

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"

M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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TANKER SECURITY PROGRAM: OSG WILL HAVE THREE VESSELS

M.E.B.A.-contracted OSG announced that it has been informed that three of their vessels will be part of the inaugural 10 vessel Tanker Security Program fleet.

Expected to launch later this year, the TSP is a fleet of 10 commercial U.S.-flag petroleum product tankers supporting U.S. strategic defense needs. The program was created to reduce military reliance on foreign-flag commercial vessels while also expanding the qualified mariner pool. The program has received consistent bipartisan Congressional support and is fully funded at \$60 million (\$6 million per vessel) for Fiscal Year 2023. A future expansion of the program is already being proposed by Members of Congress.

Overseas Shipholding Group President/CEO Sam Norton announced that OSG is being awarded three slots in the program which is administered by the Maritime Administration. He said that OSG's medium range tankers OVERSEAS SANTORINI, OVERSEAS MYKONOS and OVERSEAS SUN COAST were approved for the TSP. The remaining TSP slots reportedly have been divvied up among Seabulk, Crowley and MLL on tankers utilizing non-M.E.B.A. labor.

Norton noted that the award, "culminates nearly five years of effort in working with its industry, labor, and government partners to get the TSP up and operating....With the inception of the TSP, the Department of Defense will have access to an expanded pool of US flagged tankers operating worldwide that will allow for committed, reliable and loyal fuel transportation to the US military during a time of national crisis, as opposed to relying on transportation by foreign-flagged vessels."

CLEVELAND HALL RELOCATING

Members can do business at the new M.E.B.A. office in Cleveland as soon as Monday after the Union found a worthy location to replace the former space. Structural damage to the current Cleveland hall building prompted the M.E.B.A. District Executive Committee to locate a more appropriate and professional office. Atlantic Coast V.P. Jason Callahan, in conjunction with Cleveland Dispatcher Cheryl Kostreba, headed up the search for the new hall.

The new office, only a few blocks away from the old location, is located in bustling Playhouse Square at the Hanna Building - 1422 Euclid Ave, Suite 400-11, Cleveland, OH 44115

Phone and fax numbers, as well as the email address, remain the same.

As a reminder, the Cleveland hall is open by appointment only. Members and applicants needing to conduct business there should first schedule an advance appointment by leaving a voicemail at (216) 579-6322 or email Dispatcher Cheryl Kostreba at ckostreba@mebaunion.org. Make sure you receive confirmation before beginning travel. The Union will attempt to accommodate all normal business hour requests.

MEMBERS TOUR POTENTIAL NEW HALL IN HOUSTON

Members toured a promising new location for the Houston Union hall this week as the search for a replacement to our current aging hall heats up. M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac and Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha were in town, and together with Gulf Coast V.P. Adam Smith and about 15 members, took a field trip to the location, a gated building not far from the current hall right off of Interstate 610. So far, the building is the leading contender after a lengthy search and due diligence performed over the last two years. Members were impressed with the potential of the building, its location, parking and other amenities, as well as leasing opportunities for future occupants.

The current hall was built as a department store in 1938 and the M.E.B.A. set up shop there 20 years later. It is showing its age and a renovation of the current space would not be cost-effective. Expect the hall to relocate in the very near future.

WAGE DETERMINATION FOR S.I. FERRY LICENSED ENGINEERS

In a long-awaited decision issued recently, New York City Comptroller Brad Lander has determined that prevailing wages of M.E.B.A. licensed engineers serving aboard the Staten Island Ferries are comparable to those of their private sector counterparts working on vessels for Maersk Line Ltd. The M.E.B.A. is still working through details of this determination but believes it should be a major win for these titles. This decision would pay Maersk engineer wages to Chief Engineer & Marine Engineer titles at the Ferry system, to be implemented retroactively to 2010. The prevailing wage law (Labor Law 220) sets wages and benefits for ferry titles that qualify, and while the engineering titles are on the prevailing wage list the deck titles are not.

The Comptroller's decision builds upon a ruling made last year by the City's central, independent administrative law court that adjudicates city matters. In an August 2022 decision Law Judge Faye Lewis agreed with the Union on a ruling that stated that "marine engineers and chief marine engineers" onboard the Staten Island Ferries "should be paid the rates of prevailing wages and benefits commensurate with those paid to chief engineers and first assistant engineers on U.S.-flag Maersk cargo vessels."

