The newly built Jones Act tanker M/T American Phoenix was christened June 28 at the BAE Systems Southeast Shipyards facility in Mobile, Ala., adding state-of-the-art tonnage to the domestic fleet and bringing new jobs to the membership of American Maritime Officers. The American Phoenix will operate in the Jones Act trades in the Gulf of Mexico under charter to Koch Industries. Seabulk Tankers is providing technical services for Mid Ocean Tanker Company and AMO represents all licensed officers working aboard the ship.

“The ship embodies a remarkable combination of determination, ingenuity, strength and safety,” said AMO National New jobs for AMO aboard state-of-the-art Jones Act tanker

Legitimate U.S.-flag interests can overcome TAL taint

Page 2: A notorious shipping company booted from U.S. registry for consistently deficient operation, inadequate maintenance, chronic safety violations and miserable labor conditions continues to haunt legitimate U.S. maritime interests. The company is TransAtlantic Lines. In mid-June, Coast Guard Capt. Eric Christensen cited the TAL experience as the principal evidence supporting his unfounded, unfair public comments about the relative safety of the privately owned and operated U.S. merchant fleet.

AMO jobs secure as Sealift purchases M/V Black Eagle

The M/V Black Eagle has been purchased by Sealift LLC and entered service under a short-term MSC charter. The ship was previously operated by Red River Holdings LLC. AMO continues to represent all licensed officers working aboard the ship under Sealift ownership and operation. AMO Essentials

- STAR Center course schedule: Pages 8-9
- STAR Center registration application: Page 11
- AMO directory: Page 10
- AMO membership meeting schedule: Page 10
Legitimate U.S.-flag interests can overcome TAL taint

By Tom Bethel
National President

A notorious shipping company blocked a U.S. registry for consistently deficient operation, inadequate maintenance, chronic safety violations and miserable labor and living conditions continues to haunt legitimate maritime interests.

The company is TransAtlantic Lines, an affront to civilized seafaring worldwide since its rise in 1998. TAL is based in a home on Lincoln Avenue in tony Greenwich CT, and its performance record makes the world’s worst flag-of-convenience operation look like a model of responsibility, dignity and humanitarian impulse.

TAL has the disgraceful distinction of having had its International Safety Management Code Document of Compliance and its ISM safety certificates yanked by the U.S. Coast Guard. The Coast Guard’s action was but prudent action against TAL in December 2011 effectively prohibited the company from operating under the American flag.

In mid-June, Coast Guard Capt. Eric Christensen cited the TransAtlantic Lines experience as the principal evidence supporting his unfounded, unfair public comments about the relative safety of the privately owned and operated U.S. merchant fleet on the high seas.

In a recent case, objective evidence of continued non-compliance with the requirements of the ISM code, applicable international conventions and flag state regulations, as well as a systemic failure to adequately implement company policies and procedures led to the first-ever revocation and cancellation of a U.S. company’s ISM Document of Compliance,” Capt. Christensen wrote on the Coast Guard’s Homeport Web site.

“After reviewing reports, documents on various authorities — including port and flag states — clearly established a pattern of habitual disregard for rules and regulations,” Capt. Christensen continued. “There was also a repetitive inability of the company to implement corrective action, both indicative of an ineffective SMS.”

Capt. Christensen, chief of the Coast Guard’s Office of Commercial Vessel Compliance, did not identify the specific company by name, but the circumstances he spelled out applied only to TransAtlantic Lines.

Weak as it was, this was the heart of Capt. Christensen’s narrow, unwarranted and unduly opinionated conclusion that the U.S. merchant fleet in international trade is beset by “an alarming trend in the number of significant deficiencies noted.”

As we report elsewhere in this issue, seagoing labor responded immediately and forcefully to counter the alarming trend in the number of significant deficiencies found in Capt. Christensen’s Web post.

Seafarers International Union President Mike Sacco, Marine Engineers’ Beneficial Association President Mike Jewell, International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots President Tim Brown and I made our points in a letter June 15 to Adm. Robert Papp Jr., commandant of the Coast Guard.

In our letter to Adm. Papp, we noted that, in the specific overseas flag state control jurisdiction cited by Capt. Christensen, the number of U.S.-flagged ship detentions was actually quite small, especially in proportion to the number of vessel inspections conducted. We also addressed the difficulties resulting from inefficient federal rule-making procedures that often delay Coast Guard regulations conforming to International Maritime Organization conventions.

Responsible U.S.-flagged merchant ship owners and operators can overcome the TAL taint brought upon them by Capt. Christensen. Theirs is a collective record of safety, efficient and dependable service to commercial customers and to government agencies. And it would take a lot more than one man’s thoughtless commentary to cast the skilled spirit of civilian American mariners, who are as resilient as they are reliable, and who have served these United States so well for so long in routine trade and in distant defense emergencies.

This recovery would be a lot easier if there were a fitting end to the TransAtlantic Lines story. But, despite its embarrassing history, TAL lives on. Operating under a succession of temporary ISM documents, TAL is propped up willfully by the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (formerly Military Traffic Management Command), a unit of Transportation Command in the Department of Defense.

For reasons known only to SDDC brass, the agency has in recent years awarded TAL charters worth multiple millions to supply U.S. military bases in the Azores, Ascension Island and Guantanamo Bay. TAL has demonstrated repeatedly that it cannot provide the services specified in the charters — TAL uses third party shipping companies routinely to meet its contractual commitments to the SDDC.

For reasons known only to SDDC brass, the agency awarded yet another charter to TransAtlantic Lines in April 2012 — five months after the company lost the honor and the privilege of U.S. merchant ship registry.

The SDDC has apparently learned nothing from another TRANSCOM unit — Military Sealift Command, the only federal agency with the exclusive, specific responsibility of arranging the seaborne transport of defense cargoes. When the Coast Guard revoked TAL’s papers, MSC immediately canceled its only contract with the company.

