

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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In this issue//TRANSCOM Report Shows Need for RRF Recapitalization//Matson's LURLINE Goes into Service Next Week//New Plan to Keep JOHN W. BROWN in Baltimore// MarAd Advisory for Mariners Near Yemen//Coast Guard Minimum Drug Testing Rate//Make Sure Your Email Address is On File//Apply for Union Plus Scholarships//

TRANSCOM REPORT REINFORCES CONCERNS WITH AGING READY RESERVE FORCE FLEET

A US Transportation Command analysis has given credence to fears that the nation's Ready Reserve Force fleet is succumbing to age and may not be able to meet future wartime sealift requirements.

The nation relies on 46 Ready Reserve Force vessels along with 15 Military Sealift Command ships for the initial surge of sealift capacity. The vessels in the RRF fleet are an average of almost 45 years old. In mid-September, defense officials ordered a large-scale turbo activation of 27 Ready Reserve Force (RRF) vessels and 6 Military Sealift Command ships in an effort to test the readiness of the aging fleet and its support network.

But the TRANSCOM analysis shows that the vessels participating in the September exercise suffered a low mission Cumulative Fleet Success Rate validating concerns that the aging fleet "is challenged to be immediately available for a large-scale inter-theater force deployment without delays/impacts to force closure due to degraded readiness."

TRANSCOM and the Maritime Administration have stressed the need for a recapitalization of the RRF for years and have repeatedly informed Congress that the military is dependent on America's Merchant Marine to help project U.S. power overseas. Maritime Administrator Rear Adm. Mark Buzby said the current aging sealift fleet demands an inordinate amount of maintenance and repair costs to keep it going. TRANSCOM said the analysis "reinforced the need for recapitalization, appropriate levels of resourcing to correct material deficiencies, and continued emphasis on readiness improvements."

The report notes that "to be available to execute a large-scale inter-theater force deployment, vessels in the Organic Surge Fleet must be ready for tasking (RFT rate 63.9%), they must be able to transition from ROS-to-FOS within prescribed timelines (RFS rate 81.8%), and they must be able to complete the voyage without undue delay or significant mitigation (Qualitative Mission Success rate 77.8%). Readiness goals aim for the Organic Surge Fleet to have an 85% availability on any given day to support large-scale force deployments. The low Cumulative Fleet Success Rate of 40.7% suggests the Organic Surge Fleet is challenged to meet these objectives."

The TRANSCOM report can be accessed at <https://www.ustranscom.mil/foia/docs/USTRANSCOM%20Turbo%20Activation%2019-Plus%20AAR.pdf>

MATSON SET TO BEGIN SERVICE WITH THE NEW LURLINE

Matson Navigation has taken delivery of its brand new combination container/roll-on, roll-off (CONRO) vessel LURLINE, the sixth so-named vessel in the company's history since 1887. The NASSCO-built Kanaloa-class vessel is 870 feet long, 114 feet wide (beam), with a deep draft of 38 feet and weighing in at over 50,000 metric tons. The LURLINE is Matson's largest ship and the largest ConRo vessel ever constructed in the U.S. It is one of Matson's fastest vessels, with a top speed of 23 knots, which will help ensure on-time deliveries in Hawaii from Matson's three West Coast terminals in Seattle, Oakland and Long Beach.

The vessel will carry an extra 3rd Assistant Engineer until it receives ACCU approval from the Coast Guard. M.E.B.A. officers for the inaugural voyage include C/E David Ayou, 1st A/E Jeff Pillard, 2nd A/E Adam Burton, 3rd A/E Blake Taylor and 3rd A/E Matthew Hester.

The new MATSONIA is currently under construction at NASSCO's San Diego yard and is scheduled to join her sister ship by this time next year. In the past two years, Matson also took delivery of two Philly Shipyard-built vessels that are currently in service – the DANIEL K. INOUE and KAIMANA HILA.

Lurline is set to make her maiden voyage to Hawaii next week, departing Oakland on January 9, then leaving Long Beach on January 11, and arriving in Honolulu on January 15.

Both new Kanaloa Class vessels will have an enclosed garage with room for approximately 500 vehicles, plus ample space for rolling stock and breakbulk cargo. They will also feature state-of-the-art green technology, including a fuel-efficient hull design, environmentally safe double hull fuel tanks, fresh water ballast systems and the first Tier 3 dual fuel engines to be deployed in containerships serving West Coast ports. Both new vessels will enter service fully compliant with new International Maritime Organization (IMO) emission regulations that went into effect on Wednesday. Under the latest IMO requirements for engine manufacturers, Tier 3 engines reduce the levels of particulate emissions by 40 percent and nitrogen oxide emissions by 20 percent, as compared to Tier 2 standards.

NEW PROPOSAL TO KEEP WWII LIBERTY SHIP IN BALTIMORE

With its future in Baltimore in doubt, the Foundation supporting the SS JOHN W. BROWN announced a new plan to keep the WWII Liberty Ship in Charm City by relocating it to a proposed new pier in the old Bethlehem Steel Fairfield Shipyard. The plan would move the BROWN to a revitalized section of the old yard in South Baltimore in two years allowing the vessel to continue its mission as a living memorial to the wartime role of merchant mariners. The proposal is contingent on securing the necessary funding, estimated to be \$18 million.

