

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"

M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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T&I RANKING MEMBERS WANT ANSWERS ON JONES ACT WAIVER

Two Members of Congress are pushing back against the Trump administration's controversial Jones Act waiver — even if, with Democrats in the minority, the effort may not produce much more than a strongly worded letter. Ranking Member Rick Larsen of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and Ranking Member Salud Carbajal of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee have demanded answers from President Donald Trump over his administration's decision to waive the Jones Act for 150 consecutive days.

In their letter, the lawmakers said the waiver "represents a direct threat to the American maritime industry" and contradicts the administration's own America's Maritime Action Plan, which calls for greater use of U.S.-flag ships and domestic shipyards. They also questioned whether the administration has exceeded its legal authority, noting that Jones Act waivers are permitted only when they are immediately necessary to support national defense and when no qualified U.S.-flag vessels are available.

Reps. Larsen and Carbajal are seeking documentation showing how each voyage under the waiver supported a specific military operation, what market survey was conducted to determine that U.S.-flag ships were unavailable, and a copy of the waiver itself. Whether the Trump administration responds in any meaningful way remains to be seen.

You can read the full text of the letter [here](#).

"GOVERNMENTS HAVE CHOSEN...TO FAIL SEAFARERS" - ITF SAYS FOC SYSTEM HAS ENABLED HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

The International Transport Workers' Federation is tired of being ignored. For decades, the ITF has warned that the Flag of Convenience system would continue to fuel exploitation, abandonment and humanitarian crises unless governments took action. Now, with more than 20,000 seafarers trapped in and around the Strait of Hormuz amid continuing tensions in the Persian Gulf, the federation and maritime unions worldwide are once again demanding immediate action — not only to protect mariners caught in the current conflict, but to confront the age-old FOC system that made this crisis all but inevitable.

The consequences are stark. In 2025, a record 6,223 seafarers were abandoned worldwide — a 32 percent increase over the previous year and the sixth consecutive annual rise. According to the ITF, the same FOC system has also facilitated shadow fleets, sanctions evasion, and many of the worst abuses seen during the COVID-era crew change crisis.

Meeting at the ITF's Fair Practices Committee, seafarers' and dockers' unions issued a forceful statement declaring that "...the FOC system is the rotten apple at the core of seafarer exploitation...It is the enabling architecture behind the shadow fleet, behind record-breaking abandonment figures and behind the worst abuses of the COVID-19 crew change crisis. And governments have chosen, year after year, crisis after crisis, to fail seafarers."

Since hostilities involving Iran, Israel, and the United States intensified, the ITF has received more than 2,200 requests for assistance from seafarers in the region. Many reports involve unpaid wages, denied contractual benefits, urgent repatriation requests, and vessels running dangerously low on food, water, and fuel. More than 540 mariners have already been repatriated. But union leaders stress that the current emergency is merely the latest symptom of a much older problem.

The ITF is calling for mandatory transparency of vessel ownership, enforcement of the international "genuine link" requirement, investigations into FOC practices, and financial liability for flag states that fail to protect crews under the Maritime Labour Convention of 2006. "The world is watching the Strait of Hormuz," the federation said. "The international community must decide whether it is serious about protecting the workers who keep global trade moving."

RECs ARE UP AND RUNNING

At long last, NMC Regional Examination Centers (RECs) and monitoring units (MUs) - except for REC New Orleans and MU San Juan – have resumed regular operation, including availability to schedule examinations for all mariners. Routine service resumed this week after the Homeland Security funding lapse resulting in a partial shutdown was resolved.

REC New Orleans will remain temporarily closed to walk-in and counter service, but their examination room will reopen for scheduling and conducting mariner examinations. MU San Juan remains closed temporarily but will provide examination services on a limited basis. Mariners are strongly encouraged to monitor the NMC website for updates regarding processing times, REC operations, and policy adjustments as operations stabilize.

For questions or assistance scheduling mariner exams, contact the Customer Service Center via the NMC online chat system, by e-mailing IASKNMC@uscg.mil, or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

DUAL-FUEL VESSEL ORDERS DOMINATE GLOBAL SHIPBUILDING

The World Shipping Council reports that orders for new containerships and vehicle carriers are now overwhelmingly centered on dual-fuel designs, underscoring how rapidly the global liner industry is committing to lower-emission propulsion. According to the latest update to the WSC's Dual-Fuel Fleet Dashboard, a total of 764 dual-fuel container ships and vehicle carriers are currently on order. Dual-fuel vessels account for a commanding 78 percent of all containership orders and an extraordinary 94 percent of vehicle carrier orders, making them the clear standard for nearly all major newbuilds in those sectors.

