

## Headlines:

USCG – marijuana use prohibited;  
New York – tug sinks, barge grounds;  
White House – petroleum supply adequate;  
DOS – importers of oil from Iran;  
DOS – temporary easing of Iran sanctions;  
CBP – quarterly interest rates;  
MARAD – National Maritime Strategy Symposium;  
NOAA – improved “magenta line”;  
FMC – nominations for Earth Day Award;  
House – CBP Authorization Act introduced;  
House – hearing on maritime sovereignty;  
ITLOS – Arctic Sunrise arbitrators appointed;  
Malta – investigation opened;  
Panama Canal – contractual dispute; and  
UK – windfarm service vessel catches fire, sinks.

January 15, 2014



# Bryant's Maritime News

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*Note: This newsletter is one section of the [Bryant's Maritime Consulting](http://brymar-consulting.com) website. Visit the site for more extensive maritime regulatory information. Individual concerns may be addressed by retaining [Dennis Bryant](mailto:dennis.l.bryant@gmail.com) directly. Much of the highlighted text in this newsletter constitutes links to Internet sites providing more detailed information. Links on this page may be in PDF format, requiring use of Adobe Acrobat Reader. Comments on these postings are encouraged and may be made by email to the editor or by going to the blog page on the website and clicking the envelope that appears at the end of each posting. Be aware that the daily newsletter is a single posting, even though it contains a number of individual items. Every new beginning begins with a tenuous first step.*

## **USCG – marijuana use prohibited**



The US Coast Guard issued a [Marine Safety Information Bulletin](#) regarding its recreational and medical marijuana use policies for maritime transportation workers. The bulletin notes that marijuana is listed as a Schedule I drug in the federal Controlled Substances Act. As such its use by maritime transportation workers is prohibited, even when state law allows recreational or medical use of marijuana. Medical Review Officers will not verify a drug test as negative based upon marijuana use of any type. (1/14/14).

## New York – tug sinks, barge grounds



The US Coast Guard issued a [news release](#) stating that a tug sank and its barge grounded off Atlantic Beach, New York after the towline parted. The sole crewmember on the tug was rescued. A salvage plan for the barge is being developed. The incident is under investigation. (1/14/14).

## White House – petroleum supply adequate



The Department of State (DOS) issued a notice stating that the President has determined that there is a sufficient supply of petroleum and petroleum products from countries other than Iran to permit a significant reduction in the volume of petroleum and petroleum products purchased from Iran by or through foreign financial institutions. [79 Fed. Reg. 2746](#) (January 15, 2014).

## DOS – importers of oil from Iran



The Department of State (DOS) issued a notice stating that each of the following importers of oil from Iran has qualified for an 180-day exemption: India, Malaysia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, and Turkey. [79 Fed. Reg. 2746](#) (January 15, 2014).

## DOS – temporary easing of Iran sanctions



The Department of State (DOS) issued the text of a [Background Briefing](#) on the Implementation Plan of the P5+1 and Iran's First Step Nuclear Agreement. Among other things, the plan calls for temporary easing of the sanctions on Iran's petrochemical exports. The plan begins implementation on 20 January. (1/13/14).

## CBP – quarterly interest rates



The US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) issued a notice stating that, for the quarter beginning 1 January, the interest rates for overpayments will

be 2% for corporations and 3% for non-corporations and the interest rate for underpayments will be 3% for both. [79 Fed. Reg. 2681](#) (January 15, 2014).

## MARAD – National Maritime Strategy Symposium



The Department of Transportation (DOT) issued a [news release](#) stating that the Maritime Administration (MARAD) kicked-off the first National Maritime Strategy Symposium in Washington, DC. (1/14/14).

## NOAA – improved “magenta line”



The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) issued a [news release](#) stating that the Office of Coast Survey will include an improved “magenta line” in future editions of nautical charts of the Intracoastal Waterway. The new magenta line will serve as an advisory directional guide to help prevent boaters from going astray in the maze of channels that constitute the route. (1/14/14).

## FMC – nominations for Earth Day Award



The Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) issued a [news release](#) stating that it is accepting nominations for the FMC Chairman’s Earth Day Award, which recognizes the maritime transportation industry for innovations and successes in developing environmentally sustainable shipping practices. Nominations should be submitted by 10 March. (1/14/14).

## House – CBP Authorization Act introduced



Representative Miller (R-MI) introduced the [United States Customs and Border Protection Authorization Act](#) (H.R. 3846) to provide for the authorization of border, maritime, and transportation security responsibilities and functions in the Department of Homeland Security and the establishment of United States Customs and Border Protection, and for other purposes. Representative Miller issued a [press release](#) explaining its purpose. (1/10/14).

## House – hearing on maritime sovereignty



The House of Representatives conducted a joint subcommittee hearing on [Maritime Sovereignty in the East and South China Seas](#). [Ms. Bonnie S. Glaser](#),

Center for Strategic and International Studies, testified that nationalism and power competition within China are the main drives of China's maritime disputes, with resource rivalry an important but secondary factor. **Mr. Peter A. Dutton**, Naval War College, testified that American policies must focus on maintaining the region as an open, maritime system. **Mr. Jeff M. Smith**, American Foreign Policy Council, testified that the disagreement between the United States and China in this realm presents arguably the greatest potential for miscalculation, escalation, and conflict. (1/14/14).

### ITLOS – Arctic Sunrise arbitrators appointed



The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) issued a **press release** stating that it has appointed arbitrators in the arbitral proceedings instituted by the Kingdom of the Netherlands against the Russian Federation in respect to the dispute regarding the vessel Arctic Sunrise. (1/13/14).

### Malta – investigation opened



The Malta Ministry for Transport & Infrastructure issued a **press release** stating that it has opened an investigation into the alleged incident involving the Malta registered ship MT Baku off the coast of Libya. (1/9/14). *Note: Unofficial reports indicate that a Libyan government vessel fired on the tanker when it believed the tanker was attempting to call at the port of Es-Sider to take on a cargo of crude oil without official Libyan permission.*

### Panama Canal – contractual dispute



The Panama Canal Authority issued a **press release** stating that it has proposed that it and the Grupo Unidos por El Canal S.A. (GUPC) jointly contribute \$283 million to the new locks project. The monies would be used to pay the contractor and subcontractors. **Another press release** reiterates that the Panama Canal Authority remains committed to completion of the Expansion Project and that the current dispute has no impact on daily Canal operations. (1/7/14). *Note: The Panama Canal Authority and GUPC are in a dispute regarding which party is responsible to delays and cost overruns.*

### UK – windfarm service vessel catches fire, sinks



The UK Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) issued a **press notice** stating that the three crewmen of the windfarm service vessel ECC Topaz were rescued after the vessel caught fire in the North Sea off Lowestoft. The vessel subsequently sank. (1/14/14).

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