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House – bill introduced re whistleblower protection;  
House – bill introduced to establish maritime heritage area;  
Senate – USCG authorization bill introduced;  
Senate - bill introduced to establish maritime heritage area;  
Congress – review of derelict vessel response policies;  
GAO – report on DOD Arctic planning;  
St. Lawrence River – bulker aground; and  
MREN – Marine casualty reporting & investigation.

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# 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. Those who don't study history may lose the opportunity to make original mistakes.*

## **St. Lawrence Seaway – update re cruise vessel allision**



The US Coast Guard issued a second [news release](#) [located at <http://www.uscgnews.com/go/doc/4007/2549862/>] regarding the cruise vessel that allided with the wall of the Eisenhower Lock in the St. Lawrence Seaway. All the passengers were removed; the vessel was freed, and moved to a safe location.

The Seaway has reopened to maritime traffic and the incident is under investigation. (6/20/15).

### **USCG – conditions of entry on vessels from Gambia**



The US Coast Guard issued a notice stating that, effective 6 July, it will impose conditions of entry on vessels arriving in the United States after having called at any port in the Republic of the Gambia during their last five port calls. In summary, each affected vessel must: (1) implement the Security Level 2 measures from its ship security plan while in a Dominican Republic; (2) ensure that each access point is guarded and that guards have total visibility of the exterior of the vessel while in a Dominican Republic port; (3) attempt to execute a Declaration of Security while in a Dominican Republic port; (4) log all security actions; and (5) report actions taken to the pertinent USCG Captain of the Port [COTP] prior to arrival in the US. **80 Fed. Reg. 35660** [located at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-06-22/pdf/2015-15325.pdf>] (6/22/15).

### **MERPAC – working group meeting**



A working group of the Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (MERPAC), sponsored by the US Coast Guard, will meet in Arlington, Virginia on 14-15 July to review guidelines on fatigue mitigation and management. **80 Fed. Reg. 35659** [located at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-06-22/pdf/2015-15216.pdf>] (6/22/15).

### **Behm Canal – restricted area corrections proposed**



The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) proposes to amend the regulations for the restricted area in waters of the West Arm of the Behm Canal near Ketchikan, Alaska to correct various inaccuracies. Comments on the proposal must be submitted by 22 July. **80 Fed. Reg. 35620** [located at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-06-22/pdf/2015-15294.pdf>] (6/22/15).

### **Virginia Beach – danger zone proposed**



The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) proposes to establish a danger zone in waters of the Atlantic Ocean south of Rudee Inlet in Virginia Beach, Virginia, an area used for live fire exercises. Comments on the proposal must be submitted by 22 July. **80 Fed. Reg. 35621** [located at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-06-22/pdf/2015-15293.pdf>] (6/22/15).

## DOI – DWH oil spill restoration plan



The Department of the Interior (DOI) has extended, through 6 July, the period within which to submit comments on the Draft Phase IV Early Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment. **80 Fed. Reg. 35393** [located at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-06-19/pdf/2015-15152.pdf>] (6/19/15).

## FMC – meeting on 24 June



The Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) issued a notice stating that the Commissioners will meet on 24 June in Washington, DC. During the open session, they will consider: (1) public access to Commission information and records; (2) the Howard Coble Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2014; (3) the Second Global Maritime Regulatory Summit; (4) the Maersk/MSC Vessel Sharing Agreement; (5) the Petition of United Arab Shipping Company for an exemption; and (6) port congestion and related international supply chain issues. During the closed session, they will consider the Pacific Ports Operational Improvement Agreement. **80 Fed. Reg. 35357** [located at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-06-19/pdf/2015-15326.pdf>] (6/19/15).

## HHS – hair specimen for drug testing



The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has extended, through 29 July, the period within which to submit information regarding specific aspects of the regulatory policies and standards that may be applied to the Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Workplace Drug Testing programs (hair specimen). **80 Fed. Reg. 34921** [located at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-06-18/pdf/2015-14964.pdf>] (6/18/15). *Note: This item was brought to my attention by my good friend Robert C. Schoening of Workplace Substance Abuse Consulting.*

## USN – distressed mariners recovered



The US Navy (USN) issued a **news release** [located at [http://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story\\_id=87747](http://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=87747)] stating that the amphibious transport dock ship USS Green Bay (LPD 20) recovered distressed mariners in the Makassar Strait of Indonesia. The origin of the mariners is unknown. (6/19/15).

## House – bill introduced re whistleblower protection



Representative DeSaulnier (D-CA) introduced a bill (H.R. 2824) to provide whistleblower protections to certain workers in the offshore oil and gas industry. Official text of the bill is not yet available. (6/18/15).

## House – bill introduced to establish maritime heritage area



Representative Kilmer (D-WA) introduced a bill (H.R. 2833) to establish the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area in the State of Washington, and for other purposes. Official text of the bill is not yet available, but Representative Kilmer issued a [press release](#) [located at <http://kilmer.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/kilmer-cantwell-murray-and-heck-reintroduce-maritime-heritage>] explaining the measure. (6/18/15).

## Senate – USCG authorization bill introduced



Senator Thune (R-SD) introduced a bill (S. 1611) to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2016 and 2017, and for other purposes. Official text of the bill is not yet available. (6/18/15).

## Senate – bill introduced to establish maritime heritage area



Senator Cantwell (D-WA) introduced a bill (S. 1623) to establish the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area in the State of Washington, and for other purposes. Official text of the bill is not yet available. (6/18/15).

## Congress – review of derelict vessel response policies



Senator Cantwell (D-WA) issued a [press release](#) [located at <http://www.cantwell.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases?ID=09168fd9-2eae-4f11-a788-f2c20de10299>] stating that she and Representative Kilmer (D-WA) led a bipartisan letter to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) calling for a formal study on the impact of derelict vessels to waterways and coastal communities. They seek a review of how the US Coast Guard, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) identify, track, and respond to abandoned and derelict vessels. (6/5/15).

## GAO – report on DOD Arctic planning



The Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report on Arctic planning by the Department of Defense (DOD). The report finds that the DOD expects to play a supporting role in the Arctic relative to other federal agencies, based on a low level of military threat expected in the region and that the department has efforts underway to address capability needs and to update its plans. [GAO-15-566](http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/670903.pdf) [located at <http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/670903.pdf>] (6/19/15).

## St. Lawrence River – bulker aground



The Canadian Transportation Safety Board (TSB) issued a [media release](http://www.tsb.gc.ca/eng/medias-media/deploiement-deploiement/marine/2015/20150621.asp) [located at <http://www.tsb.gc.ca/eng/medias-media/deploiement-deploiement/marine/2015/20150621.asp>] stating that it has deployed a team of investigators to the St. Lawrence River off Summerstown, Ontario to assess an occurrence involving the bulk carrier Tundra, which ran aground. (6/21/15).

## MREN – Marine casualty reporting & investigation



In the June 2015 edition of Maritime Reporter and Engineering News, you can find my article entitled [Marine casualty reporting & investigation](http://www.brymar-consulting.com/wp-content/uploads/MREN/MREN150600.pdf) [located at <http://www.brymar-consulting.com/wp-content/uploads/MREN/MREN150600.pdf>]. In the article, I discuss problems with the current USCG marine casualty reporting and investigation system and suggest that it is time to overhaul and pare back requirements to as to make the process both manageable for the Coast Guard and meaningful for the regulated community.

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