TAL’s unseemly tie to the SDDC is one issue. The SDDC’s encroachment upon Military Sealift Command’s mission is another. American Maritime Officers is focusing on both in every possible venue, and we will keep everyone in our union informed.

As always, I welcome comments and questions from AMO members everywhere. Please feel free to call me on my cell at (202) 251-0349.
Seagoing labor to U.S. Coast Guard: Christensen article mischaracterizes entire industry based on actions of a few; disregards professionalism, dedication of U.S.-flag operators, American crews

The following letter dated June 15 was sent to U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Robert Papp by American Maritime Officers National President Thomas Bethel, Seafarers International Union President Michael Sacco, International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots President Timothy Brown and Marine Engineers’ Beneficial Association President Michael Jewell.

As maritime professionals and chief representatives of the major sea-going labor unions, we are writing to express our strong objection to the claims raised in an article written by Captain Eric Christensen, Chief of Commercial Vessel Compliance for the Coast Guard, which was posted to the USCG Homeport website and has been carried in the maritime industry trade press. This article has been used by U.S.-flag critics to blast the American merchant marine.

We agree with Captain Christensen that the United States flag should never appear on the gray list of any House Armed Services Committee leadership: “We are concerned that the United States flag ships and crews, however, ever, fails to recognize the true issue and is extremely disingenuous.

At the same time, while we understand that while the Paris MOU — a flag state control regime to which the United States is not a party — has moved the U.S.-flag off their “white” list, we firmly believe that this fact alone is at best a grossly misleading indicator of U.S.-flag performance. In fact, the Paris MOU acknowledges that of the 174 vessel inspections of U.S.-flag vessels by its member-states, only 7 vessel detentions have been recorded. This is hardly an “alarming trend” representative of a significant decline in statutory and international convention compliance.

Captain Christensen’s article is a mischaracterization of the professionalism and dedication of the United States flag commercial ship operators and their highly trained crews. We must emphasize the total disregard by Captain Christensen for all the advances in training, safety, and education our members achieved that go beyond mere compliance. TransAtlantic Lines’ bad behavior, which has rightfully resulted in the revocation of their ISM Document of Compliance, should not be sufficient to call into question the entire U.S.-flag commercial industry’s commitment to safety, training, and compliance. We would hope that in the future, the USCG would be working with us to address the wide range of problems — including issues with the overall USCG regulatory regime — that confront the US-flag industry, rather than point fingers and “sound the general alarm.”

We believe that part of the problem lies in the United States regulatory regime that the Coast Guard administers in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act itself. The rulemaking procedures in the Act make it difficult for the USCG to respond to IMO treaty obligations in a timely fashion. As a result, IMO obligations come into force and the US is not in compliance with international standards. Even simply updating American regulations to conform to international standards can take a considerable amount of time. Changes to the APA are unlikely, making Coast Guard interim guidance and advisory notices critical to bridging the gap until final regulations are promulgated.

The USCG Legal Division’s resistance to permitting the USCG to disseminate non-mandatory advisory notices on international requirements until after regulations are in place, compounds this problem.

AMO aboard the OSG Columbia

AMO members working aboard the Jones Act articulated tug/barge combination OSG Columbia, homeported in Port Everglades, Fla., in June, were Captain Tommy Potter, Assistant Engineer David Perrey, Chief Engineer Stan Kozik, Second Mate Chris Scott and Third Mate Brian Carroll. With them is AMO National Vice President for Inland Waters Charles Murdock.

Chief Mate Joel Harriff

We are writing to convey our strong support for the Jones Act and its benefits to the country’s national, homeland, and economic security. The domestic maritime industry plays a critical role in our nation’s security and we ask for your continued assistance in defending this important law. As you know, the Jones Act requires that all waterborne cargo moved between two points in the United States be transported on American vessels. Since its enactment, the Jones Act has been supported by every Congress and President because of the security benefits it provides. America’s domestic shipping industry is responsible for nearly $50,000 jobs and more than $100 billion in annual economic output. The U.S. Navy has said that repeal of the Jones Act would “hamper [America’s] ability to meet strategic sealift requirements for the Marine Corps and Navy shipbuilding.” The Jones Act supports our industrial base and maintains a national maritime industry that helps to ensure there will be ample U.S. sealift capacity to defend our nation. As members of the House Armed Services Committee, which has jurisdiction over this issue, we recognize the importance of the Jones Act and its invaluable contribution to our nation’s security, which is why we are concerned about any efforts to weaken the law.

We understand that the Administration chose to waive the Jones Act approximately 50 times following the June 2011 release of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR). This decision allowed foreign vessels and foreign workers to transport oil from the SPR despite the availability of U.S. vessels. Under any circumstance, it is critical that the Administration ensures that U.S. vessels and U.S. seafarers are fully utilized before granting any Jones Act waivers. In the future, we urge the Administration to take all steps necessary to ensure Jones Act vessels are used and that the transportation of goods, including petroleum products, is in compliance with our nation’s cabotage laws.

We thank the Administration for recognizing the critical role the Jones Act plays in our nation’s national, homeland, and economic security and appreciate its support for the Jones Act. We look forward to working with you in the future to ensure the continued strength of America’s domestic maritime industry.
New policy allows eligible TWIC holders to extend credential expiration date, reduces cost, travel burden

The Transportation Security Administration in June announced a major policy change regarding the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC). Effective Aug. 30, 2012, TWIC holders who are U.S. citizens or U.S. nationals, and hold TWICs that will expire on or before Dec. 31, 2014, may be eligible to obtain an extended expiration date (EED) TWIC, which would be valid for three years.

To obtain an EED TWIC, eligible TWIC holders would pay a fee of $60, can begin the application process over the phone and would be required to make one in-person visit to a TWIC enrollment center to pick up the EED TWIC card.

TWIC holders exercising this option will not be required to remember their PIN number.

