CANADIAN AND AMERICAN PILOTS’ Associations FORM JOINT NAVIGATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

The Canadian Marine Pilots’ Association (CMPA) and American Pilots’ Association (APA) have agreed to form a joint navigation technology committee (CANAM NAVTECH). CMPA President Captain Simon Pelletier and APA President Mike Watson authorized the committee earlier this year, and the committee was officially formed in July. The committee is co-chaired by Captain Kevin Vail (Chair of CMPA’s Technical Committee) and Captain Jorge Viso (Chair of APA’s NAVTECH).

American and Canadian pilots have long had their own navigation technology committees, and information was routinely shared between the APA and CMPA. The formal establishment of the CANAM NAVTECH, however, will enhance the professional discussions and dissemination of information, both internally and externally, relating to emerging and existing navigation technologies.

In heralding the formation of this joint effort, Captain Pelletier said, “It is important to the continual improvement of the piloting profession and the ongoing safety of our waters that pilots in our two countries work closely together and share experiences. The CANAM NAVTECH is the latest example of this positive and effective collaboration.” Captain Watson added, “In light of the fact that there are some organizations at home and abroad, comprised of members with no experience in piloting or navigation, attempting to dictate how pilotage should be conducted, it is especially important that real experts are brought together to discuss pilotage and trends and developments in navigation technology.”

More information on the CANAM NAVTECH will be provided at the APA’s Biennial Convention during the week of October 15.

PILOTS PLAY KEY ROLE AT JOINT SAFETY / SECURITY CONFERENCE

The 2012 Joint Conference of Harbor Safety and Area Maritime Security Committees was held in Pittsburgh on August 28-30. The conference theme was port infrastructure, but a number of navigation safety and maritime training topics of interest to pilots were also discussed. A diverse group of local, state and federal maritime stakeholders attended, but pilots were prominent in the planning and substance of the event. The Sandy Hook Pilots and the Tampa Bay Pilots were both primary sponsors of the conference, and a number of pilots from around the country also attended and were active participants. The pilot groups in attendance represented six states. See page 5 for more from the Pittsburgh joint conference.

Captain Andrew McGovern (N.J. Sandy Hook Pilots) was a key member of the conference Planning Committee, and also moderated a panel discussion on maritime training. During this session, Mr. Ike Eisentrout, Deputy Director of the Coast Guard’s National Maritime Center (NMC), discussed credentialing and medical review programs. During Mr. Eisentrout’s presentation, he recognized the APA for its outstanding efforts in working with the NMC on improving its mariner services. In discussions of e-Navigation and AIS, USCG officials praised the contributions of pilots, particularly the APA NAVTECH Committee. Captain Steve Roberts (Bay & River Delaware Pilots) later gave a presentation on the new services available to mariners through the Mariners’ Advisory Committee for the Bay and River Delaware.

Among the featured speakers was Rear Admiral Joe Servidio, Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy, who will speak at the upcoming APA biennial convention next month. Rear Admiral Servidio discussed broad issues relating to navigation safety and maritime security, and also praised the level of private sector involvement in the conference.

The 2014 Conference will be held in Philadelphia, and the Pilots Association for the Bay & River Delaware are already deeply involved in the planning.
IMO LAUNCHES "ACCIDENT ZERO" INITIATIVE

In September, IMO Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu proposed a new initiative he refers to as “Accident Zero” in which ports, harbors, straits, and sea areas with a vessel traffic service (VTS) would count and publicize the number of consecutive accident-free days.

In describing the IMO initiative, Sekimizu said, “Every day it will be a challenge for all concerned to achieve ‘Accident Zero’ and each accident-free day that is achieved will further encourage all parties in the port to work together toward the common goal of safety.”

IMPA WORKS WITH INDUSTRY TO PUBLICIZE CHANGES TO PILOT TRANSFER REGULATIONS

As reported in past editions of ON STATION, amendments to the Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS) regulations governing pilot ladders and other transfer arrangements entered into force on July 1, 2012. In an effort to ensure shipping companies understand and comply with the new – and previously existing – regulatory requirements, the International Maritime Pilots’ Association (IMPA) has worked with the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) to update a brochure on the subject. A wide range of international shipping organizations (including INTERTANKO, BIMCO, CLIA, INTERCARGO, OCIMF, SIGTTO, ITF, and IFSMA) have publicly supported the brochure and have pledged to distribute it to their members.

