

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"
M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES
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MLA UNIONS MEET AT HQ FOR STRATEGY SESSION

Representatives of the five unions that make up the Maritime Labor Alliance met at M.E.B.A. Headquarters on Wednesday to deliberate over a series of issues important to the coalition. The MLA is a cooperation between the ARA, IBU, ILWU, M.E.B.A. and the MM&P that fights to protect MLA member jurisdictions, working conditions and labor rights. M.E.B.A. was represented at the meeting by President Adam Vokac, Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha as well as Government Affairs Director Erick Siahaan.

Prior to their internal meeting, MLA representatives and other maritime industry guests held a meeting at M.E.B.A. HQ with Congressman Robert Garcia (D-CA-42). Rep. Garcia is a newly elected Member of Congress who represents Southeast L.A. and Long Beach including the Port. He formerly served as the Mayor of Long Beach before his Congressional run and is currently a co-Chair of the Congressional Ports Caucus. He had a positive meeting with maritime representatives and demonstrated a strong grasp of supply chain issues. Rep. Garcia expressed his support for the Jones Act and was very receptive in discussions about the Maritime Security Program and cargo generating programs for U.S.-flag shipping.

Following Rep. Garcia's departure, each of the MLA affiliates gave a report, and a multitude of important issues were thoroughly reviewed as the Alliance looks to further improve conditions for working men and women in the maritime industry.

Future opportunities in the emerging offshore wind industry were roundly discussed during the MLA meeting as was the EMBARC program (Every Mariner Builds a Respectful Culture), legislative and organizational issues.

MLA held its annual officer election and unanimously re-elected MM&P's Don Marcus as MLA President and M.E.B.A.'s Roland Rexha as MLA Secretary-Treasurer. The parties pledged to meet again in the near future.

Following the MLA meeting several top leaders of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) including President Paddy Crumlin and ITF Maritime Coordinator Jaqueline Smith, along with other international transportation trade unionists, stopped by M.E.B.A. HQ for a hearty discussion.

M.E.B.A. BRINGS NEW AFFILIATE ONBOARD

The M.E.B.A. has welcomed a new affiliate into the fold, adding another law enforcement agency under the National M.E.B.A. umbrella. M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac formalized an affiliation agreement this week with the Association of Deputy District Attorneys (ADDA). ADDA represents about 650 DDAs in California's Los Angeles County.

The ADDA's mission is to ensure that Deputy District Attorneys have the resources and support they need to carry out their duties effectively and fairly. DDAs are responsible for prosecuting criminal cases in the county's Superior Court. They handle a wide range of cases, including misdemeanors, felonies, and capital crimes. One of the main functions of ADDA is to negotiate with the county government on behalf of DDAs for salaries, benefits, and working conditions. They also provide its members with a range of legal services, including representation in disciplinary matters, collective bargaining, and grievances. Michelle Hanisee serves as President of the union. ADDA is the National M.E.B.A.'s eleventh affiliate.

Other M.E.B.A. affiliates include the Association of Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs (ALADS), the Association of Public Defender Investigators (APDI), the California Association of Professional Employees (CAPE) the Los Angeles County Lifeguard Association (LACoLA), the Municipal Construction Inspectors Association (MCIA), the National Federation of Public and Private Employees (NFOPAPE) and the Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS), the Professional Peace Officers Association (PPOA) and Union de Ingenieros Marinos (UIM), our Panamanian affiliate.

M.E.B.A. Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha met this week with the ADDA Executive Board to welcome them into the M.E.B.A. family. He told them, "My Union is proud to join you as we fight to improve the futures of our memberships and to move forward with you together to strengthen your voice in the theme of Unity and Friendship."

ADDA is the first affiliate to join the National M.E.B.A. since the PPOA and APDI joined forces with the Union in 2019. Welcome aboard!

NEW CHARLESTON REP., EXPANDED HOURS

Many thanks to Brian McNamara who has completed his service as M.E.B.A.'s Charleston hall Representative, a position he held for almost 6 ½ years. Brian was a Calhoon School graduate who sailed with the Union for 30 years. He represented the Union well during his long career and his service to the M.E.B.A. is greatly appreciated.