To be eligible for the EED TWIC, card holders must:

- Be a U.S. citizen or U.S. national
- Currently hold a TWIC that is both valid and not revoked
- Currently hold a TWIC that is not expired, but that will expire on or before Dec. 31, 2014
- TWIC holders wishing to obtain an EED TWIC should begin the process at least 30 days before the expiration date of their current TWIC. To confirm eligibility and begin the enrollment process for an EED TWIC, contact the Transportation Security Administration help desk at (866) 347-8942. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. EDT.

More information is available online at: www.tsa.gov/what_we_do/layers/twic/
The EED TWIC is a one-time temporary extension intended to provide convenience and cost-savings during the pending deployment of TWIC card readers, the TSA announced. TWIC holders also have the option of a standard five-year renewal, which requires two in-person visits to a TWIC enrollment center and includes a fee of $129.75.

House passes legislation to ease burden on TWIC users

The House of Representatives in June approved legislation that, if enacted into law, would reduce the travel burden on people who require a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) for their employment.

Sponsored by Congressmen Steve Scalise (R-LA), H.R. 3173 would require the Department of Homeland Security to reform the TWIC program such that only one in-person visit to a TWIC enrollment center would be required, except in cases involving extenuating circumstances that would require more than one in-person visit to a TWIC center.

Current regulations require an in-person visit for enrollment, a second visit to pick up the card and another two visits each time the TWIC must be renewed. This creates an enormous inconvenience for many transportation workers, who may live hundreds of miles away from the nearest enrollment center, or work aboard vessels on which they may be abroad for months at a time.

At press time, the legislation had not been voted on in the Senate or enacted into law, and existing regulations and requirements still apply for all TWIC users.

T-AGOS and SWATH sea time counts toward unlimited licenses for engineers

The U.S. Coast Guard will continue to honor existing agreements regarding service time and horsepower equivalencies on T-AGOS and SWATH vessels, and sea time aboard T-AGOS and SWATH vessels will continue to count toward unlimited licenses for engineers, the agency has advised.

American Maritime Officers National Vice President for Government Relations Mike Murphy worked closely with U.S. Coast Guard headquarters, the National Maritime Center and Military Sealift Command to have this issue addressed and resolved after the National Maritime Center denied an application from an AMO engineering officer to sit for an upgrade of an unlimited license.

In a letter to Military Sealift Command, the Coast Guard cited a previous determination, in which “the Coast Guard agreed that service on either the T-AGOS or SWATH vessels could be considered as qualifying for an unlimited license in accordance with the scenarios specified in the October 1998 equivalency determination.” The determination cited by the Coast Guard accounted for the combined horsepower of the engines onboard a T-AGOS or SWATH vessel.

EPA issues interim guidance for non-availability of compliant fuel in ECA

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has released interim guidance on the non-availability of compliant fuel oil for the North American Emission Control Area (ECA).

The ECA comes into effect on Aug. 1, 2012, and at that time, many vessels will be required to use low-sulfur fuel. The EPA’s interim guidance describes in detail the fuel oil requirements and what vessel operators must do if they are unable to obtain the appropriate fuel.

The interim guidance is available online at: www.epa.gov/compliance/resources/policies/civil/eca/mobile/finalfuelavailabilityguidance-0626.pdf

AMO aboard Ready Reserve Force ships Cape Island, Cape Intrepid

AMO members working aboard the Ready Reserve Force ships Cape Island and Cape Intrepid in June, here in Tacoma, Wash., included Chief Mate Malik Darley (Island), Third Assistant Engineer Scott Williams (Island), Chief Engineer Micah Salkind (Intrepid), Third A.E. Gary Rame (Intrepid), Second A.E. Ray Guerrero (Island), First A.E. Brian Sinaisky (Intrepid), Second A.E. Chris Davis (Intrepid), First A.E. Toby Kessler (Island) and Chief Mate Matt Piper (Intrepid).

With them is AMO National Secretary-Treasurer José Leonard. Both ships are operated by Crowley Liner Services.

The AMO aboard the H. Lee White on the Great Lakes

The H. Lee White, here in Sandusky, Ohio, is operated by American Steamship Company. AMO represents all licensed officers on the ship.

AMO members working aboard the H. Lee White in April, here in Sandusky, Ohio, included Captain Richard Laskey.
Congressman Gibbs receives Great Lakes Legislator of the Year Award

Co-sponsor of RAMP Act emphasizes critical need for proper investment in dredging of Great Lakes ports and waterways

Congressman Bob Gibbs (R-OH) June 6 received the Great Lakes Legislator of the Year Award for 2012 from the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force, the largest labor-management coalition representing the Great Lakes shipping and maritime transportation sectors. American Maritime Officers and American Maritime Officers Service are members of the task force.

Rep. Gibbs serves as chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee’s Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment and has been a strong supporter of the maritime industry.  

“I am very honored to receive the 2012 Great Lakes Legislator of the Year Award and proud to represent a district and a state that depends so much on a healthy Great Lakes maritime transportation system,” Rep. Gibbs said. “In 2010, maritime commerce on the Great Lakes generated 226,000 jobs in the U.S. and Canada, including more than 90,000 direct jobs. Addressing the infrastructure needs of our nation’s ports is critical if we are going to build on this job growth and move raw materials and general cargo in an efficient and economical manner.”

Commenting on his selection for the 2012 award, Rep. Gibbs cited the importance of dredging on the Lakes and stressed the need for a remedy to the dredging crisis.  

“The economic importance of maritime trade cannot be underestimated,” Rep. Gibbs said. “The dredging crisis concerns me because harbors that have not been dredged to their proper depth will not only reduce ship traffic and freight at that port, but also will increase shipping costs.”

That is why proper investment in dredging is critical. Our Great Lakes ports and waterways must be at their authorized depths and widths so raw materials and general cargo are able to move domestically and overseas in an efficient and economical manner,” Gibbs continued. “When channels are not properly dredged, ships cannot take on full loads, resulting in a loss of efficiency and an increase in cost. Every inch of depth means more cargo can be shipped, and with our nation attempting to increase exports, we need to ensure that all our ports are operating at their full potential and ships aren’t running half full.”

