his office. A second SIUNA Convention Delegate may be needed based on the per capita tax paid to the International over the last five years.

Any member wishing to become a candidate for office must be nominated and have a second to his nomination. Any member in good standing may nominate himself. The names and book numbers of members doing the nominating and seconding must be included.

Balloting in the MFW election will commence on Saturday, December 6, 2025, and will continue through Thursday, February 5, 2026.

For the information of all members, and of particular importance to any member who may be thinking about running for office, Article V of the Constitution, which explains the entire election procedure in detail. An Election Newsletter is also posted at all MFW halls.

All members who wish to run for office are urged to comply with the Constitutional procedures governing nomination and election. Failure to do so will result in disqualification by the Credentials Committee. Any candidates for office who submit their photographs on a timely basis will have their picture published in *The Marine Fireman* during the entire election period.

### HOWZ SHIPPING?

May 2025	
San Francisco	
Electrician.....	1
Electrician/Reefer/Jr. Engineer.....	1
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer.....	2
Junior Engineer .....	2
Oiler .....	5
Wiper .....	5
Standby Electrician/Reefer .....	15
Standby Wiper .....	11
TOTAL .....	42
Seattle	
Electrician.....	1
Standby Electrician/Reefer .....	10
TOTAL .....	11
Honolulu	
Reefer/Electrician/Jr. Engineer.....	2
Junior Engineer .....	2
Oiler .....	2
Wiper .....	1
Shore Mechanic.....	2
Standby Electrician/Reefer .....	32
Standby Wiper .....	26
TOTAL .....	67
Wilmington	
No Report Submitted	

### HONOR ROLL

Voluntary donation to  
General Treasury — May 2025:  
Eric White, #3925 .....\$100.00

### Regular membership meeting dates 2025

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

## HONOLULU NOTES

The Honolulu Hall dispatched a total of 67 billets during the month of May. Of these, 58 were standby jobs, with 32 Standby Electrician/Reefer positions and 26 Standby Wiper positions among them. The remainder included a few rotary billets, a couple relief billets, and a few trip-offs. Presently, the Honolulu registration list has 20 A-, 10 B-, and 13 C-seniority members.

May began with the Worker’s Day March, organized to show union solidarity and support for federal sector workers. The march drew over a thousand participants—primarily union members and concerned citizens — who walked from the Hawaii State Capitol to the Prince Kuhio Federal Building. Then lining up at Ala Moana Boulevard with signs in hand, we were met with a steady chorus of supportive honking from passing vehicles.

A week later, I had the opportunity to volunteer at the 33rd Annual National Association of Letter Carriers’ Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, the nation’s largest single-day food collection event. Union postal workers gathered non-perishable food donations from households, then union member volunteers sorted them at the Food Bank. With inflation, tariffs, and federal funding cuts

affecting our communities, food insecurity continues to grow. A recent study shows 1 in 3 Hawaii households struggle to afford food. As Randy Perreira, Executive Director of HGEA and President of the Hawaii State AFL-CIO, noted, “We had over 200 union volunteers getting the foodbank restocked. We are grateful for those in the community who give canned goods; this is just one of the ways we give back.”

In 2024, this drive collected over 800,000 pounds of food statewide.

On May 23, I attended the Marimed Foundation’s Maritime Career Expo & Job Fair at Windward Community College. With 19 vendor tables present, it was clear that demand for maritime labor remains high across the board.

Throughout the month, I also continued to represent the MFW at regular meetings, including the Honolulu Sailors’ Home Board, the Honolulu Port Maritime Council, and the Hawaii AFL-CIO Executive Board.

Lastly, I want to extend my thanks to Brother Don Ngo for stepping in to cover the hall while I manned the MFW booth at the Career Expo. Your dependability and support are always appreciated.

