

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"
M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES
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POID UNIT SEALS NEW FOUR-YEAR CONTRACT WITH APL

M.E.B.A.'s Professional Office and Industrial Division (POID) has a new four-year collective bargaining agreement with American President Lines following a ratification vote that concluded earlier this month. The POID shoreside professionals are the backbone of American President Lines' administrative workforce. They perform the clerical work that helps ensure that APL vessels move on time and are loaded with revenue-producing freight.

Protracted negotiations yielded a new agreement that represents a significant improvement over the last CBA and another step forward for the hardworking unit located in Nashville, TN. The new agreement wins a 23% wage increase over the life of the contract including an immediate 10% wage increase retroactive to May. The M.E.B.A. held firm against demands to weaken POID pension and medical benefits, while adding important contract provisions that protect job security and provide a growth path for the unit.

Resolute through the bargaining process were our rank-and-file bargaining unit team. M.E.B.A. officials who helped land this important contract included M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac, Executive V.P. Claudia Cimini and M.E.B.A.'s Oakland Patrolman. M.E.B.A. legal counsel was also instrumental in working toward this positive outcome. Many thanks to the solidarity and involvement of the POID bargaining unit members who submitted information, volunteered their time, and participated in helping the team achieve a successful contract.

M.E.B.A. HOSTED EVENT FOR WA STATE CANDIDATE WHO HAS CALLED FOR WSF REVITALIZATION

M.E.B.A. co-hosted an event earlier this week promoting a candidate for Washington State's Gubernatorial race who is looking to fix a broken Washington State Ferry system. The State's Attorney General, Bob Ferguson, has a good chance to be Washington's next Governor. Ferguson has expressed his interest in bolstering ferry reliability amid frequent cancellations due to breakdowns and a lack of qualified mariners.

He has called for the implementation of strategies to address labor shortages such as easing credentialing costs for mariners and undergoing "a wage and benefit survey that includes

comparisons of all relevant employers, such as commercial shipping operations, that are in competition for the same maritime workers, to keep wages and benefits competitive” - a proposal supported by the M.E.B.A.

M.E.B.A. has met with Ferguson several times and had a meeting with him this summer where they discussed the ferry system along with proposed solutions to various problems that plague the system. This week’s event was a fundraiser/meet and greet that was co-hosted with other WSF maritime unions including IBU, the Office and Professional Employees International Union Local 8 (OPEIU 8), Ferry Agents Supervisors and Project Administrators Association (FASPAA), Metal Trade Unions, and Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters Union.

M.E.B.A.’s WSF Representative introduced the candidate, who addressed attendees about the issues before opening it up for questions and answers. Many members discussed the issue of lagging wages at the ferry system and the wage disparity between deck and engine crews that has helped whittle away the once-hefty pool of experienced and qualified mariners.

NEW EPA RULE REQUIRES BALLAST TREATMENT SYSTEMS ON GREAT LAKES NEWBUILDS

The Environmental Protection Agency finalized national discharge standards to control the release of pollutants and invasive species from vessels operating in U.S. waters. These standards address discharges that occur with normal operation of large vessels. The rule is intended to address harmful pollutants, including bacteria, pathogens, oil, grease, and metals while reducing the spread of invasive species that can damage ecosystems and infrastructure. The rule primarily applies to non-recreational, non-Armed Forces vessels 79 feet or longer (such as commercial, research and emergency rescue vessels) and ballast water from fishing vessels and non-recreational, non-Armed Forces vessels less than 79 feet long.

The final rule requires “Lakers” – large vessels operating in the Great Lakes – that are constructed in the future, to operate ballast water management systems. This new federal requirement addresses known ballast-water management challenges aboard Lakers and is intended to help reduce the spread of invasive species throughout the Great Lakes. EPA’s new standards will not be implemented for up to two years while the U.S. Coast Guard develops and issues corresponding regulations. Until the U.S. Coast Guard regulations are final, effective and enforceable, vessels continue to be subject to the existing discharge requirements established in the EPA’s 2013 Vessel General Permit and the U.S. Coast Guard’s ballast water regulations, as well as any other applicable state and local government requirements.

INCOMPLETE MMC APPLICATIONS WILL BE MET WITH REJECTION

The National Maritime Center (NMC) will begin rejecting incomplete merchant mariner credential (MMC) application submissions during initial screening beginning December 1, 2024. MMC application submissions that are incomplete due to missing the following required items will be rejected:

- a complete CG-719B on the current version of the form;
- evidence the applicant holds or has applied for a TWIC card;
- evidence of payment of the required evaluation fee (use of pay.gov is the preferred method of fee payment); and

- evidence of satisfying applicable drug testing requirements.

If an application package is found to be missing any of these items during initial screening, the applicant will be e-mailed a Notice of Rejected Incomplete Application indicating what is missing. If the original submission is rejected, the applicant will have to resubmit the entire application package and include the missing item(s). The documentation in the application submission will not be retained by the NMC or returned to the applicant. Guidance on how to complete an MMC application can be found on the NMC website.

