

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"

M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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JONES ACT WAIVER PUTS MARITIME CAREERS AT RISK

More than 1,250 newly licensed officers recently graduated from the nation's seven maritime academies, ready to launch careers aboard U.S.-flag vessels after years of demanding education, sea service and Coast Guard licensing. But as the Class of 2026 enters the workforce, the nearly 150-day Jones Act waiver is casting a shadow over their future by reducing opportunities for American mariners and shifting work to foreign vessels and crews.

The American Maritime Partnership (AMP) pointed out that graduating cadets normally look forward to careers aboard vessels in the domestic fleet, which consists of more than 45,000 vessels, including container ships, freighters, tankers, offshore supply vessels, dredges, tugboats and towboats. Others will contribute their skills to U.S. shipbuilding and repair yards, helping design and construct the next generation of American vessels. Additionally, some will serve in uniform, joining the U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, or other branches of the military.

However, AMP President Jennifer Carpenter noted, "without the Jones Act, the vessels these graduates are trained to operate would be replaced by foreign ships crewed by foreign mariners, sending jobs, investment and maritime expertise overseas while weakening America's ability to strengthen its own maritime workforce and sealift capacity."

AMP noted that the 2026 graduating class "is exactly the workforce the Trump Administration has said it wants to grow." She said, "President Trump's 2026 Maritime Action Plan explicitly calls for expanding mariner training and education, investing in state maritime academies, and building the pipeline of American mariners needed for the nation's maritime resurgence. Extending the Jones Act waiver works directly against those stated priorities."

To speak out against the ongoing waiver of the Jones Act, visit [this link](#).

MEMBERS STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO GET ETO ENDORSEMENT

As vessels incorporate alternative fuels, greater automation, sophisticated emissions-control systems, and increasingly complex electrical and networked technologies, the demand for qualified Electro-Technical Officers continues to grow. The M.E.B.A. believes the ETO endorsement will become an essential credential for the next generation of U.S. mariners.

With expanded U.S.-flag opportunities and new vessel construction on the horizon, now is the ideal time to earn your ETO endorsement while it can still be obtained primarily through assessments and related requirements. Waiting could mean additional training or more stringent qualification standards in the future. Starting from scratch requires approximately four months of coursework, so mariners are strongly encouraged to begin the process now and position themselves for the jobs of tomorrow.

Mariners can earn the endorsement easily by completing onboard assessments followed by notification to the Coast Guard. Current options for obtaining the ETO endorsement are described at this link: https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/NMC/pdfs/checklists/mcp_fm_nmc5_216_web.pdf

It is recommended that senior officers (possessing 2nd STCW - first engineer national title) utilize Option 4 which is onboard assessment-based (checkoffs) vs. many months of classes. Option 3 can be utilized for more junior officers (without a management level STCW) which also requires a letter of recommendation from a Chief, Master or company representative along with 360 days of sea time. The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School has made online guidance available to assist the membership in applying for the endorsement. This CMES link has docs & info needed for application: www.mebaschool.org/curriculum/stcw-electro-technical-officer-endorsement

UNIONS POWER AMERICA SWEEPSTAKES RUNS UNTIL AUGUST 19

Union members can enter the “Unions Power America” Sweepstakes for a chance to win various prizes and can earn bonus entries by completing additional activities with Union Plus. The Sweepstakes runs until August 19 and members are vying for \$150,000 in total cash prizes including two grand prizes of \$40,000 along with a 3-5 day hotel stay at a fabulous far-flung vacation spot. The First Prize winner will receive \$20,000 in cash and two Second Prize winners will nab a cool \$5,000. 40 Third Prize winners will come away with a lean and mean \$1,000 each. Winners will be announced on Labor Day, September 7th in which there will be additional live event prizes handed out. You can enter at unionplus.org/unionspoweramerica

Union Plus programs, which are available to M.E.B.A. members, applicants, retirees and our affiliates, provide a vast range of money-saving benefits and services. The M.E.B.A. is enrolled in dozens of moneysaving U.P. programs ranging from life insurance to auto services discounts.

ITF FUND TO AID DISASTER-STRUCK WORKERS IN VENEZUELA

The International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) has launched an emergency relief fund to support transport workers and their unions in Venezuela following devastating June 24 earthquakes. The ITF expressed its deepest solidarity with the Venezuelan people as they face immense loss and hardship in the disaster's aftermath. The powerful earthquake has claimed at least 4,000 lives, injured more than 17,000 people, and left countless communities struggling to recover.