Aloha,  
**Mario Higa**, Port Agent

### Do Buy Union-Made Automobiles

**UAW CARS**

- Cadillac Celestiq
- Cadillac CT4
- Cadillac CT4-V
- Cadillac CT4-V Blackwing
- Cadillac CT5
- Cadillac CT5-V
- Cadillac CT5-V Black Wing
- Chevrolet Bolt (Electric)
- Chevrolet Corvette
- Chevrolet Malibu
- Ford Mustang Coupe
- Ford Mustang Convertible
- Ford Mustang Shelby

**UAW TRUCKS**

- Chevrolet Colorado
- Chevrolet Silverado Medium-Duty
- Chevrolet Silverado EV
- Chevrolet Silverado Light Duty\*
- Chevrolet Silverado Heavy Duty
- Ford F-150
- Ford F-150 (Electric)
- Ford F-150 (Hybrid)
- Ford F-650/750
- Ford Ranger
- Ford Super Duty 250/350/450/550
- GMC Canyon
- GMC Sierra Light Duty\*
- GMC Sierra Heavy Duty
- GMC Hummer Pick-up (Electric)
- Jeep Gladiator
- Navistar (Regular and Crew Cab)
- Ram 1500\*

- Ram 1500 Classic
- Ram 1500 Hybrid
- UAW SUVs/CPVs
- Acura ZDX (Electric)
- Buick Enclave
- Cadillac Escalade
- Cadillac Escalade ESV
- Cadillac Escalade IQ (Electric)
- Cadillac Lyriq (Electric)
- Cadillac XT4
- Cadillac XT5
- Cadillac XT6
- Cadillac Vistiq (Electric)
- Chevrolet Suburban
- Chevrolet Tahoe
- Chevrolet Tahoe (Police)
- Chevrolet Tahoe (Special Service)
- Chevrolet Traverse
- Dodge Durango
- Ford Bronco
- Ford Escape
- Ford Escape (Hybrid)
- Ford Expedition
- Ford Explorer
- Ford Explorer (Hybrid)
- Ford Explorer (Police Interceptor)
- GMC Acadia
- GMC Hummer SUV (Electric)
- GMC Yukon
- GMC Yukon XL
- Jeep Grand Cherokee
- Jeep Grand Cherokee (Hybrid)
- Jeep Wagoneer

- Jeep Grand Wagoneer (Hybrid)
- Jeep Grand Wagoneer
- Jeep Wrangler
- Jeep Wrangler (Hybrid)
- Lincoln Aviator
- Lincoln Aviator (Hybrid)
- Lincoln Corsair
- Lincoln Navigator/L
- Volkswagen Atlas
- Volkswagen ID.4 (Electric)

**UAW VANS**

- Chevrolet Express
- Chevrolet Express (Cut-Away)
- Ford Transit
- Ford Transit (Electric)
- GMC Savana
- GMC Savana (Cut-Away)

**UNIFOR CARS**

- Dodge Charger
- Dodge Charger Daytona EV

**UNIFOR VANS**

- Chrysler Pacifica
- Chrysler Pacifica (Hybrid)
- Chrysler Voyager
- Chevrolet BrightDrop 100 (Electric)
- Chevrolet BrightDrop 600 (Electric)

**UNIFOR TRUCKS**

- Chevrolet Silverado Crew Cab Light Duty\*
- Chevrolet Silverado Crew Cab Heavy

These vehicles are made in the United States or Canada by members of the UAW and Canada's Unifor union, formerly the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW). Because of the integration of vehicle production in both countries, all of the vehicles listed as made in Canada include significant UAW made content and support the jobs of UAW members.

Vehicles marked with a single asterisk (\*) are also produced in Mexico.

When purchasing a vehicle marked with a single asterisk, it's important to check the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN). A VIN beginning with "1" or "4" or "5" identifies a U.S. made vehicle; a "2" identifies a Canadian made vehicle; a "3" identifies a vehicle made in Mexico. Not all vehicles made in the United States or Canada are built by union represented workers. Vehicles not listed here, even if produced in the United States or Canada, are not union made.

## 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