Rep. Gibbs co-sponsored the Realize America’s Maritime Promise (RAMP) Act, which would require all funds deposited into the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund be used for their intended purpose – maintenance dredging.

“Maritime trade on the Great Lakes has been a critical part of our nation’s economy since America was founded, and it continues to be a tremendous force today,” Rep. Gibbs said. “And while many Americans overlook the importance of waterborne transportation because they do not regularly interact with it or understand the benefits that it brings, the economic importance of maritime trade cannot be underestimated.”

“As the chairman of the House Water Resources and Energy Subcommittee, I have been committed to improving our waterborne transportation system, including focusing investments on infrastructure to create jobs and move commerce,” he said.

Attending the award presentation in Washington, D.C., with Rep. Gibbs were Representatives Steven LaTourette (R-OH) and Betty Sutton (D-OH), who have each previously received the Great Lakes Legislator of the Year Award.

Limestone, iron ore loadings up in May float

American Maritime Officers National President Tom Bethel congratulates Congressman Bob Gibbs on his receipt of the Great Lakes Legislator of the Year Award for 2012 during the ceremony June 6 in Washington, D.C.

Reps. Steven LaTourette (R-OH) addresses those gathered for the award presentation June 6 in Washington, D.C. Rep. LaTourette received the Great Lakes Legislator of the Year Award in 2000.


AMO aboard the Joseph L. Block

The Joseph L. Block, here unloading iron ore in Duluth, Minn. in June, is operated by Central Marine Logistics.

AMO members working aboard the Joseph L. Block in June included Third Mate William Laparl and First Mate John Herrington.
Export-Import Bank cargo generates historic voyage for Maersk Illinois

The Maersk Illinois May 31 arrived at the Port of Milwaukee to load cargo for export, the first time a U.S.-flagged oceangoing ship has loaded cargo in Milwaukee, Wis. for an overseas destination in more than 30 years, Maersk Line, Limited reported.

The shipment of two P&H rope shovels, financed by the U.S. Export-Import Bank, required the Maersk Illinois to load nearly 8,000 cubic meters of machinery bound for a Siberian mining project. The Export-Import Bank provides loan guarantees and direct loans to help businesses overseas buy U.S. goods and services. All exported cargoes financed through the Export-Import Bank are by law reserved for U.S.-flagged merchant ships.

The Maersk Illinois was the first U.S.-flagged oceangoing vessel since 1981 to arrive at the Port of Milwaukee on the Great Lakes by way of the St. Lawrence Seaway, said Jeff Fleming, spokesman for the port.

The Maersk Illinois is one of two heavy-lift ships in the Maersk-Rickers U.S. Flag Project Carrier fleet. Maersk-Rickers is a partnership between Maersk Line, Limited and Rickmers-Line (America), Inc. American Maritime Officers represents all licensed officers aboard both ships — the Maersk Illinois and the Maersk Texas.

The Maersk Illinois loaded the cargo one day after the President signed into law legislation reauthorizing the Ex-Im Bank through fiscal year 2014. Reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank drew strong support in Congress, where the legislation was approved by a vote 78-20 in the Senate and a vote of 330-83 in the House of Representatives.

The voyage of the Maersk Illinois drew the attention of Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, who noted on his blog the “continuing success of the Ex-Im Bank” is “a win for American manufacturers and their workers, and it’s a win for our U.S.-flag fleet.”

A third shovel is slated for transport from Milwaukee, Wis. in September, to be carried by the same vessel or its twin, the Maersk Texar, Maersk Line, Limited reported.

American Phoenix

Continued from Page 1

President Tom Bethel. “AMO is very proud to be part of this project. Our officers onboard, and our union as a whole, are excited by the achievement and the potential of the American Phoenix as she prepares to enter service.”

The partially completed American Phoenix (Hull 103) was purchased in January 2011 in a Louisiana bankruptcy court auction by Mid Ocean Tanker Company, a partnership of Alterna Capital Partners and Mid-Ocean Marine. Hull 103 was to have been one of three shallow-draft product tankers built for APL Shipping Co., previously known as American Henry Lift Shipping, a non-AMO company. After purchase, construction of Hull 103 was completed at the BAE Systems shipyard in Mobile and the MT American Phoenix has risen as an impressive new generation tanker for the Jones Act fleet.

The MT American Phoenix is a great addition to the American merchant marine and Seabulk Tankers is proud to be providing the technical services to operate this vessel for Mid Ocean Tanker Company,” said Harvey Mott, vice president of fleet management for Seabulk Tankers.

Describing some of the key features of the American Phoenix in an article published by Maritime Professional, Robert Kunkel — president of Alternative Marine Technologies, technical advisor to Alterna Capital Partners during construction of the ship and a former member of AMO — wrote: “the American Phoenix is not your father’s Jones Act product carrier. The design features take into account environmental protection with a Class Environmental Safety notation and system redundancies usually seen only in the Alaskan trades. Yet her trading markets were originally planned for the U.S. Gulf.”

Kunkel noted the IMO II Chemical/Product Carrier is the first American-built tanker to be constructed under the latest IACS (International Association of Classification Societies) Common Structural Rules. The ship is scheduled to undergo sea trials and make her maiden voyage in July, he said.

The ship’s propulsion is provided by three 5,600 KW MAK 12VME32C diesel engines with Siemens IDK4543 generators,” Kunkel wrote. “The diesel-electric power driving two 4,500 KW VEM motors with twin shafts supported by Kobelco stern and strut bearings that are water lubricated and cooled. The propulsion system is fully redundant with only two generators required in operation to achieve a 14.5-knot operating speed — the third generator remains in standby.”

At a length of 616 feet, the American Phoenix is 49,000 DWT. With a capacity of 330,000 barrels, the tanker can carry crude oil, chemicals and petroleum products.
Capt. Christopher Hill accepts the Safety Achievement Award Top Honor from the Chamber of Shipping of America on behalf of the officers and crew of the M/V Ocean Titan, aboard which AMO represents all licensed officers. Presenting the award is Rear Adm. Kevin Cook, U.S. Coast Guard.

Captain Christopher Hill was assigned to the M/V Ocean Titan, which rescued all seven crew members of the M/V Florece in extreme rough seas after it collided with the Atlantic Ocean just before it sank. The actions of the entire crew, in the most challenging circumstances, were as a testament to each crewmember’s character and skill. Your actions exemplify the courage and skills inherent in the professional mariner. This citation testifies to actions in keeping with the highest traditions of the sea — aid to those in peril."

AMO officers sailing with Capt. Hill aboard the Ocean Titan during the rescue included Chief Mate Thomas Lisante, Second Mate Daniel Landgrebe, Third Mate Zachary Gray, Chief Engineer John Vlahakis and First Assistant Engineer Sean Donovar.

The TSA noted the Ocean Titan of HeavyLift Shipping LLC “received Top Honor for the crew’s extraordinary courage and superior seamanship” in the rescue operation. The Ocean Titan was one of two ships receiving Top Honor from the Chamber of Shipping for rescue operations that occurred in 2011.

Since 1959, the Chamber of Shipping of America (CSA) has sponsored the Ship Safety Achievement Award program which recognizes outstanding feats of safety that contribute to saving a life, a ship or other property. This year’s CSA President for Government Relations Bethel, AMO National Vice President for Government Relations Mike Murphy, AMO Plans Executive Director Steve Nickerson and AMO National Assistant Vice President Dave Weathers conducted a series of shipboard informational meetings on the U.S. Gulf Coast in June, visiting vessels in Alabama, Louisiana and Texas. Here aboard the ATB Brownsville are AMO National President Tom Bethel, AMO National Vice President for Government Relations Mike Murphy, AMO Plans Executive Director Steve Nickerson and AMO National Assistant Vice President Dave Weathers conducted a series of shipboard informational meetings on the U.S. Gulf Coast in June, visiting vessels in Alabama, Louisiana and Texas. 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The awards were presented June 12, 2012, during the Safety Awards Luncheon in New Orleans, La. More than 160 people representing more than 80 companies and organizations attended the event, now in its fifty-fourth year. "This year, we gave awards to 1,395 vessels that operated 7,015 years without a lost-time incident,” said CSA President Joseph Cox. "This extraordinary record is directly attributable to the professionalism of our seafarers and the dedication of shore-based company personnel to safe operation.” Among the companies that own and/or operate vessels manned under contract by AMO receiving Devlin Awards for the performance of their vessels were Crescent Towing, Crowley Technical Management, General Dynamics - AMSEA, Interocean American Shipping Corporation, Keystone Shipping Co. (Key Lakes), Maersk Line Limited, Ocean Pacific Tankers Inc., Seabulk Tugers Inc., Seabulk Towing Inc., Tote Company, Totem Ocean Trailer Express and USS Vessel Management LLC. The U.S. Maritime Administration was also recognized for the safety records of vessels operated by IAS.

The Chamber of Shipping of America represents 37 U.S.-based companies that own, operate or charter oceangoing tankers, container ships and other merchant vessels engaged in both the domestic and international trades, as well as entities that maintain a commercial interest in the operation of such vessels.
## General Courses

### ABS N55 First Mgmt Software
- 3 days, 15 October

### Advanced Fire Fighting
- 5 days, 13 August - 10 September
- 6 days, 24 September
- 8 October - 12 November
- 10 December - 7 January
- 4 February

### Basic Safety Training - All 4 modules must be completed within 12 months:
- Personal Safety Techniques (5 days - 1.5 days), Personal Safety & Social Responsibility (5 days - 1 day), Elementary First Aid (6 days - 1 day), Fire Fighting & Fire Prevention (7 days - 2 days), not more (Combined Basic & Adv. Fire Fighting completed within 12 months)
- 5 days, 6 August - 24 September
- 22 October - 28 November
- 17 December
- 10 December
- 7 January - DATE CHANGE

### Basic Safety Training - Refresher
- 3 days, 6 August - 28 September
- 24 October - 28 November
- 19 December
- 16 January - CHNG
- 13 February

### Crowd Management
- 1 day, Please call

### Crisis Mgmt & Human Behavior
- 1 day, Please call

### ECDS
- 6 days, 16 July - 23 July
- 10 August - 17 September
- 15 October - 12 November
- 10 December
- 14, 28 January
- 11 February

### Effective Supervision
- 2 days, Please call

### Fast Rescue Boat
- 4 days, 27 August - 15 October
- 10 December - 6 January
- 4, 25 February

### GM3SS
- 10 days, 5 November - 14 January

### LNG Tankerman PIC
- 8 days, 5 December - 11 February

### LNG Simulator Training - Emphasis priority in the LNG simulator course is given to qualified candidate candidates for employment and/or observation opportunities with LNG contracted LNG companies. In all cases, successful completion of the LNG PIC classroom course is prerequisite.
- 5 days, 17 December - 26 February

### Proficiency in Survival Craft (Lifeboat)
- 4 days, 4 September - 5 November
- 22 January

### Safety Officer Course
- 2 days, 30 July - 1 October
- 6 November - 14 January

### Tankerman PIC DL - Classroom
- 5 days, 26 November - 7 January

### Tankerman PIC DL - Simulator
- 10 days, 16 July - 20 August
- 22 October - 28 January

### Train the Trainer
- 5 days, 20 August - 1 October
- 3 December - 4 February

### Train the Trainer - Simulator Inst.
- 5 days, Please call

### Vessel/Company Security Officer - Includes Anti-Piracy
- 3 days, 1 August - 5 September
- 5 November - 16 January

## Deck Courses

### Advanced Bridge Resource Management
- 5 days, 1 January - PM

### Advanced Shiphandling for Masters - (no equivalents) Must have sailed as Chief Mate Unlined
- 5 days, 20 August - 1 October
- 3 December - 4 February

