MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"

M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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MEMBERS RATIFY 8-YEAR, 19-SHIP MLL CONTRACTS

Members at the regular November meeting have ratified recently re-negotiated contracts covering 19 vessels with Maersk Line Ltd., M-Ships and E-Ships.

Earlier versions of the agreements failed to win ratification at Union halls during the September membership meetings, but negotiators went back to the bargaining table and hammered out an improved eight-year contract that met membership approval.

The contracts secure wage and benefit increases, improvements in OT rates, Holidays, Vacation Days and MPB increases, among other agreement terms. Contract provisions were made retroactive to November 1, 2025.

Atlantic Coast V.P. Jason Callahan headed up negotiations that M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac successfully brought over the finish line, following the initial downvote. Valuable contributions were delivered by Headquarters Contracts Officer Mark Gallagher and input was delivered by bargaining unit members and rank-and-file participating in negotiations including Dan Brown, Dan Davis, Todd Bilodeau, Kevin Bennett, Jeremiah Taylor and James Meyers.

The agreements are available for review by members and applicants in good standing at the M.E.B.A. Union halls.

GUIDANCE FOR MSC CIVMARs ON TRAVEL VOUCHERS

The M.E.B.A. has been notified that the Navy recently directed the Military Sealift Command to purge more than 2,000 old, unsubmitted travel vouchers from its system, resulting in a wave of audit-related "debt" notices being sent to both active and retired Civilian Mariners (CIVMARS). To prevent future inconvenience, all MSC mariners are reminded to submit travel vouchers promptly after travel, verify that claims are received and accepted by the Travel Department, and most importantly, check out with Travel before retiring or when resigning from government employment to ensure no pending or incomplete claims remain.

Retaining copies of your travel orders, vouchers, and receipts for at least six years is also strongly advised. These steps can help avoid being caught up in future audit actions or erroneous debt claims. Anyone with questions or concerns should contact M.E.B.A. Government Fleet Representative Craig Moran at the M.E.B.A. Norfolk Union hall for assistance.

GLOBAL DOCKWORKER ALLIANCE TO FIGHT JOB-KILLING AUTOMATION

In a show of international labor power, dockworkers from across the globe came together last week in Portugal to declare war on job-killing automation at ports. The historic "Anti-Automation Conference: People Over Profits" culminated in the signing of the Lisbon Summit Resolution, creating the Global Maritime Alliance — a united front to protect maritime jobs from the machines.

The Alliance takes its cue from the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), which last year scored a landmark six-year Master Contract at U.S. Atlantic and Gulf Coast ports, locking out automation and safeguarding thousands of jobs. ILA President Harold Daggett co-hosted the summit with the International Dockworkers Council (IDC).

The two-day Lisbon Summit, attended by a thousand union dockworker and other maritime leaders, including M.E.B.A. Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha, unanimously passed the Lisbon Summit Resolution. Their inclusion in this historic labor solidarity agreement will be fortified by scores of other global dockworker and maritime unions who intend to join the Global Maritime Alliance.

"Sisters and Brothers, I am fully confident we have the power and the resources to fight automation on a global scale," Daggett noted. "We must move forward with courage and determination."

"If sacrifices are required to block automation, we must be willing to make them. If enduring hardships are needed to achieve our goal of no automation on the waterfront, we must be willing to endure them, President Daggett said. "Remember, these will be selective job actions against the companies that defy us…Our voices shout out: NO TO AUTOMATION! We must be strong, we must be united, and we must be committed to take on this challenge together and never surrender. NEVER SURRENDER!"

HOUTHIS ANNOUNCE HALT TO RED SEA ATTACKS

Yemen's Houthi movement has declared a halt to its maritime operations against Israel and lifted its naval blockade of Israeli ports — a major development for Red Sea shipping security.

The announcement came in a letter from Houthi chief of staff, Yousef Hassan al-Madani signaling that attacks on vessels previously targeted for links to Israeli ports have now stopped. However, the letter noted that the group was "closely monitoring developments" and would resume strikes "deep inside the Zionist entity" and reinstate a blockade on Israeli-linked vessels if fighting in Gaza resumes.

The Houthis rose to international attention during the Israel-Hamas war with missile and drone attacks that they claimed were meant to pressure Israel to stop fighting. Their campaign, which began in late 2023, killed at least nine seafarers, sank four ships, and forced global shipping lines to reroute around Africa. The attacks also hammered Egypt's Suez Canal revenue, cutting an estimated $6 billion in foreign exchange earnings in 2024. While vessel traffic has begun to recover, many carriers still avoid the Red Sea.

MIXED REACTIONS TO SUSPENSION OF CHINESE PORT FEES

An abbreviated public comment period on the administration's decision to suspend port fees on Chinese vessels has produced varied reactions from the industry. As previously reported, as part of an agreement reached during recent trade talks, the U.S. and China suspended reciprocal port fees on each other's vessels for a year. The fees — that began being implemented last month amid U.S. efforts to counter China's shipbuilding dominance — had complicated global shipping and increased freight costs.

The U.S. Trade Representative's unusually short public comment period garnered a flurry of varied comments from stakeholders on the suspension.