IMO Secretary General, Nick Cutmore, explained: “Sadly, pilots continue to lose their lives as a result of accidents while boarding or disembarking ships, and many more have been seriously injured. We are therefore pleased by the support received from industry to help promote the message about the vital need to rig pilot ladders safely and in accordance with SOLAS requirements.”

ICS Secretary General, Peter Hinchliffe, added: “When pilots come aboard ships it is to help seafarers during critical and demanding phases of a voyage. It is incumbent on ship operators and their crews to do everything possible to ensure safety during pilot transfer operations, which always involve a degree of risk, even when conditions are good. Some common causes of accidents still appear to be defects in the structure of the ladder treads or ropes, or a lack of a proper securing of the ladder to the ship.”


IMPA CONGRESS BEGINS IN LONDON

As ON STATION heads to print, the 21st Congress of IMPA is convening in London. The theme of this Congress is, appropriately, “Pilots Steering a Course for the Future.”

The meeting began on September 24 and will run through September 28th. The biennial Congress, which brings together pilots from around the world, was attended by representatives of a number of APA-member pilot groups, as well as APA officers and staff. The five day conference included sessions on navigation technology, fatigue, bridge resource management, pilot organization structure, and pilot transfer arrangements. Complete information, including a detailed agenda, can be found at: www.impa2012.com.
HOUSE COMMITTEES CONTINUE TO BE FRUSTRATED WITH TWIC PROGRAM

The House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) and its Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation (CG&MT) held separate hearings on the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program over the past several months. Congressional members used these hearings to grill Department of Homeland Security officials and express anger and frustration over ongoing problems with the TWIC program. On June 28, the full T&I Committee held a hearing focused solely on the TWIC program and its implementation and oversight by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and on September 11, the CG&MT held a hearing on a variety of maritime security topics, including TWIC.

T&I Chairman John Mica (R-FLA) kicked off his hearing with a strong statement. “Time after time we have been promised in this hearing room that the program would put into place measures that would allow us to identify who is going in and out of our ports in a secure manner...now these cards have become a joke within the transportation community.” Mica said.

Democrat and Ranking Member of the CG&MT Subcommittee, Rep. Rick Larsen also had strong criticism, focusing on the high costs and bureaucratic confusion with the TWIC program. Larsen said, “Excessive costs—more than $250 million out of the pockets of transportation workers—administrative inefficiencies, technical biometric glitches and confusing or burdensome enrolment requirements routinely surface as faults of the program.”

While Mica’s and Larsen’s comments were aimed at TSA, CG&MT Chairman Frank LoBiondo criticized the Coast Guard for its delay in publishing regulations governing deployment of TWIC readers. He said, “The Coast Guard is now telling us it expects to publish regulations sometime this fall, well over three years after the original deadline. As we wait out these delays, the TWICs are no more than a flash card...this is undermining security at our nation’s ports.”

While members from both parties expressed frustration over TWIC, all agreed that some system to prevent unauthorized access to restricted port areas is needed.

HOPES OF FINALLY FIXING DREDGING FUNDING DASHED

As all those around the country with an interest in America’s ports were aware, Congressional leaders seemed close to finally taking action to mandate that all money collected under the harbor maintenance tax is actually used for harbor maintenance and dredging projects. The tentatively agreed “fix” would have removed an obstacle that has stood in the way of needed dredging funds being sent to ports around the country. At the eleventh hour, however, deals were struck between Congress and the Administration that gutted legislation that would have addressed the problem.

In April, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 4348, a surface transportation bill that addressed land, air and water transportation matters. This bill included a provision that required the Nation’s harbor maintenance budget to equal the amounts collected through the harbor maintenance tax and prohibited these funds from being used for anything but harbor maintenance. Over the next several months, negotiations took place between the House and Senate and it appeared the House version of the harbor maintenance provision would be included in the final version of the surface transportation bill.

In final negotiations between Congress and the White House, however, the provision was replaced with a purely cosmetic gimmick. The final bill, H.R. 6064 (Temporary Surface Transportation Extension Act), contained only a “Sense of Congress” that “the Administration should request full use of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) for operating and maintaining the navigation channels of the U.S.” The bill was signed by the President on June 29.

The sponsor of the original mandatory provision in H.R. 4348 and longtime advocate for increased dredging funds, Rep. Charles Boustany (R-LA), tried to be positive about the setback. He issued the following statement, “Although this language is short of what [the House passed], it does break new ground in providing Congressional direction...regarding HMTF funding. In fact, this language marks the first time that Congress has enacted legislation recognizing the inadequacy of HMTF spending.”