### Advanced Shiphandling for 3rd Mates - 60 days residence equiv. for 3rd Mates
- 10 days, 24 September - 15 October
- 3 Dec Wh 2 PM

### Ads / Emerg. Shiphandling - First Class Pilots, Great Lakes
- 5 days, 21 January

### Bridge Resource Management Seminar
- 3 days, Please call

### Dynamic Positioning - Basic
- 5 days, 27 August - 28 January

### Dynamic Positioning - Advanced
- 5 days, 26 November - 26 February

### Integrated Bridge System (IBS) / Prohibited Propulsion Trg
- 5 days, 26 November - 26 December

### Locking & Docking for First Class Pilots - Great Lakes
- 5 days, Please call

### TOAR (Towing Officer Assessment Record) - Third Mates (Unlined or Great Lakes), 1907 Master License required AND OOW required
- 6 days, 13 August - 26 November
- 14 January PM

### Top Training - ASD Aerial (Admitting Stern Drive)
- 5 days, 27 August - 12 November
- 26 January PM

### Visual Communications (Flashig Light) - Test only!
- 1 day, Schedules as required

## Engineering Courses

### Advanced Slow Speed Diesel
- 10 days, 10 December

### Basic Electricity
- 10 days, 10 September - 1 October
- 11 February

### Diesel Crossover
- 4 weeks, 16 July - 8 October

### Engine Room Resource Management
- 5 days, 10 September - 7 January

### Environmental Awareness (Includes Water Separator)
- 2 days, 24 September - 13 November
- 22 January

### Gas Turbine Endorsement
- 10 days, 20 August - 8 October
- 9 November - 10 December
- 4 February

### High Voltage Safety Course (Classroom)
- 3 days, 1 August - 23-24 Oct
- 3 February

### Ocean Ranger Program
- 5 days, Please call

### Programmable Logic Controllers (PLC4)
- 3 days, 22 July - 28 September
- 15 October - 25 February

### Refrigeration (Operational Level)
- 3 days, 20 August - 26 November
- 28 January

### Refrigeration (Management Level)
- 5 days, 27 August - 3 December
- 4 February

### Steam Crossover
- 4 weeks, 14 January

### Welding & Metalurgy Skills & Practices - Open to eligible Chief Mates and Masters on a space available basis. Interested participants should apply and will be confirmed 2 weeks prior to start date.
- 2 weeks, 30 July - 22 October
- 3 December - 25 February

## Deck Upgrade at the Management Level - Successful completion of this program will satisfy the training requirements for STCW certification as Master or Chief Mate on vessels of 500 or more gross tonnage (GRT). This program will complete ALL 53 Control Sheet assessments of the training requirements for STCW. Course completion certificates do not expire. Operation level officers (3M and 2M) interested in advancing to Chief Mate/Manager (Management) Level are encouraged to start obtaining the required courses as soon as practical after acquiring OOW experience. Advanced Navigation and a USCSC approved ECDS course must be completed within 12 months of each other to satisfy the Management Level upgrade course and assessment requirements.

### Celestial Navigation
- 5 days, 27 August - 8 October
- 17 November - 12 February

### Upgrade: Advanced Meteorology
- 5 days, 27 August - 19 October
- 10 December - 18 February

### Cargo Operations
- 3 days, 4 September - 29 October
- 22 January

### Marine Propulsion Plants
- 5 days, 23 July - 13, 20 August
- 17 September - 12 November
- 3 December - 14 January

### Upgrade: Stability
- 5 days, 6 August - 1 October
- 26 November - 7 January
- 25 February

### Watchkeeping 1: BRM
- 3 days, 25 July - 5 September
- 31 October - 12 December
- 13 February

### Watchkeeping 2: COLREGS - Watchkeeping 1 & 2 must be completed within 13 months of each other
- 3 days, 30 July - 10 September
- 5 November - 17 December
- 18 February

### Upgrade: Shiphandling at the Management Level
- 10 days, 8 August - 15 October
- 7 January - 25 February

### Shipboard Management
- 3 days, 23 July - 17 September
- 12 November - 21 January

### Upgrade: Advanced Navigation (Includes Simulator)
- 3 days, 16 July - 25 August
- 24 September - 26 November
- 28 January

### ECDS - Advanced Navigation and the USCSC approved ECDS to be completed within 12 months of each other. Suggested dates follow. See also deck courses above.
- 3 days, 27 August - 1 October
- 3 December - 4 February