The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) noted their relief that the fees were suspended saying the pause would allow the industry to continue delivering the cargo and passengers that power the American economy. "We urge the Trump Administration to continue negotiations to ensure that these policies are not reimposed in one year," the AAPA said in their comments. AAPA said the Administration's combination of tariffs and port taxes would mean that "ports have fewer resources available to purchase more expensive equipment. This is far from a prescription for American maritime industry revitalization. Instead, the forecast for future port development is shaping up to be a long, cold winter. With rising costs and shrinking capital resources, ports will likely pause or contract capital improvement plans and wait for better economic conditions."

The Transportation Institute (TI) supported the one-year suspension but remains concerned about China's dominant position in global shipbuilding and its retaliatory fees on U.S.-flagged vessels. TI urged continued U.S. engagement to eliminate China's unfair practices and looks forward to the Administration's forthcoming Maritime Action Plan to strengthen America's maritime industry and national security.

However, the United Steelworkers, IAM, IBEW, and Boilermakers unions strongly criticized the decision to suspend the Section 301 actions calling it a setback for U.S. workers and shipyards. They argue the one-year pause gives China a "free pass" for its predatory practices, undermines early progress in rebuilding America's maritime capacity, and risks shifting new commercial ship orders back to Chinese yards. The unions warned that delaying these measures weakens investor confidence, jeopardizes job creation, and threatens funding for initiatives like the proposed Maritime Security Trust Fund. They urged the USTR to reinstate the Section 301 remedies, maintain momentum toward restoring U.S. maritime strength, and directly engage with shipyards, labor, and suppliers to counter China's dominance and rebuild the American maritime industrial base.

RESUMPTION OF SERVICES AT RECs

Funding for the Federal Government has been restored, and the National Maritime Center (NMC) and Regional Examination Centers (RECs) are in the process of resuming services to mariners. Full resumption of services at the RECs will be phased in to allow prioritization of their most critical services and to accommodate mariners most impacted by the furlough.

E-mail submission of applications and supporting documentation remains active. Walk-in and scheduled counter service at the RECs will remain suspended through November 21, 2025, to allow

REC employees to prioritize the backlog in screening applications and scheduling mariner examinations.

To prioritize mariners whose examinations were canceled during the furlough, the RECs will focus on rescheduling these examinations during the first 5 business days. The earliest available date for these mariners to start testing at most RECs will be November 18, 2025. Mariners whose examinations were canceled during the furlough will be contacted by the REC to re-schedule new examination dates.

Starting November 24, 2025, RECs are expected to return to routine operations, including availability to schedule exams for all mariners. Because of existing staffing shortages, some RECs may continue to have limited services.

For updates on NMC and REC operating statuses, please monitor the NMC website. For questions, contact their Customer Service Center via the NMC online chat system, by e-mailing IASKNMC@uscg.mil, or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662).

NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE SHINES A SPOTLIGHT ON MARINERS

The *New York Times* recently put America's seagoing professionals front and center in an in-depth feature titled *"Mariners Wanted: Six-Figure Salaries and Months at Sea."* Reporter Peter Eavis visited the Calhoon M.E.B.A. Engineering School in September and interviewed several M.E.B.A. members about life and work at sea.

The article highlights the growing national focus on rebuilding the U.S. merchant fleet and the need for more qualified American officers and engineers. M.E.B.A. Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha was quoted in the article noting the scale of manpower needed if Congress moves ahead with plans to expand U.S.-flag shipping. He said the fleet would require thousands more American crewmembers. He noted that many shipping companies have continued to make improvements on quality of life-at-sea issues to entice and retain mariners. However, Rex stressed that one of the biggest carrots is a mariner's pocketbook – "they have to address wages," he said.

Eavis captures both the rewards and the grind of the profession. Mariners can earn six-figure salaries and enjoy extended paid leave — but the long hitches, isolation, and fatigue can take their toll. In the article, veteran M.E.B.A. Chief Engineer Nathan Weymouth said that too often, "You get off the ship, and you're so burned out." Still, Weymouth said he remains optimistic, crediting the M.E.B.A. for "holding companies accountable and advocating for improved wages."

You can check out the article ***here***.

APPLICANTS LOOKING FOR MEMBER STATUS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FULFILLING REQUIREMENTS

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. 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, mail or via your local Union hall.

Qualified applicants trying to make membership should provide Headquarters with required documentation to ensure their inclusion on the next M.E.B.A. District Investigating Committee (DIC) report. The report, which will be voted on at the December membership meetings, compiles a list of those who have fulfilled the requirements of their application. 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 that may include an initiation fee and/or letters of recommendation.

The M.E.B.A. Membership Department can be contacted by applicants who are qualified to make membership and want to ensure their inclusion on the DIC's December Report. For further information, you can visit your local Union hall or contact the HQ Membership Department at (202) 638-5355 or membership@mebaunion.org.

NEXT MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS *(All times are local)*
Monday, December 8 – **Boston**@1200. **Seattle (Fife)**@1300.
Tuesday, December 9 – **CMES**@1430; **Charleston**@1400; **Houston**@1315; **Oakland**@1230.
Wednesday, December 10 – **Jacksonville**@1300; **New Orleans**@1315; **Online HQ "Town Hall" Meeting@**1300 **(No Voting) – Register by emailing** mebahq@mebaunion.org
Thursday, December 11 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@**1230; **NY/NJ@**1300; **Norfolk@**1300; **Tampa@**1300.
Friday, December 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 Calhoon 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