The final bill was disappointing to those in the maritime sector, including pilots, who have been watching this legislation closely throughout the 112th Congress.

Miss an edition of ON STATION?  For back issues go to: www.americanpilots.org/newsletter_archives.html
NOAA NAMES NEW CHIEF HYDROGRAPHER

ON August 14, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced the appointment Rear Admiral Gerd Glang as Director of NOAA’s Office of Coast Survey and the Nation’s chief hydrographer. Glang, who has been with the NOAA officer corps since 1989, will be responsible for overseeing NOAA’s efforts to maintain and update the nation’s nautical charts, survey the coastal seafloor, respond to maritime emergencies and searches for underwater obstructions that pose a danger to navigation.

CAPTAIN GARY LEWIN TALKS HELO OPS TO BRAZILIAN PILOTS

Captain Gary Lewin, Columbia River Pilots, recently addressed the 37th National meeting of the Brazilian Maritime Pilots’ Association on the topic of the use of helicopters for embarking and disembarking during piloting operations. The Conference, which was held from March 13-16 in Curitiba, Brazil, was attended by Brazilian pilots, other pilots from around the world, governmental authorities, and other representatives from the maritime industry. The Brazilian pilots are considering the use of helicopters and organized a special session of the Conference, with Lewin as the featured speaker.

During the Conference, Lewin discussed the safety and efficiency benefits of using helicopters during piloting operations, especially in pilotage areas such as the Columbia River Bar with such consistent heavy weather.

CAPTAIN PETE GARAY APPOINTED TO ALASKA ARCTIC POLICY COMMISSION

On September 21, Alaska State Senate President Gary Stevens and House Speaker Mike Chenault announced their appointments to the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission, which was created last year to help develop the state’s Arctic policy and strategy. Stevens and Chenault chose 19 members and three alternates, including three senators and three representatives, and 14 other members from areas ranging from federal and tribal governments, to the logistics industry and tribal entities. Among the private sector appointees was Captain Peter Garay, who is designated as an “American Pilots Association Delegate / Marine Pilot Representative.”

The Commission will meet in Arctic areas around the state, and in Anchorage and Fairbanks, over the next two years. The Commission will provide preliminary policy recommendations by January 30, 2014, and submit a final report by January 30, 2015.

OFFICERS GATHER FOR APA EXECUTIVE MEETING IN WASHINGTON, DC

Officers of the American Pilots’ Association met at the APA offices in Washington, DC on August 7. During this regular business meeting, the officers heard reports from the regional Vice Presidents and received updates on national and international matters from the APA staff.

The current officers, pictured above from left to right, are: Captain Roger Paulus (Vice President, Great Lakes States), Captain Eric Nielseni (Vice President, North Atlantic States), Captain Gary Maddox (Vice President, South Atlantic States), Captain Mike Torjesen (Vice President, Gulf States), Captain Mike Watson (APA President), Captain Whit Smith (APA Secretary-Treasurer), Captain A.J. Gibbs (Vice President, Gulf States-Louisiana), and Captain Pete McIsaac (Vice President, West Coast States).

APA HOSTS LEADERS OF CHINESE MARINE PILOTS’ ASSOCIATION

On August 22, the APA hosted a delegation of Chinese pilots at its Washington, DC offices. The six person delegation, led by Captain Sheng Shudong (Secretary General for the Chinese Marine Pilots’ Association), included representatives from Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Ningbo pilot stations.

During the conference, the pilots discussed pilot safety, oversight, and shared thoughts on areas of common interest regarding piloting. Captain Shudong and Captain Watson agreed to continue their professional dialog in the future.
COAST GUARD MANDATES POST-ACCIDENT CHECKS OF WIRELESS DEVICE USE BY SAFETY-CRITICAL PERSONNEL

In a September 7th memorandum to field offices, Captain Dave Fish, Chief of the Coast Guard Office of Investigations and Analysis, issued “supplemental guidance” requiring marine casualty investigators to identify and document “any instances where the use of cell phones and other wireless electronic devices by on-duty crewmembers in safety-critical positions may be a causal factor in a marine casualty.”

This memorandum follows up on the Coast Guard’s February 2011 “Marine Safety Advisory” warning mariners about the dangers of distracted operations caused by the non-operational use of cell phones or other wireless devices. This safety advisory, with the title, “Distracted Operations—Don’t let it be you!” can be found on the Coast Guard’s Homeport website at: https://homeport.uscg.mil (click “Investigations”, then click “safety alerts”).

The September 7th memorandum lays out a series of new steps Coast Guard investigators must follow while investigating a “vessel navigation incident” (which the Coast Guard defines as a collision, allision, or grounding). These steps include:

♦ Identify all personnel that were on duty in a navigation-related position during the time leading up to and including the accident.
♦ Determine whether these personnel had a cell phone or other wireless device in their possession at the time. If so, determine whether it was a personal device or one provided by their employer.
♦ For those personnel with a device, collect a record of all communications made using the device while they were on duty leading up to the accident, including calls, texts, emails and posts to social networking sites.
♦ For each communication, determine if it was work-related or personal.
♦ If necessary, a subpoena will be issued to network carriers requesting the communications.

For marine accidents other than collisions, allisions, or groundings, the September 7 memorandum instructs investigators to collect the above information “whenever it appears that the use of wireless or electronic devices may have played a role in the marine casualty.”

SEAFARER RIGHTS GROUP CONFIRMS CRIMINALIZATION STILL A BIG CONCERN

Seafarers’ Rights International (SRI), a United Kingdom-based organization focused on raising awareness of seafarer rights and providing assistance to seafarers, released the results of a twelve month survey of how mariners have been impacted by criminal charges. The results of the survey, which included polling of 3,480 seafarers representing 68 different nationalities, where shocking.

While pilots were not addressed in the survey, nearly one-quarter of all masters reported that they had faced criminal charges related to a marine casualty.

Other questions in the survey asked about the experiences of seafarers who had faced criminal charges. The results showed that 44% of seafarers reported that they were bodily searched, 87% said that they did not have legal representation, and 89% of seafarers who had faced criminal charges said that they did not have their rights explained to them.

PILOTS A STRONG PRESENCE AT JOINT SAFETY / SECURITY CONFERENCE
APA NEWS

CAPTAIN SUSAN CLARK, PORTLAND PILOT AND PIONEER, PASSES AWAY

On Thursday, September 6, 2012, Captain Susan Clark passed away after succumbing to her battle with a very aggressive form of cancer.

Captain Clark was born on September 19, 1963 in Skowhegan, Maine. She graduated as high school valedictorian and class president and also graduated at the top of her class from Maine Maritime Academy. She later sailed with Exxon, eventually becoming the first woman to sail as captain with that company. After finishing her career with Exxon, she earned a law degree from the University of Maine.

Her ultimate calling, however, was to become a pilot, which she did with the Portland Pilots. She served as President of the Portland Pilots until December 2011, and she also served for three years as a Trustee for the American Pilots’ Association.

Captain Clark is survived by her husband, Glenn Daukas, and their sons, Louis and Rigel. The APA joins all who knew her in expressing heartfelt condolences to Captain Clark’s family.

TEXAS STATE PILOTS’ ASSOCIATION HONORS A CENTURY OF SERVICE BY RETIRED PILOTS

On September 18, the Texas State Pilots’ Association (TSPA) honored the more than 100 years of service and leadership provided by three recently retired Texas pilots. The honorees where Captain James Coonrod (38 years, Galveston-Texas City Pilots), Captain Larry Robinson (31 years, Matagorda Pilots), and Captain Max Blanton (33 years, Freeport Pilots). All three retired pilots are past presidents of their respective pilot association. Congratulations and good luck to all!

ELECTIONS, SELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS, ETC.

♦ The results of elections of officers for the South East Alaska Pilots Association are as follows: Captain Larry Pullin (President), Captain Ed Sinclair (Vice President), and Captain Doug Sturm (Secretary Treasurer).
♦ The Crescent River Port Pilots’ Association announced their 2012-2013 Board of Directors. The Board Members are: Captain James “Jimmy” Cramond (President/Treasurer), Captain E. Michael Bopp (Vice President), Captain Eric M. Short (Director), Captain Craig B. Clasen (Director), and Captain Richard E. Ducros, II (Director).

IN MEMORIAM
Captain Susan J. Clark
1963—2012

IMPORTANT DATES

October 15-19: APA Convention in Washington, DC. Information about registration, hotel reservations, and travel is posted on the APA website.
November 6-7: 2012 E-Nav Conference in Seattle, WA. Information about registration can be found at: www.enavigation.org

TEXAS STATE PILOTS’ ASSOCIATION HONORS A CENTURY OF SERVICE BY RETIRED PILOTS

From Left to Right: Captain Mike Morris (TSPA President), Captain James Coonrod, Captain Larry Robinson, and Captain Max Blanton.