M.E.B.A. ELECTION: NOVEMBER 15th IS THE DEADLINE TO BE “IN GOOD STANDING” FOR YOUR BALLOT TO COUNT

Members who are not in good standing by November 15, 2024, with dues paid in accordance with the M.E.B.A. By-Laws (through the end of the Fourth Quarter, as applicable) are not eligible to vote in the ongoing M.E.B.A. election.

Members are strongly urged to ensure their dues status is secured through the end of the year to guarantee their participation in this year’s officers’ election.

M.E.B.A. ELECTION: HOW TO OBTAIN A DUPLICATE BALLOT

TrueBallot, Inc. is serving as the Impartial Administrator for the 2024 M.E.B.A. Election. If you are an M.E.B.A. member and did not receive a ballot – or yours has been lost or destroyed – you can request a duplicate ballot in writing. The M.E.B.A. By-Laws state, “A member shall be entitled to make a written request of the Impartial Administrator for a duplicate ballot and receive the same provided he states in his letter that he has not received his ballot or that his ballot has been lost or mutilated so that it cannot be used. Duplicate ballots shall be counted unless the original and duplicate ballot mailed to a member are both cast, in which event neither ballot shall be counted.”

Written requests for duplicate ballots can be made to TrueBallot by emailing 0212401@trueballot.com. Please make sure you include your address to send the duplicate ballot. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact M.E.B.A. Headquarters.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE SS POET TRAGEDY

No trace of the SS POET was ever found after she vanished at sea in late October of 1980, 44 years ago today. The 522-foot ship was loaded up with 13,500 tons of corn and was making the 16-day trip to Port Said, Egypt. The M.E.B.A.-contracted ship departed Philadelphia with 34 crew members onboard. The 12,000-ton vessel vanished without a trace – and without sending an SOS – after last reporting her position on October 24, 1980 when she sailed past Cape Henlopen, DE. Inexplicably, vessel owners didn’t report the ship missing until ten days later on November 3rd. Five M.E.B.A. members were lost with the ship.

The 34 men aboard the vessel ranged in age from 20 to 60. The five M.E.B.A. engineers were Chief Engineer Lloyd Thayer (60), 1st A/E Michael Canfield (31), 2nd A.E Christopher Carrino (24), 3rd A/E Mark Henthorne (24) and 3rd A/E Anthony Bourbonnais (32). John McNaney, the ship’s permanent Chief Engineer missed the trip to stay with his wife who was recovering from surgery.

The vanishing of the vessel fueled wild Bermuda Triangle theories as well as other wild rumors that the ship had been hijacked by the mob or was part of a Government arms-for-Iran deal. But the

official casualty report questioned whether the aging ship with its heavy cargo could have succumbed to tumultuous storms that had been predicted along its North Atlantic route.

Today, the tragedy of the SS POET still resonates with our membership, especially the old guard, and serves as another reminder of the unforgiving sea and the dangerous nature of our business. The mention of the POET brings a chill to the heart of mariners akin to the invocation of doomed ships of the past like the GOLDEN DOLPHIN, EDMUND FITZGERALD, MARINE ELECTRIC and the EL FARO.

REDUCTION OF PIRACY INCIDENTS; POSSIBLE RESURGENCE NEAR SOMALIA

Maritime crime and piracy incidents lowest since 1994, but threats to crews remain. In the first nine months of 2024, reported incidents of piracy and armed robbery fell to the lowest levels since 1994, according to the latest report by the ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB). Despite the lowest reported incidents in three decades, IMB and its Piracy Reporting Centre warn that crew safety remains at risk. IMB reported 79 incidents for the period of January-September 2024, down from 99 incidents in the same period last year. This marks a significant overall reduction and the lowest reported numbers since 1994. From January to September, 62 vessels were boarded, six were hijacked while nine faced attempted attacks and two were fired upon. In 86% of incidents, perpetrators successfully gained access to the vessel with most incidents occurring at night. Violence towards crew members remains concerning, with 111 crew taken hostage, 11 kidnapped and three threatened. Perpetrators were armed with weapons, guns, and knives in 45 of the reported incidents.

The Indonesian Archipelago remains an area of concern with a steady rise in the number of reported incidents. From January to September 2024, 17 incidents were reported compared to 12 in 2023 and nine in 2022. There were fewer incidents in the Gulf of Guinea, Somalia and the Singapore Straits, but October activity in Somalia (not covered by the report) have led to concerns that a resurgence in that area remains a possibility. Piracy near Somalia had been dormant for years but once again reared its head in November 2023 after several hijackings. As always, crews are being encouraged to enforce strict security protocols and stay alert while passing through high-risk regions.

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

Monday, November 4 – **Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.**

Tuesday, November 5 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.**

Wednesday, November 6 – **Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mebahq@mebaunion.org**

Thursday, November 7 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.**

Friday, November 8 – **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.***