Taking over for Brian is member Giancarlo Mahalik who was appointed as the new Charleston Representative by the District Executive Committee. Giancarlo, who also responds to "Carlo," is an area resident who shipped out of the Charleston hall with Keystone, OSG & Crowley as an engineer. This last Monday was his first day on the job. He has been part of the Union since his graduation from SUNY Maritime five years ago and he has a twin brother who also sails with the M.E.B.A.

The appointment coincides with the Union’s efforts to expand representation for Charleston area members. The hall will now be open from 10-4 each weekday and will step up the amount of ship visits on the M.E.B.A.-contracted Ready Reserve Force vessels in town and deep-sea ships making port calls. Welcome aboard Giancarlo!

CHUNK OF MATSON FLEET WILL RUN ON LNG

Matson Navigation has now confirmed that it will go ahead on the conversion of another recently built ship to run on liquefied natural gas (LNG).

Last year, the company announced it was moving forward with the main engine retrofit of their containership DANIEL K. INOUYE to dual-fuel LNG. Last week, the company said the INOUYE’s sistership, the KAIMANA HILA (constructed in 2019), would undergo a main engine conversion from a MAN B&W S90ME-C10.5 unit to a dual-fuel ME-GI unit capable of running on LNG. MAN PrimeServ, a division of MAN Energy Solutions, is heading up the conversion.

Matson also plans a future conversion of the Kanaloa-class vessels (LURLINE & MATSONIA) to LNG. The company previously announced it would retrofit the 2003-built container ship MANUKAI to operate on LNG.

Additionally, the company recently signed contracts with Philly Shipyard Inc. to build three new 3,600 TEU Aloha Class LNG-ready containerships for use in their Alaska service. The first vessel is expected to be delivered in the fourth quarter of 2026 with subsequent deliveries in 2027.

MATSON SCHEDULES LNG FUEL CLASSES

As Matson begins to convert vessels to run on liquefied natural gas (LNG), the company has contracted with the U.S. Maritime Resource Center (USMRC) to conduct Basic LNG Marine Fuel (IGF Code) classes at West Coast locations. So far, three have been scheduled – two in California and 1 in Hawaii. The deadline to sign up is April 10.

Dates and locations are as follows:

- April 17-18 – OCC Conference Center, 500 12th Street, Suite 105, Oakland, CA 94607
- April 20-21 – Residence Inn by Marriott, 600 Queensway Drive, Long Beach, CA 90802
- April 24-25 – MSRC, 179 Sand Island Access Road, Honolulu, HI 96819

This is a two-day Basic Marine Fuel Training (IGF Code), USCG approved, in-person class. Matson will provide refreshments and box lunches. Classes run 0800-1700 each day.

Interested members should send an email to registrar@mebaschool.org stating which class they want to attend along with a valid email and phone number for Matson to contact them. Once the list of candidates is established and confirmed, Matson will email the candidates directly with the details and instructions for attending the course. Transportation and housing are NOT included.

The CMES runs an “LNG as a Fuel: Combined Basic & Advanced IGF Code Operations” course and has several more scheduled classes this year. This is a 4-day course with a 12-student maximum.

Remaining course dates on the year include: April 3 - April 6; May 22 - May 25; August 28 - August 31; September 18 - September 21; and December 4 - December 7.

For these classes, applications should be submitted via the CMES website (mebaschool.org), faxed to (410) 822-7220, or emailed to applications@mebaschool.org

JAX HALL RELOCATING

Our Union hall in Jacksonville will be moving to a new space, not too far from the old hall. Dispatcher Liz Pettit anticipates that she will be at her post by the end of next week in the new location which is much larger than the old site with plenty of parking. The new hall, located at 644 Cesery Blvd. (Suite 200) in Jacksonville is near the water and not too far away from the airport. Conveniently, the phone and fax numbers, and of course, the email address, will remain the same.

