APA HOSTS SENIOR NOAA OFFICIALS

On 24 May, APA hosted senior officials from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at the APA offices. NOAA was represented by Mr. Glenn Boledovich, Policy Director and Chief of Policy and Constituent Affairs, National Ocean Service (NOS); Mr. Richard Edwing, Director, Center for Operational Products and Services (COOPS); Mr. Darren Wright, Maritime Services Program Manager (under COOPS), and Ms. Rachel Medley, Chief, Customer Affairs Branch, Office of Coast Survey.

Participating for the APA were Captain Peter McIsaac, President; Mr. Paul Kirchner, Executive Director-General Counsel; Mr. Clay Diamond, Deputy Director-Associate General Counsel; and Mr. Bill Cairns, Navigation Technology Advisor.

The agenda for the meeting was quite broad. Among the topics discussed were NOAA projects and services that are of particular importance to pilots, including NOAA’s “Next Generation Navigation Project,” high resolution charts and Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System or PORTS®.

While providing an update on PORTS®, NOAA identified port areas that will be getting new or enhanced PORTS® sensors. These areas included Cape Cod, Savannah, Matagorda Bay, and Port Everglades. NOAA officials also discussed some of the technical delays associated with their project to integrate PORTS® data with other operational data disseminated by the Coast Guard’s nationwide AIS.

The NOAA officials briefly addressed recent leadership changes at NOS, and also gave an update on NOAA’s budget prospects for next year.

Captain McIsaac and the APA staff updated the NOAA representatives on some of the APA priorities, including the ongoing work related to e-Navigation (both domestically and internationally) and the developments relating to so-called “virtual aids to navigation.” In addition, APA discussed the latest on how NOAA products are being integrated into PPUs throughout the country.

One other technical issue was briefly discussed. The FCC is proposing the reallocation of some radio frequency spectrum that could impact the downlink of PORTS® information from the NOAA GOES satellite systems. The APA submitted comments to the FCC on the issue urging the protection of this band for GOES.

Finally, considering that the current Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between NOAA and the APA is set to expire in fall 2017, discussions began about a timetable and plan to work towards renewing the MOA.
MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE HOLDS 96th SESSION

The 96th Session of IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 96) was held from May 11-20 at IMO Headquarters in London. Captain Peter McIsaac, APA President, was appointed as a member of the U.S. Delegation. During this session, MSC approved amendments to SOLAS regulations that extend requirements for maintenance, examination, and repair of lifeboats/rescue boats, launching appliances and release gear; and that enhance watertight door standards.

The Committee also approved amendments to the STCW Code to extend emergency training requirements to personnel on passenger ships, and discussed various issues relating to cyber security. In addition, MSC recognized the Galileo Global Navigation Satellite System as a component of the World Wide Radionavigation System.

McISAAC ATTENDS INTERNATIONAL PILOTS’ EXECUTIVE MEETING

The Executive Committee of the International Maritime Pilots’ Association (IMPA) met aboard the HMS Wellington on May 9-10. This meeting, presided over by IMPA President Captain Simon Pelletier, included a meeting of the IMPA Advisory Group of which APA President Captain Peter McIsaac is a member.

Captain McIsaac participated in two committees of IMPA’s Advisory Group, the Safety Committee and Navigation Technology Committee.

IMO TO OBSERVE ANNUAL DAY HONORING SEAFARERS

Each year, June 25 is celebrated globally as the “Day of the Seafarer.” This year, IMO’s Day of the Seafarer campaign aims to let the world know how and why seafarers are indispensable to everyone. The campaign tagline is: "At Sea For All." The hashtag #AtSeaForAll has been created for seafarers, shore staff and the general public to use to signal their awareness of the importance of seafarers. All are encouraged to use that hashtag across social media.

In 2010, the Diplomatic Conference that met in Manila to adopt revisions to the STCW Convention, also agreed that the unique contribution made by seafarers should be marked annually. June 25, the day the STCW amendments were formally adopted, was chosen as the appropriate day to honor seafarers.

The IMO has prepared a Day of the Seafarer 2016 “toolkit” that provides details on how mariners can get involved with the campaign. The toolkit is available at:


SOUTH KOREA CHANGES COURSE ON NEED FOR GPS BACK-UP

The Republic of Korea (South Korea) has resurrected a project to build an eLORAN system as a terrestrial backup to GPS following numerous recent GPS signal jamming incidents that it has blamed on North Korea. The South Korean government stated that these incidents have had significant negative effects on maritime operations and navigation safety.

These are the incidents to which the U.S. Coast Guard referred in Safety Alert 01-16 (see www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg545/alerts/0116.pdf). The Alert noted "multiple outbound vessels from a non-U.S. port suddenly lost GPS signal reception."