The M.E.B.A. represents all five officer titles at the Staten Island Ferry (Captain, Chief Engineer, Marine Engineer, Assistant Captain and Mate) and all of those titles have been without a contract for 13 years. The M.E.B.A. is going to mediation with the NYC Office of Labor Relations armed with the Comptroller's determination that should help resolve a contract that values all five titles represented at the ferry.

APL TO FLAG-IN REPLACEMENT SHIP FOR GULF EXPRESS

American President Lines announced that it will be swapping-out the Maritime Security Program container vessel APL GULF EXPRESS for a newer ship. The outgoing vessel, constructed in 2002, will be replaced by the APL EAGLE, a ship 14-years younger that meets new requirements for CO² emissions.

The new ship formerly sailed as the CNC MERCURY in the CMA CGM international fleet.

The EAGLE will assume the MSP chit from the GULF EXPRESS when the change is made, scheduled for some time in May. Main propulsion power on the incoming vessel comes from two electronically-controlled, two-stroke MAN B&W-6S60ME-C8.2-TII engines. M.E.B.A. members currently serving on the GULF EXPRESS will join the APL EAGLE.

MARITIME STALWART DAN DUNCAN RETIRES

Hard to believe, but after more than 35 years as an effective advocate for unions and U.S.-flag shipping, the Maritime Trades Department's Dan Duncan headed off into retirement, a day after working the Congressional Maritime Sail-In.

Dan was a news reporter when he suited up with the Seafarers International Union in 1987 and he worked as a field representative at first. A couple years later, he was working at SIU Headquarters on the newspaper staff and worked his way up to the prestigious Director of Communications position in 1996. Having achieved that pinnacle, the Maritime Trades Department snatched Dan away in 2000 where he worked as an assistant to MTD President Mike Sacco and eventually succeeded Executive Secretary-Treasurer Frank Pecquex. At MTD's recent Board Meetings, MTD Administrator Mark Clements was appointed to the difficult task of filling Dan Duncan's shoes.

An avid reader of the *Telex Times*, Dan has been an effective and dedicated advocate for our industry and a pleasure to work with. Though he has withdrawn from official duties, nobody expects him to pull back on his perennial support for working men and women and U.S.-flag shipping. Fair winds and following seas to you Dan Duncan and Cheers!

NMC CREDENTIALING DELAYS

Due to an increase in application volume and ongoing technical difficulties with the National Maritime Center's credential production equipment, merchant mariner credential (MMC) applicants are experiencing issuance delays. **NMC credential printers remain operational but at a reduced capacity.** They are said to be working "as hard as possible" to get these problems addressed. They cannot provide exact timeframes for completion of a mariner's MMC issuance, but they say all efforts are being made to process applications and produce MMCs as quickly as possible. Mariners can expect to receive a status update e-mail at each stage of the application, including upon issuance of their credentials. These technical problems do not affect credential endorsements or medical certificates. For the most up to date status information, use their [online tool](#) to check your status.

NMC processes applications on a first in, first out basis and they appreciate your patience while they work to get your credential to you as soon as possible. For those mariners whose credential is **'Approved to Print'** and when it is critical to vessel operations or an applicant's employment, please contact the NMC Customer Service Center and they will attempt to prioritize printing of your MMC.

Mariners can also request expedited mailing of their MMC or medical certificate, which includes the ability to track the package. Full instructions are available on the NMC website detailing the [expedited mailing process](#). As a reminder it is recommended to apply at least 90 days in advance. Remember, for renewals you can apply up to 8 months early with no change between your expiration and renewal dates.

Mariners may contact their Customer Service Center via [Live Chat](#) or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662) for assistance.

NEXT MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS (*All times are local*)

Monday, May 8 – **Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.**

Tuesday, May 9 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.**

Wednesday, May 10 – **Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mebahq@mebaunion.org**

Thursday, May 11 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.**

Friday, May 12 – **Honolulu@1100.**

-----FINISHED WITH ENGINES-----



***M.E.B.A. does not tolerate assault, or harassment of any kind.
If you see something, say something – The M.E.B.A. Emergency Hotline
can be reached at 1-888-519-0018.***

The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and demonstrated 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. 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.