### Self-Study License Exam Preparation
- Aff
### MSC Training Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic CBR Defense</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>24 August - 14 September</td>
<td>1 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damage Control</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>23 August - 13 September</td>
<td>16 November - 31 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat Stress Afloat / Hearing Conservation Afloat</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>20 August - 4 September</td>
<td>29 October - 25 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helicopter Fire Fighting</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>7 August - 25 October</td>
<td>27 November - 15 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Environmental Programs (with CBRD)</td>
<td>1/2 day</td>
<td>24 August - 14 September</td>
<td>1 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Sanitation Devices</td>
<td>1/2 day</td>
<td>27 September - 16 November</td>
<td>25 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical PIC Refresher - Not MSC approved</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>5 September - 16 October</td>
<td>22 January - 20 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSC Readiness Refresher - Must have completed full CBRD &amp; DC once in career</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>6 August - 22 October</td>
<td>26 November - 14 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSC Watchtender - BASIC - Once in career, IST grade good-bye/transfer</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>26 July - 27 September</td>
<td>1 November - 13 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSC Watchtender - ADVANCED - Required for all GIN members</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>30 July - 1 October</td>
<td>5 November - 17 December, 4, 28 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSC Ship Reaction Force - Required every three years for GIN members</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>31 July - 2 October</td>
<td>8 November - 18 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMM - Shippable Automation Management</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>16 July - 28 October</td>
<td>7 January - 20 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Arms - Initial &amp; Sustainment (Refresher) Training - Open to members &amp; applicants eligible for employment through AMO with 1 year on MSC in MARAD contracted vessels. Required of crew on MSC or MARAD contracted vessels. Required of crew on MARAD contracted vessels. Required at 12 month intervals.</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>23 July - 27 August</td>
<td>6, 20 August - 10, 24 Sept - 19 October - 25 November - 13, 26 November - 10 December - 14, 28 November - 14, 29 January - 11, 25 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Sanitation Afloat</td>
<td>1/2 day</td>
<td>27 September - 16 November</td>
<td>25 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat Stress Afloat / Hearing Conservation Afloat</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>4 September - 29 October</td>
<td>28 October - 19 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary First Aid - Prerequisite for MCP within preceding 12 months</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>17 July - 21 August</td>
<td>18 September - 6, 30 October - 4 December - 8, 29 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Care Provider - Prerequisite for MCP within preceding 12 months. Please see ETA certificate when registering.</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>18 July - 22 August</td>
<td>19 September - 10, 31 October - 5 December - 8, 30 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical PIC - Please see MCP certificate when registering.</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>23 July - 27 August</td>
<td>24 September - 5 November - 10 December - 4 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urinalysis Collector Training</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>30 July - 1 October</td>
<td>13 November - 17 December - 11 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breath Alcohol &quot;test&quot; (BAT) - Aco Sensors 3 and 4 only!</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>31 July - 2 October</td>
<td>14 November - 18 December - 13 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saliva Screening Test - QEDs only!</td>
<td>1/2 day</td>
<td>1 August - 3 October</td>
<td>15 November - 19 December - 13 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical PIC Refresher - Not for MSC approved</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>5 September - 16 October</td>
<td>22 January - 20 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radar Courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radar Recertification</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>6 August - 4 September</td>
<td>12, 29 October - 17 December - 10, 11 January - 22 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radar Recertification at Toledo Maritime Academy - Non-Navistar Training</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>23 August - 29 November</td>
<td>13 December - 24 January - 28 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARPA</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>30 October</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARPAC</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>29 October</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Radar Observer Unlimited</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>22 October</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Study CDs and Online Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer in Charge of a Navigation Watch (OICNW) - 3 day package comprised of courses below. Students will be nominated and assigned by their contracted company and shall attend all 3 days. Any places not taken by the contracted companies will be made available on a chronological order basis.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Study License Exam Preparation</td>
<td>A/R</td>
<td>A/R</td>
<td>Available to those students who completed their courses at STAR Center. Please call to schedule.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Galley Courses & Original License Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Fire Fighting</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>10 September - 7 January</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Safety Training</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>24 September - 14 January</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPA/MCP</td>
<td>4 days</td>
<td>18 September - 29 January</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency in Survival Craft (Lifeboat)</td>
<td>4 days</td>
<td>4 September - 22 January</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Electricity (for Original Engineers only)</td>
<td>70 days</td>
<td>1 October - 11 February</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original NGA Preparation and Exams</td>
<td>A/R</td>
<td>15 October - 29 January</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Self-Study CDs and Online Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>loatment Protection Coordinator</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>DoT - Hazardous Material Transportation</td>
<td>CD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Terrorists Level 1</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>EPA Universal Refrigerant Certification Examination</td>
<td>Self-study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crew Endurance Management</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Prudent Mariner’s Guide to Right Whale Protection</td>
<td>CD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vessel General Permit - EPA</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Electrical Safety Refresher</td>
<td>CD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Officer in Charge of a Navigation Watch (OICNW)

- Completion of this program will satisfy the training requirements for STCW certification as Officer In Charge of a Navigation Watch (3M/2) on vessels of 500 or more gross tonnage (GT). This program will complete ALL Control Wheel assessments.

### MARAD Training Program - (11 day package comprised of courses below) Students will be nominated and assigned by their contracted company and shall attend all 11 days. Any places not taken by the contracted companies shall be made available on a chronological order basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Arms - Initial &amp; Sustainment (Refresher) Training - Open to members &amp; applicants eligible for employment through AMO with 1 year on MSC in MARAD contracted vessels. Required at 12 month intervals.</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>15 October - 14 January</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary First Aid</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>18 October - 17 January</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Collector Training</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>18 October - 18 October</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breath Alcohol Test Collector</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>20 October - 25 January</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Fire Fighting</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>8 October - 7 January</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### NOTICE

- AMO members planning to attend the union’s Center for Advanced Maritime Officers’ Training/STAR Center in Dania Beach, Florida—either to prepare for license upgrading or to undergo specialty training—are asked to call the school to confirm course schedule and space availability in advance.

- NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY AS TO STUDENTS: The Center For Advanced Maritime Officers Training (CAMOT) and Simulation Training Assessment and Research Center (STAR), established under the auspices of the American Maritime Officers Safety and Education Plan, admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin or sex to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the Center. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin or sex in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and other programs administered by the Center.
Reminder: ECDIS training requirements

As a reminder, new ECDIS training requirements contained in the U.S. Coast Guard’s Supplemental Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (SNPRM) are expected to be phased in over a five-year period, which will conclude January 2017. If an officer does not have the required training by Jan. 1, 2017, his or her credential will have a limitation placed on it prohibiting the individual from serving on ECDIS equipped vessels. ECDIS training may also be required sooner under certain circumstances, as noted below.

Separately, some ECDIS requirements for newly built ships began to take effect July 1. Tankers larger than 3,000 gross tons and passenger ships larger than 500 gross tons constructed on or after that date will need to meet requirements in the SOLAS Convention.

