Headlines:
Senate – Coast Guard Authorization Act adopted;
Lake Ontario – vessel hijacking under investigation;
USN – laser weapons system deployed;
San Francisco – 1901 shipwreck located;
NRC – guidance for aquatic environmental studies;
House – bill introduced re USMMA;
IMO – elimination of unnecessary paperwork;
ReCAAP – November report; and
India – seafarer's biometric identity document.

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Bryant's Maritime News

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Note: This newsletter is one section of the Bryant's Maritime Consulting website. Visit the site for more extensive maritime regulatory information. Individual concerns may be addressed by retaining Dennis Bryant 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. Better to light one candle than curse your flashlight.

Senate – Coast Guard Authorization Act adopted

Considered by unanimous consent late Wednesday, the Senate adopted S. 2444 [located at http://www.brymar-consulting.com/wp-content/uploads/Misc/S_2444.pdf] to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2015 through 2016, and for other purposes. Prior to adoption, there was an amendment in the nature of a substitute, striking the original content and substituting the Howard Coble Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2014, previously adopted by the House. (12/10/14). *Note: Adoption of the substitution makes this an enrolled bill, which can now go the President Obama for signature without further action by Congress.*

Lake Ontario – vessel hijacking under investigation

The US Coast Guard issued a news release [located at http://www.uscgnews.com/go/doc/4007/2433925/] that US and Canadian law enforcement agencies are investigating the reported hijacking of a Canadian charter vessel. The master of the 18-foot vessel arrived at US Coast Guard Station Niagara to report that two men had hired his boat for a fishing charter on Lake Ontario. One of the men pulled out a knife and demanded to be put ashore immediately. The master put the boat ashore near Four Mile Creek State Park in New York, just east of the international boundary. The two men went ashore and fled on foot. The incident is under investigation. (12/10/14).

USN – laser weapons system deployed

The US Navy issued a news release [located at http://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=84805] stating that the USS Ponce (AFSB(I) 15) is on duty in the Arabian Gulf with the world's first operational shipboard laser weapons system (LaWS). The system is capable of a range of escalating options, from optical dazzling and disabling to lethal destruction. (12/10/14).

San Francisco – 1901 shipwreck located

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) issued a news release [located at http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/press/2014/pr121014.html] stating that it and its partners have located and imaged the wreck of the steamship City of Rio de Janeiro, which sank on 22 February 1901 in the Golden Gate to San Francisco Bay with the loss of 128 of the 210 persons on board. A high-powered remotely operated vehicle and sophisticated sonar were used to locate and image the wreck in deep water in the shipping channel just west of the present-day Golden Gate Bridge. (12/10/14).

NRC – guidance for aquatic environmental studies

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued a notice stating that it seeks comments on its draft regulatory guide DG-4023 "Aquatic Environmental Studies for Nuclear Power Stations". Comments should be submitted by 9 February 2015. 79 Fed. Reg. 73646 [located at http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-11/pdf/2014-29026.pdf] (12/11/14).

House – bill introduced re USMMA

Representative Grimm (R-NY) introduced a bill (H.R. 5813) to allow for a contract for operation of Melville Hall at the United States Merchant Marine Academy, after receipt of a gift from the United States Merchant Marine Academy Alumni Association and Foundation, Inc., for renovation of such hall and for other purposes. Official text of the bill is not yet available. (12/9/14).

IMO – elimination of unnecessary paperwork

The Danish Maritime Authority (DMA) issued a news release [located at http://www.dma.dk/news/Sider/Progressone-solutionsandeliminationofunnecessarypaperwork.aspx] stating that progress is being made at IMO on e-solutions and elimination of unnecessary paperwork. (12/8/14).

ReCAAP – November report

The ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre posted its Report for November 2014 [located at http://www.recaap.org/Portals/0/docs/Reports/2014/ReCAAP_ISC%20November2014ReportOpen.pdf]. The number of incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia (20) was the same as for the month of October. (12/10/14).

India – seafarer's biometric identity document

The Indian Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) issued a notice [located at http://dgshipping.gov.in/WriteReadData/News/201412100455448954396notice_sid_biomatric_cra_101214.pdf] stating that comments are sought on draft rules for implementation of provisions of the International Labour Convention C-185 relating to the Seafarer's Bio-metric Identity Document. Comments must be received by 11 January 2015. (12/11/14).

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