The JOHN W. BROWN is one of only two remaining operational World War II Liberty Ships. The vessel was built at the Bethlehem-Fairfield shipyard on Baltimore's Patapsco River in 1942. The BROWN made thirteen voyages during WWII then later became a floating vocational high school in New York City. In 1988, she was designated as an historic ship, was returned to her 1944 configuration, then began serving as a museum ship and sailing to East Coast and Great Lakes ports conducting "Living History" cruises.

The vessel had been berthed at the state-owned pier on Clinton Street in Baltimore for years but was temporarily settled at an alternate location after the pier was sold. The arrangement for the alternate berth expired at the end of 2019 necessitating a plan for a new home for the BROWN, one that threatened its relocation away from Baltimore. Under the new plan, the BROWN must still secure interim dockage for two years until the new Fairfield berth is ready.

Specifically, under the \$18 million plan announced by Project Liberty Ship and Maritime Applied Physics Corp. (MAPC), a portion of the former Shipyard would be rebuilt to provide a berth for the great ship along with a support base for for MAPC's growing shipbuilding and maritime technology operations. The proposal would utilize federal and state funding, augmented by corporate and individual donations. The pier would be owned and administered by a non-profit entity.

MAPC designs and builds advanced technology systems and vessels for the Defense Department, as well as commercial products, such as the new Baltimore water taxis and floating aquaculture systems. It owns and has a plant on the land where the Bethlehem-Fairfield yard was located in the 1940's. MAPC currently holds a 50-year lease, with an option to purchase the 780-foot pier that needs to be replaced to accommodate the JOHN W. BROWN and the expansion of MAPC's business.

RENEWED MARAD WARNINGS OF RISKS IN RED SEA, GULF OF ADEN

The Maritime Administration has updated an advisory warning of risks to mariners on commercial U.S.-flag ships transiting waters near Yemen. The notice points out that regional conflict near Yemen poses a threat to mariners in the southern Red Sea, Bab al Mandeb Strait, and Gulf of Aden.

MarAd notes that although a limited cease-fire is in effect between Houthi rebels and the Saudi Arabian-led Coalition, various threats remain and could manifest themselves in the form of missiles, rockets, projectiles, mines, small arms, unmanned aerial vehicles, unmanned surface vessels, or waterborne improvised explosive devices.

Additionally, the advisory notes that piracy poses a threat in the Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean, and Gulf of Oman.

With regard to the conflict in Yemen, U.S. flagged commercial vessels are advised to avoid entering or loitering near Yemen's Red Sea ports. Vessels at anchor, operating in restricted maneuvering environments, or proceeding at slow speeds should be especially vigilant. The Advisory expires on June 17, 2020.

COAST GUARD MINIMUM DRUG TESTING RATE SET AT 50% FOR 2020

The Coast Guard has set the calendar year 2020 minimum random drug testing rate at 50 percent of covered crewmembers effective for the 2020 calendar year. The rate is unchanged from last year and indicates that the positive rate for the previous year was greater than one percent. The rate was at 25% in 2018. The Coast Guard's Patrick Mannion can be contacted by email for further information at DAPI@uscg.mil.

MAKE SURE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS IS ON FILE!!!

Members and applicants should ensure that Headquarters has your e-mail address along with your other contact information. If you haven't filled out an M.E.B.A. Database Update Form – or if your information has changed – grab the form off the M.E.B.A. website (www.mebaunion.org) located in

the “Documents & Member Notices” section. Email addresses are also collected at membership meetings on the sign-in sheet, but members must write clearly as many addresses are typically scribbled illegibly.

Update Forms should be sent to the HQ Membership Dept. by mail, fax at (202) 638-5369, or e-mail membership@mebaunion.org Since the M.E.B.A. Plans office in Baltimore and Headquarters databases are NOT linked, you should not assume that info forwarded to Plans is updated in the Union database and vice versa.

APPLY FOR UNION PLUS SCHOLARSHIPS

M.E.B.A. families have until January 31, 2020 to apply for college education assistance money through Union Plus. M.E.B.A. members, retirees and their families - as well as members of affiliated M.E.B.A. unions - are eligible courtesy of the Union’s enrollment in dozens of moneysaving U.P. programs ranging from life insurance to financing children’s educations. Visit unionplus.org/scholarship for more. Families of M.E.B.A. members or affiliated members are among past scholarship money recipients. Union Plus Scholarship are granted to students attending a two-year college, four-year college, graduate school or a recognized technical or trade school. Recipients are selected based on academic ability, social awareness, financial need and appreciation of labor.

Applications can be submitted up until Tuesday January 31, 2020, at noon (EST). Those arriving after the deadline will not be considered. The award date is May 31, 2020. During the first week of June 2020, award recipients will be notified. A GPA of 3.0 or higher is recommended. The required essays can account for up to half your total score. Scholarship applicants are judged by a committee of impartial post-secondary educators. Amounts range from \$500 to \$4,000. These one-time cash awards are for study beginning in the Fall of 2020. Students may re-apply each year. Get the official application and all the details including eligibility criteria by visiting unionplus.org/scholarship Since 1991, the Union Plus Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$4.5 million to students of union families. Over 3,000 union families have benefited from the program.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Monday, January 6 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;
Tuesday, January 7 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;
Wednesday, January 8 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;
Thursday, January 9 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;
Friday, January 10 – Honolulu@1100.

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The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and proven track record of readiness, safety, and loyalty in answering America's call to action in times of both peace and war is unrivaled in the world. M.E.B.A. HQ – Phone: (202) 638-5355; mebahq@mebaunion.org. Visit us on Facebook. For publication and related inquiries (and to send photos & hot news tips) contact Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – marco@mebaunion.org Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram.