

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

The Official Union Newsletter – "The Word to the Wise"

Number 28 – July 15, 2021



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HANDSHAKE DEAL WITH INTERLAKE IN REOPENER TALKS

This week, M.E.B.A. negotiators concluded re-opener talks with Interlake Steamship reaching a new agreement - pending final approval. The parties discussed wages and fringe benefits affecting the next four years of M.E.B.A.'s contract with the company that extends into 2025. The re-opener agreement will be reviewed for approval by M.E.B.A.'s District Executive Committee and Interlake officials before it can be finalized.

M.E.B.A.'s negotiating team was headed up by Atlantic Coast V.P. Jason Callahan and included Tampa Branch Agent Nicole Greenway and Contracts Officer Mark Gallagher. The M.E.B.A. team was joined by rank-and-file members Derek McMullen, Chris Miller and Ryan Carpentier.

Interlake was represented by its V.P., Counsel & Secretary Tom Wynne, V.P. & CFO Bill Thornton and Director of Training & Marine Personnel Jayson Toth.

AGENCIES COLLABORATE TO TARGET ANTI-COMPETITIVE SHIPPING BEHAVIOR

Following up on a recent Presidential Executive Order, the Federal Maritime Commission and the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice have inked an MOU to better fuel cooperation and communication in their oversight and enforcement responsibilities of the shipping industry. President Biden's Executive Order, issued last Friday, seeks to curb anti-competitive behavior in the trades, that has led to soaring prices and supply chain congestion. The Order seeks to remedy prices that have continued to rise, in part because of corporate consolidation and reduced competition.

The MOU establishes a framework for FMC and the Antitrust Division to continue regular discussions and review law enforcement and regulatory matters affecting industry competition.

FMC Chairman Daniel Maffei said the MOU "supplements and strengthens the FMC's ability to detect, address, and pursue violations of the law or anticompetitive behavior by those we regulate."

WARNINGS ISSUED FOR MARITIME HOTSPOTS

Following recent disturbing incidents, the Maritime Administration is cautioning mariners transiting certain dangerous international waters. Multiple maritime threats have been reported in waters near Iran - the Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean, where vessels were attacked and suffered explosions earlier this year. The MarAd alert cautions mariners in those areas as well as the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

MarAd says that heightened military activity and increased political tensions in the region continue to pose serious threats to commercial vessels. Associated with these threats is a potential for miscalculation or misidentification that could lead to aggressive actions. They warned that vessels operating in the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, and Gulf of Oman may also encounter GPS interference, bridge-to-bridge communications spoofing, and/or other communications jamming with little to no warning. Vessels have also reported bridge-to-bridge communications from unknown entities falsely claiming to be U.S. or coalition warships.

MarAd also issued an Advisory for the Gulf of Guinea related to piracy and kidnapping. Though recent International Maritime Bureau statistics note decreased overall piracy activity of late, the Gulf continues to account for almost a third of global incidents. During the first six months of 2021, pirates and armed robbers operated off seven of nine countries in the Gulf of Guinea (Nigeria, Benin, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Sao Tome and Principe, and Gabon) targeting a variety of vessels up to 200 nautical miles from shore.

IMB: PIRACY HITS LOWEST LEVEL SINCE 1994, BUT RISKS REMAIN

Over the first six months of 2021, the International Maritime Bureau has reported the lowest level of global piracy incidents in 27 years. There were 68 reported incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships through June - down from 98 incidents during the same period last year. Despite the overall decline in reported incidents, violence against crews has continued with 50 crew kidnapped, three taken hostage, two assaulted, one injured and one killed throughout the first half of 2021. Vessels were boarded in 91% of the reported incidents.

The Gulf of Guinea continues to be particularly dangerous for seafarers with 32% of all reported incidents taking place in the region, according to IMB. The region accounted for all 50 kidnapped crew and the single crew fatality recorded by IMB during the first half of 2021.

The Singapore Straits recorded 16 incidents in the first six months of 2021, in comparison to 11 during the same period in 2020. IMB urged mariners to be vigilant in waters near Peru as well as in Manila Bay, Philippines where there has been an uptick of incidents.

NEW FILM PROBES SEAFARER FAITH & WELFARE

Religious beliefs and attitudes are kept private onboard ship, but a Cardiff University research team put together a film spotlighting the importance of faith to global seafarers to better cope with living and working conditions onboard ship. The Seafarers International Research Centre (SIRC) study focused on two cargo vessels carrying multinational crews during a six-month period.

The research findings are described in a new 27-minute film, available on YouTube, shining a light on how seafarers express and draw upon faith to deal with the stress of being away from home for months at a time. The research also showed the important role, particularly during the pandemic, of port

chaplains, paid staff and volunteers – all of which provide welfare services to seafarers of all faiths in dedicated seafarers' centers.

Andrew Linington, a senior policy advisor at Nautilus International UK, who was interviewed for the film, said, “Over the last few years, we’ve seen a much greater awareness of psychological needs as the industry has changed dramatically and the complexity of needs along with it. By tapping into those changes, highlighting the need for a restructuring of services and for a reappraisal of what seafarers need by asking the questions of the seafarers themselves, then we have the basis for what could deliver a quantum shift in seafarer welfare.” The film is available for viewing at <https://youtu.be/wWrl9Mc65TQ>

NMC EXAM CENTERS OPEN UP A LITTLE MORE

The National Maritime Center (NMC) will resume counter service appointments on Monday for many of its Regional Examination Centers (RECs), easing up some of its COVID restrictions. However, counter and exam services are by appointment only with no walk-ins allowed. Mariners seeking to schedule counter service or examination appointments can do so by contacting the appropriate e-mail address or phone number below:

REC Anchorage – recanc@uscg.mil
REC Baltimore – recbaltimore@uscg.mil
REC Boston – recboston@uscg.mil
REC Charleston – reccha@uscg.mil
REC Honolulu – rechonolulu@uscg.mil
REC Houston – rechouston@uscg.mil
REC Juneau – recjun@uscg.mil
REC Long Beach – reclb@uscg.mil
REC Memphis – recmemphis@uscg.mil
REC Miami – recmia@uscg.mil or (305) 536-4331
REC New Orleans – recnola@uscg.mil
REC Oakland – recoakland@uscg.mil
REC Portland – recportland@uscg.mil
REC Seattle – recseattle@uscg.mil
REC St. Louis – recstl@uscg.mil
REC Toledo – rectol@uscg.mil
MU Ketchikan – (907) 225-4496 (extension #3)
MU San Juan – (787) 729-2368

As a note, the New York REC is out of commission until July 26 when it will reopen in a new temporary location until the old site is refurbished. During the closure, mariner applications can still be e-mailed to them at RECNY@uscg.mil

AFL-CIO REPORT SHOWS CEOs GOT BIG RAISES DURING THE PANDEMIC

This year’s AFL-CIO Executive Paywatch report details that S&P 500 CEO pay increased, on average, during the pandemic, and that the average CEO-to-worker pay ratio in 2020 was 299-to-1.

The AFL-CIO noted that during a year of unspeakable loss and economic turmoil, where millions of working people lost their jobs through no fault of their own, this year’s report shows an S&P 500 CEO’s pay has increased, on average, by more than \$700,000.

“Working people bore the brunt of COVID-19 and its impact on the U.S. economy,” said AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler during the report’s release. “Last year, the unemployment rate peaked at 14.7% in April, with a record 41 million layoffs in the United States. While many of those jobs have come back, there was a net loss of 9 million jobs in 2020.”

Shuler noted that people are taking note of the power of unions to protect workers during such times. She said, “They see that having a union means health care benefits. Retirement Security. Safety protection. Paid sick leave—in a crisis like the pandemic—and now in record heat waves. Those protections can be life-saving. Every worker should have the right to form a union. And good union jobs must be the rule, not the exception.”

USE M.E.B.A. WEBSITE DUES PAYMENT OPTION TO IRON OUT LWOP/VACATION DUES LAPSES

Some M.E.B.A. bargaining unit members pay dues by automatic Dues Check-Off (DCO). But when DCO members take vacation or (in the case of the Government fleet) Leave without Pay (LWOP), there are lapses in payroll where dues aren’t automatically submitted. Those members can iron out the imbalance from a link on the M.E.B.A. homepage (www.mebaunion.org). Click the link, select the bargaining unit in the “Check Off, Catch-Up” section and make sure you remain a member in good standing.

A “Vacation Pay” option is also available. This is useful for port engineers and Union officials who can make these payments online. Many members and applicants think that paying online is the most efficient and advantageous manner to remain in good standing.

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS *(All times are local)*

Monday, August 2 – Boston@1200; Seattle-Fife@1300;

Tuesday, August 3 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

Wednesday, August 4 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online Headquarters “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No voting)

Thursday, August 5 – L.A.-San Pedro@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

Friday, August 6 – Honolulu@1100

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



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. 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.