AG & MARITIME INTERESTS URGE FOOD AID FUNDING

A coalition of agriculture and shipping interests, including the M.E.B.A., is urging Congress to maintain its support for our nation's international food aid programs that are beholden to federal budgeting. Such programs, including P.L. 480 Title II Food for Peace, Food for Progress, and McGovern-Dole International Food for Education, have garnered significant bipartisan backing for over six decades and have aided millions of vulnerable individuals globally. The letter, penned to the Chairs and Ranking Members of both the House and Senate Agriculture Subcommittees (part of each chamber's Appropriations Committees), has been posted on the M.E.B.A. homepage located at www.mebaunion.org. The almost 90 signatories ask that Congress increase the fiscal year 2024 agriculture appropriations funding for these crucial accounts to a minimum of \$2.3 billion. The need for global food assistance remains high due to persistent drought, ongoing conflict, inflationary costs, and other crises worldwide. According to the UN World Food Programme, the number of people facing crisis levels of food insecurity has risen to 349 million due to COVID-19, conflict, and climate-related extreme events, up from 287 million in 2021. Since 2019, USAID has reported a surge in acute food insecurity from 135 million to 345 million.

Food for Peace has proven to be the most successful international food aid program in the world providing transparency and reliability while lending crucial support to vital U.S. agriculture and maritime jobs. However, through the years some opponents have called for reform of the PL-480 program by eliminating the U.S.-flag cargo preference component and transforming it into more of a cash-based system. The drastic reduction of cargoes for U.S.-flag shipping over the past decade alongside the lowering of the food aid cargo preference level from 75% to 50% in 2012 helped facilitate a precipitous reduction in the internationally-trading U.S.-flag fleet as ships continue to flag out from the Stars and Stripes. Subsequent erosion of the mariner pool will continue to complicate the nation's ability to fulfill DOD sealift requirements.

NMC TIPS TO AVOID CREDENTIALS LOST IN THE MAIL

The National Maritime Center (NMC) uses the U.S. Postal Service to mail completed credentials, which does not involve a means of tracking. As such, delivery can take up to 21 days. Sometimes, credentials may be returned or lost forever for a variety of reasons. NMC issues lists some important things you can do to reduce that possibility:

- *Validate your address.* When applying for a credential, make sure the address on your application form is accurate and legible. If you change your address after the application has been submitted,

notify us as soon as possible before your credential is processed and mailed by contacting our Customer Service Center at 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662). Note, after the credential has been processed and mailed, we cannot change the method used for mailing.

- Consider using an [expedited mailing option](#). NMC strongly recommends you use an expedited mailing option. Please note, the cost incurred for [expedited mailing](#) is the responsibility of the mariner.

Think your credential is lost in the mail?

If so, a replacement credential will be issued, free of charge, to mariners whose credentials were lost in the mail prior to receipt through no fault of their own. If this has happened to you, check out [this link](#) for the full notice to allow you to obtain an expedited replacement credential. If you have questions regarding duplicate or replacement credentials, please contact the NMC Customer Service Center via our online chat system or call 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

ITF TARGETS FOUR WORST FLAGS OF CONVENIENCE IN THE MED

Up to a thousand ships flagged to the Cook Islands, Palau, Sierra Leone, and Togo will be targeted for safety, maintenance and seafarer welfare inspections across the Mediterranean Sea in the coming eight weeks by an army of inspectors from the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), seafarers' unions and port authorities. "Substandard shipping in the Mediterranean Sea is driving down seafarers' wages and conditions, it's endangering the lives of crew and risking our environment," said ITF Inspectorate Coordinator Steve Trowsdale. "These flags take money from shipowners to register ships that other countries wouldn't touch. Many are old vessels and are poorly-maintained by their owners. Many of these ships are dangerous and should not be trading," he said. The blitz comes on the heels of new analysis showing the four Flags of Convenience registries together accounted for more than 100 crew abandoned in the last two years, with millions of dollars wages not paid to crew by the flags' shipowners that the ITF then had to recover on seafarers' behalf.

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

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

Tuesday, April 4 – **Jesse Calhoon Day – All Halls Closed**

Wednesday, April 5 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Oakland@1230; Online HQ "Town Hall" Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mebahq@mebaunion.org

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

Friday, April 7 – **Good Friday – All Halls Closed**

Monday, April 10 - 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.*