The ITF announced it has created a Venezuela Earthquake Fund to support affected workers through its Venezuelan affiliate, Federación Bolivariana de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras del sector Transporte, Afines y Conexos (the Bolivarian Federation of Transport and Amalgamated Workers).

The humanitarian crisis is deepening by the day, with countries around the world assisting Venezuela through the deployment of rescue personnel, rescue dogs to find trapped victims, and supplies. Edgar Diaz, ITF Regional Secretary for Latin America and the Caribbean, said, “The ITF is ready to do all

it can to ensure that the unity, cooperation and commitment of transport workers and working people across the world will help support their recovery. Every donation – no matter the size – will help transport workers rebuild their lives and their communities.”

If you're able to, you can donate to the ITF Solidarity Fund for Venezuela now by clicking [here](#).

REMINDER ON JOB CALL PROCEDURES

It is the responsibility of members and applicants to have all their necessary documentation in-hand ahead of time for job call. Those who have recently upgraded their license should make sure their STCW reflects the upgrade. Your license, passport and other important documents should be valid for at least six months from the time you begin working aboard ship. Your drug-free certificates have to be valid at least until the day you join your ship. Check your expiration dates!

If flying with your documents on the way to a hall, double-check that you haven't left any essential documents at home and *make sure to keep your docs with you in your carry-on luggage*. The primary documents that you'll need include your Merchant Mariner Credential with current STCW, VSO or VPDSO endorsement, TWIC, Passport, USCG Medical Certificate, Drug-Free Certificate or Drug-free Letter, Group Card, Dues Receipt and proof of vaccination(s). Permanent or relief employees should get their company clearance to the hall ahead of time. Work with the Military Sealift Command will require security clearances.

As you should know, no one can be dispatched to a job while on vacation or while receiving a paid vacation benefit without a waiver. The Union requires a return-to-work date when clearing for a vessel so make sure you have your vacation pay and vacation carry-over statements, shipping discharge and port relief pay voucher for verification of return-to-work. It should also be noted that failure to obtain prior Union permission to return-to-work early, before the return-to-work date as listed on your carry-over or vacation statement, will subject you to a penalty.

Remember, a member or applicant cannot be dispatched for a job requiring STCW credentials if the Coast Guard Medical Certificate is due to expire prior to the completion of the job called. Members are encouraged to have their paperwork for the USCG Medical Certificate completed and to submit it for renewal at every annual physical in order to avoid an issue at job call. Certain jobs require proof of benzene or shot records, MSC courses, GMDSS, High Voltage/Marine Propulsion, Crowd Control, Welding, or other courses to satisfy company requirements.

Mariners are reminded to keep their vaccination records with them when sailing – especially when shipping onboard MSC-contracted vessels. Keep your documents with you at all times when travelling and NEVER leave them in your car. If you have questions about your documents, direct them to your local hall.

IMO AGAIN OUTRAGED OVER LATEST SHIP ATTACKS

International Maritime Organization Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez is once again exasperated and outraged with the situation in the Strait of Hormuz after renewed attacks are putting seafarers at risk in the course of their daily duties.

“I regret that once again I am compelled to speak out following attacks on commercial ships and innocent seafarers, due to geopolitical circumstances beyond their control,” he declared.

He condemned the latest series of “reckless attacks” that are putting innocent seafarers in grave danger.” He said, “no seafarer should have to risk their life simply for doing their job.”

Dominguez urged shipowners, operators and flag states to refrain from sending mariners into the danger zone. 6,000 seafarers remain stranded onboard vessels in the Persian Gulf and the latest attacks add to the intensification of fear, uncertainty and psychological strain mariners are enduring.

He urged de-escalation and the safe passage of trapped vessels out of the Gulf. “The safety of seafarers must remain our foremost priority,” he concluded.

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

Friday, July 10 – Honolulu@1100

Monday, August 3 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.

Tuesday, August 4 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230; Portland, Maine@1200.

Wednesday, August 5 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mebahq@mebaunion.org

Thursday, August 6 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

Friday, August 7 – Honolulu@1100

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***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. Website: www.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. The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School can be contacted at (410) 822-9600 or www.mebaschool.org. M.E.B.A. Plans is at (410) 547-9111 or www.mebaplans.org