The United Kingdom and Ireland, until recently, had been doing extensive work on eLORAN for a GPS backup system in Europe. This work has since been suspended, however, due to a lack of funding.

In South Korea, the government plans to establish eLORAN transmitters along the coast by late 2019. Because of its lower frequency and higher power, eLORAN is less susceptible to jamming than GPS and other satellite-based navigation systems.
SENATE AND HOUSE HOLD HEARINGS ON STATE OF U.S. MARITIME INDUSTRY

In March and April, both chambers of the U.S. Congress held hearings focused squarely on the U.S. maritime industry and on federal transportation safety and marine environmental protection programs. APA staff attended these Congressional proceedings.

On March 8, the Senate Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety and Security Subcommittee held the first of two hearings examining the current state of the U.S. maritime industry. This first hearing, which focused on “the Federal Role,” delved into U.S. agencies’ maritime policy, regulation and oversight programs. The following agencies provided witnesses to the hearing: U.S. Maritime Administration, Federal Maritime Commission, and the U.S. Coast Guard. A representative from the Department of Transportation also appeared before this Senate subcommittee.

The second of the Senate maritime hearings occurred on April 20. This hearing was from the “Stakeholder Perspective,” and sought the views of ports, shippers, carriers and maritime labor. Witnesses for this hearing included a port director, an operations manager for a produce company, a tug company executive, as well as the Chief of Staff for the International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots, Mr. Klaus Luhta. These witnesses discussed current trends, opportunities and challenges facing the maritime transportation system, as well as thoughts on how federal programs could be improved to support and enhance marine operations.

The House of Representatives was not going to be left out of efforts to shine a spotlight on the maritime industry. The House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation (CG&MT) held its hearing on April 14 and received testimony on a variety of maritime transportation safety and marine environmental protection programs implemented and enforced by the Coast Guard.

The government witnesses for this hearing included Coast Guard Rear Admiral Paul Thomas, Deputy Commandant for Prevention Policy, and an official from the Transportation Research Board. At this hearing, CG&MT also heard from representatives of the “brown water” fleet, the World Shipping Council, the National Association of Waterfront Employers and the International Cruise Victims Association.

The APA will continue to watch, and participate in as necessary, these types of hearings in the future.

NATIONAL MARITIME DAY PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION

On May 20, the President signed a Proclamation designating May 22 as “National Maritime Day 2016.” Portions of the Proclamation read as follows:

NATIONAL MARITIME DAY PROCLAMATION

Since America’s founding, proud mariners have selflessly dedicated themselves to protecting and advancing our interests -- here at home and around the world. The patriots of the United States Merchant Marine have long served as our Nation’s “fourth arm of defense,” safeguarding the ideals that have guided our country for more than two centuries. They facilitate the transport and trade of American goods, and they put their lives on the line in times of war. On National Maritime Day, we honor our Merchant Mariners and celebrate their irreplaceable role in shaping our Nation’s narrative.

Whether in still or raging waters, Merchant Mariners are fundamental to guaranteeing the delivery of essential goods to far-reaching corners of our globe. These seafarers have bravely faced threats at home and abroad -- including combatants and pirates, disease outbreaks and natural disasters -- and they consistently heed the call to serve their fellow Americans. In World War II, their ships carried troops and much-needed support to the battlefield, thousands making the ultimate sacrifice. They were among the first to see battle, and many were among the last to return home to our shores.

Carrying forward a legacy that spans generations, the United States Merchant Marine is vital to our Nation’s economic security as well. Their transportation of vital cargo has impacts far beyond America’s borders, generating trillions of dollars of economic activity each year. And when our entrepreneurs decide to embark on new ventures across oceans, mariners stand by and protect their pursuit of the American dream through tireless work to cultivate safe and open waterways. On this day, and every day, let us express our sincere gratitude to these courageous men and women for all they do for our Nation, and let us reaffirm our commitment to support them as they continue to uphold their proud tradition of service.

The Congress, by a joint resolution approved May 20, 1933, has designated May 22 of each year as “National Maritime Day,” and has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation calling for its appropriate observance.

I call upon the people of the United States to mark this observance and to display the flag of the United States at their homes and in their communities. I also request that all ships sailing under the American flag dress ship on this day.
IALA HOLDS WORKSHOP ON COMPONENTS OF IMO’S E-NAV PROJECT

The International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA), in association with the Portuguese Navy Lighthouse Directorate, recently held a workshop, titled, “Shore-based Maritime Services from Theory to Practical Use” in Lisbon, Portugal. The workshop was conducted from May 24-26.

“Maritime Service Portfolios” or MSPs are an IMO e-Navigation concept and could be described as high-level descriptions of information services to be provided to ships. The intent of the workshop was to develop guidance on the implementation of the shore-based MSP to give industry, providers of information, and navigators a common product specification (language) for exchange and understanding of information, as well as an understanding of the importance of displaying information for their maritime application in a common and specific data format.

Captain Simon Pelletier, President of the International Maritime Pilots’ Association, presented on “The Use of Electronic Information for Pilotage.” Captain Pelletier’s presentation focused on how Maritime Service Portfolios in particular, and eNavigation in general, relate to pilotage.

RTCM HOLDS ANNUAL ASSEMBLY MEETING: ELECTS NEW PRESIDENT

The Radio Technical Commission for Maritime Services (RTCM) held its Annual Assembly Meeting and Conference in Clearwater Beach, Florida from 15-20 May 2016. The program included discussions on cybersecurity in navigation and communications, eNavigation developments and systems, distress technologies, satellite services, GMDSS modernization, and various RTCM Special Committee meetings (eLoran, radar, eNav, beacons, portrayal, AIS).

This meeting also marked the retirement of long time RTCM President Bob Markle and the election of his successor, Ms. Kate Duffy. Ms. Duffy is an electrical engineer with USAF experience.

Mr. Bill Cairns, APA Navigation Technology Advisor, serves as the Chairman of RTCM’s eNavigation Steering Committee.

IN MEMORIUM

CAPTAIN TIMOTHY BROWN

Captain Timothy A. Brown, 73, who led the Masters, Mates & Pilots as International President for 21 years before retiring at the the start of 2013, passed away on Sunday, April 10th.

Generous, thoughtful and open-hearted, Captain Brown was also a fierce defender of the working conditions of MM&P members and an adroit negotiator on their behalf.

“Captain Brown spent his professional life working on behalf of all mariners, including pilots,” said Captain Peter McIsaac, President of the American Pilots’ Association. McIsaac continued, “I know I speak for all APA-member pilots when I say we owe a great deal to Captain Brown and we will miss him dearly.”

Brown joined Masters, Mates & Pilots in August of 1965 and served in the American Merchant Marine during the Vietnam War. His first MM&P vessel was the SS Fruitvale Hills. He sailed as deck cadet on the SS Del Oro for Delta Steamship Lines. He first sailed as master aboard the Sealand Consumer for Sealand Service Inc. in 1983. His last command as master was aboard the same vessel in 1991.

Captain Brown was first elected MM&P President in 1991. After six terms at the helm, he left a legacy of stability, integrity and pride to the membership of the Masters, Mates & Pilots.

Among his many awards for service to the industry are the Admiral of the Ocean Seas (AOTOS) Award in 2002, the Seafarers’ and International House “Outstanding Friend of Seafarers” Award in 2004 and the Father Lalonde “Spirit of the Seas” Award by the Council of American Master Mariners in 2012. In 2009, he was admitted to the Port of New York and New Jersey’s International Maritime Hall of Fame.

He retired as MM&P President on January 1, 2013. In June of that year, he was named a Commodore of the U.S. Maritime Service by order of the President of the United States.

Brown was named President Emeritus of Masters, Mates & Pilots by Delegates to the Eighty-fourth MM&P Convention.
COAST GUARD GIVES
MERCHANT MARINER CREDENTIAL
A FACELIFT

Captain Jeff Novotny, Commanding Officer of the National Maritime Center, announced that the NMC has been working with the Government Printing Office to refresh and enhance the ruggedness of the Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) booklet.

The new design is complete, and the supply of the current MMCs is being depleted. The NMC began issuing the updated MMC when the supply of current booklets was exhausted, which was late March 2016.

The new MMCs feature an improved layout with graphic images of historic lighthouses, the Eads Bridge, the Merchant Marine Emblem, and a first-order Fresnel lens. Additionally, the cover of the MMC has been stiffened for greater durability in the shipboard and marine environment. See the sample pages below:

All currently active credentials will remain valid until their printed expiration dates. There will be no change to endorsement labels that are issued as a result of an application for a raise of grade or increase in scope of a valid MMC.

Check the NMC website periodically for updated information. If you have questions or feedback regarding the new MMC, please contact the NMC by using their Online Chat or Ticketing system, by e-mail at IASKNMC@uscg.mil, or by calling 1-888-IASKNMC (1-888-427-5662).

NATIONAL MARITIME CENTER TO GET NEW COMMANDING OFFICER

The Coast Guard announced in May that Captain Kirsten Martin, currently a special assistant to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation, will relieve Captain Jeff Novotny as Commanding Officer of the NMC. The Change of Command ceremony will be held in Martinsburg, WV on Friday, July 1.

NAVSAC CONVENES IN VIRGINIA

The Navigation Safety Advisory Council (NAVSAC) met in Arlington, Virginia on May 4-5.

Pilots continue to be well represented on NAVSAC. The council is chaired by Captain Carolyn Kurtz (Tampa Bay Pilots). In addition, the following are among the other two dozen NAVSAC members: Captain Robert Reese (St. Lawrence Seaway Pilots), Captain Sam Stephenson (Port Everglades Pilots), Captain Mike Morris (Houston Pilots), Captain Douglas Grubbs (Crescent River Pilots, retired), and Clay Diamond (APA Deputy Director-Associate General Counsel).

At this meeting, NAVSAC received a briefing from the Coast Guard and NOAA on their “Future of Navigation Strategy.” In addition, the Council continued work on the following: (1) Discussion of the numerous issues related to “unmanned maritime systems”; (2) Input on USCG’s public notification procedures for the discontinuance of aids to navigation; and (3) Updating guidance on the carriage of electronic chart systems in lieu of paper charts.

HSRP MEETS IN GALVESTON

Captain Sherri Hickman, Houston Pilots, participated as a panelist at the March 15 meeting of NOAA’s Hydrographic Services Review Panel (HSRP) in Galveston, Texas.

At the meeting, HSRP examined how mariners use NOAA's navigational, positioning, and coastal data, as well as explored the "next generation" navigation service solutions. Captain Hickman also gave a report on PORTS®, AIS and other related navigation safety matters on the Houston Ship Channel.
GREAT LAKES PILOT Elected PRESIDENT OF VETERAN’S GROUP

Captain Christopher Edyvean, Western Great Lakes Pilots Association (WGLPA), was recently elected National President of the American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV). AMMV, which was founded in 1984, is a “not-for-profit pro-American organization established to gain recognition for what the men and women of the American Merchant Marine have accomplished for our country in war and peace.”

The key purpose of the organization is to “educate the American public as to the importance of having a strong U.S. Merchant Marine at all times and to promote American Sea Power and American mariners.”

Captain Edyvean, who became a member of the WGLPA in 2014, began his maritime career in 1992 after graduating from the Seafarer’s Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship at Piney Point, MD. He continued to sail in both the Great Lakes and Deep Sea divisions of the Seafarers International Union until 2005. During this time frame, Edyvean worked on several military-contracted vessels in both peacetime and conflict; he received the Merchant Marine Expeditionary Award for sailing in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

From 2006 until mid-2014, Edyvean worked as a licensed Deck Officer for Grand River Navigation on Great Lakes freighters and became a member of the International Organization of Masters, Mates, and Pilots. He quickly ascended the licensed ranks and served the last three of these years as Unlimited Tonnage Master on the Great Lakes.

For more information on AMMV, see: https://ammv.us/

CAPTAIN TAYLOR SPEAKS AT UNIVERSITY FORUM

Houston Pilot Captain Kristi Taylor was one of a small number of Houston women from business, industry, and government invited as panelists for the 19th Annual “Table Talk” presented on March 24 by the University of Houston Friends of Women’s Studies.

Later that day, Captain Taylor was the guest speaker at a meeting of the Texas Boaters Association. She was accompanied by another Houston Pilot, Captain Holly Cooper.

ELECTIONS, SELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS, ETC.

The following pilots’ associations announced new officers:

- Bay and River Delaware Pilots: Captain Ward Guilday (President), Captain Jack Hanley (Secretary-Treasurer), Captain Bill Lowe (Director - Delaware), Captain David Cuff (Director - Delaware), Captain John Kemmerley (Director - Pennsylvania), and Captain Drew Hodgens (Director - Pennsylvania).
- Mobile Bar Pilots: Captain J. Christopher Brock (President), Captain Scott M. Driscoll (Vice President), Captain Kirk M. Barrett (Secretary-Treasurer), Captain Peter Burns (Boat Captain), and Captain W. Curtis Wilson (Director).
- Northeast Marine Pilots: Captain Sean Bogus (President), Captain Richard Astles (Vice President), Captain Clinton Walker (Secretary), Captain E. Howard McVay (Co-Treasurer), and Captain Vincent Kirby (Co-Treasurer).
- Virginia Pilots: Captain J. William Cofer (President), Captain Whiting Chisman (Vice President), Captain E. Waightstill Avery (Treasurer), Captain Jacob Johnson (Director), Captain Frank Rabena (Director), and Captain David Ware (Director).
- Galveston Texas City Pilots: Captain Wally Hogan (Presiding Officer), Captain Clinton Schuessler (Senior Vice President), Captain Chris Henry (Vice President), Captain David Dion (Boat Keeper), and Captain Wendy Morrison (Secretary).
- Associated Branch Pilots: Captain Michael T.D. Miller (President), Captain Kevin P. Levine (Vice President), Captain Jeffrey R. Robichaux (Secretary), Captain Charles B. DeMetz (Director), and Captain Stephen B. Mott (Director).