As of March 2026, 440 dual-fuel container ships and vehicle carriers are already in service, representing a 65 percent increase from a year earlier. Combined with ships on order, the global fleet now includes 1,204 delivered or contracted dual-fuel vessels, backed by more than \$180 billion in private investment.

“These vessels are long-term investments built with flexibility in mind,” said WSC CEO Joe Kramek. “Ships built today will operate for decades, and the ability to operate on different fuel pathways helps reduce risk, strengthen energy security, and support more resilient global supply chains.” You can check out the dashboard at www.worldshipping.org/dual-fuel-fleet-dashboard

HAPPY MARITIME DAY ON FRIDAY!

National Maritime Day will officially be observed on Friday, May 22. It was first designated by Congress in 1933 to commemorate the May 22, 1819 Atlantic crossing of the S.S. SAVANNAH that sailed from Savannah, GA to Liverpool, England, using steam propulsion. The occasion is set aside as a time to reflect on America's maritime heritage and to honor mariners who have defended our Nation's freedom.

The National Maritime Day observance in Washington DC will take place tomorrow at D.C.'s Department of Transportation Headquarters at 1000 and will feature remarks from DOT Secretary Sean Duffy and Maritime Administrator Steven Carmel, among others. In addition, as noted in last week's newsletter, M.E.B.A.'s Captain Darin Huggins, Chief Engineer Christian Yuhus, and Captain Dru DiMattia will be awarded with the Merchant Marine Medal for Outstanding Achievement — one of the highest honors awarded by MarAd to civilian mariners and maritime professionals. The award recognizes individuals who have made extraordinarily valuable contributions to the maritime industry, including humanitarian service, leadership, and long-term dedication to advancing the U.S. Merchant Marine. Three other recipients will be honored including Dennis Kelly, Capt. Chris Edyvean, and the late John Pitts, who will be recognized posthumously.

YOU MAY BE AN APPLICANT IF...; APPLICANTS NEED TO SUBMIT DOCUMENTATION TO MAKE MEMBERSHIP

If your Book Number begins with “AB” and not “MC” you are an Applicant. In addition, your Group Card may describe you as a “Member” or “Applicant.” Qualified applicants trying to make membership should make sure they provide Headquarters with the required documentation to ensure their inclusion on the next District Investigating Committee (DIC) report. The DIC meets twice a year to review applicants for membership and will meet in late May shortly before the release of their June report. To make membership, an applicant needs the required sailing days or specified years of employment with a particular bargaining unit, must be current with service charges and must complete other necessary requirements which may include an initiation fee and/or letters of recommendation.

Applicants should know that they are responsible for providing their local Union hall/Headquarters with the documentation demonstrating their fulfillment of the application requirements. Once they submit the requisite amount of sea time (or documented years of service) to Headquarters and have otherwise fulfilled the needed requirements as stated in the application packet they signed, they may be eligible for membership.

The DEC will meet before the regular June meetings and review candidates for membership at that time. Applicants who have fulfilled the necessary requirements need to get their information into

Headquarters so they can be listed as applicants recommended for membership in the next DIC Report. The DIC will then put their report before the membership for a vote at the regular meetings taking place from June 8-12. If the report is passed, listed applicants will be accepted into membership.

M.E.B.A. Headquarters does not, and cannot, update an Applicant's record with sailing time/years of service *unless* that Applicant submits the required paperwork, i.e. discharges, sea service letters, documentation of employment, to HQ, by e-mail, fax, or mail or via your local Union hall. For further information you can visit your local Union hall or contact the HQ Membership Department at (202) 638-5355 or membership@mebaunion.org.

M.E.B.A. HALLS & OFFICES CLOSED MONDAY FOR MEMORIAL DAY

All M.E.B.A. halls and offices will be closed on Monday, May 25th for Memorial Day. The National Moment of Remembrance, established by Congress, asks Americans wherever they are on Memorial Day at 3 p.m. local time to pause for a minute of silence in an act of national unity and reflection. You could also fly the American flag at half-staff until noon, fly the POW/MIA flag (and/or Merchant Marine flag), and perhaps ring a bell eight times to signify the moment. Members of the American Merchant Marine Veterans, Inc. (AMMV) and U.S. Merchant Marine veterans from World War II will honor their shipmates and family members who were killed in action or lost at sea by attending events at Arlington (VA) National Cemetery beginning at 10:45 AM EST, including laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and participating in the National Memorial Day Parade on Connecticut Avenue in Washington, DC that starts at 10:00 AM EST.

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

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

Tuesday, June 9 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230; Portland, Maine@1200.**

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

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

Friday, June 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. 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