Regarding training requirements, the U.S. Coast Guard has issued its SNPRM on the implementation of the 2010 STCW Manila Amendments. Although the public comment period has ended, the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) will not be finalized until the Coast Guard reviews all comments. The STAR Center will provide detailed guidance for newly built ship operators once the USCG policy is published. When the CFR is finalized, the STAR Center will also request a formal acceptance of our current ECDIS training course to have been completed.

Although the proposed five-year phase in period will run until January 2017, some contracted companies (and vessels) already require documentation of having completed an approved ECDIS training course in order to ship on ECDIS.

See ECDIS & Page 11
equipped vessels. Officers who have not completed an approved ECDIS course are encouraged to do so as their schedules permit. It is recommended that each officer carry his or her approved ECDIS course certificate onboard the vessel.

Regarding ECDIS requirements taking effect July 1, these address equipment, chart data and training. To meet the technical standards, the following criteria must be met:

1. Type-approved equipment (there are approximately 26 manufacturers of type-approved equipment);
2. Adequate up to date official ENC chart data installed;
3. A flag state accepted back-up arrangement. Some back-up arrangement options are a second independent ECDIS unit, a chart/radar, or a full folio of up-to-date nautical paper charts. The USCG has not yet stated what they will require.

Pertaining to these requirements for companies and vessels, obtaining and maintaining adequate up-to-date charts can be done in a number of ways. Several chart distributors vying for the business of supplying official up to date data.

Electronic job board at AMO Dispatching

American Maritime Officers members completing Marine Environmental Awareness training at STAR Center in June with Instructor Todd Christensen included Rudy Salvaggio, Walter Rood and Vlad Newcomer.

Desired Course(s) Desired / Alternate Start Date

Remarks: *

*For Advanced Liquid Cargo Course, List Tanker Experience in remarks section

Lodging / Guest Information

CHECK IN Date: / / CHECK OUT Date: / /

Preference: [ ] Smoking [ ] Non-Smoking

Name of Spouse/Guest(s) you intend to bring Relationship

Students must be “fit for duty” and guests must be capable of performing “activities of daily living” without assistance.

All Minors must be accompanied by an adult at all times while at STAR Center. Include ages of all minors on list above.

Remarks / Requests:

STAR Center admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin or gender.
Senate committee seeks greater Jones Act enforcement

The Senate Appropriations Committee recently approved legislation requiring the federal government “take adequate measures to ensure the use of United States flag vessels” if crude oil is released from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR).

The legislation passed by the committee mirrors legislation passed in the full House of Representatives as part of a defense appropriations measure. The Senate committee also included commentary criticizing waivers provided to foreign vessels during last year’s drawdown of the SPR.

“The Committee is very concerned that 53 waivers of the Jones Act were issued in fiscal year 2011, enabling foreign-flagged vessels to transport oil released from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve,” the senators stated.

While many Jones Act vessels were available to transport the oil released from the SPR last summer, dozens of waivers were issued allowing foreign-flagged vessels to serve in a domestic trade.

“The Committee has been negatively impacted and undertaxed as a result of lax enforcement of prior rulings inconsistent with congressional intent,” the senators stated.

The committee urged the federal government to levy penalties for previously documented violations, investigate future potential violations and “dedicate adequate resources to vigorously enforce the Jones Act on the Outer Continental Shelf.”

The legislation prohibits the issuance of waivers related to a release from the SPR until the Department of Energy, the Department of Transportation and representatives of the U.S.-flag maritime industry have been consulted and that “adequate steps [have been taken] to ensure the use of United States flag vessels.”

AMO aboard the BBC Seattle

Officers and crew members working aboard the BBC Seattle as it finished loading cargo in the U.S. in June included Chief Engineer Matt Campbell, First Assistant Engineer Kevin Hogle, Chief Mate Peter Kirk, Second Mate John Finer, Second A.E. Larry French, SA Sheila Daguro, Steward Juan Gonzalez, QMED Bernard Smalls, QMED Dave Terry, Third A.E. Leowen Punzalan, AB Gerald Kelly and Third Mate Robert Bellfield. Not in the photo is Captain Bud Conroy.

The U.S.-flagged multipurpose cargo ship got underway in May to begin service under charter to MSC, adding new jobs for the membership of AMO. Teras BBC Ocean Navigation Enterprises Houston LLC is operating the ship under MSC charter and AMSEA is providing crew management services. AMO represents all licensed officers aboard the ship.

House hearing emphasizes use of U.S. vessels to ship SPR oil

The House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation on June 27 held a hearing to review the process used to determine the availability of U.S.-flagged vessels during the summer 2011 drawdown of crude oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR).

The hearing was convened based on a request from Congressmen Nick Rahall (D-WV), the ranking member on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and Rick Larsen (D-WA), the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation.

In his opening statement at the hearing, Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ) addressed the numerous Jones Act waivers issued during the 2011 SPR drawdown. “After issuing a blanket waiver and then rescinding it a day later, it appears as though the administration was assuring potential bidders for SPR oil that individual waivers would be granted for large-volume sales before applications were even submitted,” Rep. LoBiondo said. “It also appears the administration made no effort to use its authority to require the oil to be divided into smaller lots in order to be carried on U.S.-flagged vessels.

“I find these actions extremely disturbing, particularly because it came at a time when so many Americans were out of work,” he said. “It is puzzling that an administration claiming to be doing everything it can to help America’s unemployed would allow vessels crewed by foreigners, owned by foreigners, built in foreign countries, and flying foreign flags to carry nearly all of the SPR oil released.”

Rep. Larsen, in his opening statement, also expressed strong dissatisfaction with the practices employed during the 2011 SPR drawdown.

“U.S. industry has available capacity to move U.S. strategic oil reserves on U.S. flagged ships, putting U.S. mariners to work,” he said. “I don’t know of anyone on this committee who agreed with these controversial waivers, and Congress has responded accordingly to uphold the integrity of the Jones Act.