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USCG – merchant mariner credentialing;
USCG – health risk analysis;
USCG – NMC overview;
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EPA – VGP electronic reporting;
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Australia – charges for services;
Coral Sea – ship routing;
MREN – sleep apnea;
Estonia sinking – 28 September 1994; and
Anti-Flogging Act – 28 September 1850.

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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. Unattended children will be given a cup of espresso and a free kitten.

USCG – merchant mariner credentialing



The US Coast Guard posted a **notice** providing an update on planned changes to merchant mariner credentialing regulations to incorporate recent statutory amendments. These changes relate to sea service for mariners who work in the engine rooms on towing vessels and offshore supply vessels and to sea service recency applicable to military personnel serving on military vessels. Additionally, the Coast Guard is focusing on training related to the new Polar Code. (9/24/15).

USCG – health risk analysis



The US Coast Guard posted a **notice** discussing current initiatives in the Office of Commercial Vessel Compliance relating to merchant mariner credentialing. Among other things, the Office, with participation by the Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (MERPAC) and the Merchant Mariner Medical Advisory Committee (MEDMAC), is reviewing the health risk analysis process and fitness for duty determinations. (9/23/15).

USCG – NMC overview



The US Coast Guard posted a **notice** providing an overview of the activities of the National Maritime Center (NMC). (9/22/15).

Tacoma – bulker detained for safety deficiencies



The US Coast Guard issued a **news release** [located at <http://www.uscgnews.com/go/doc/4007/2604650/>] stating that the bulk carrier *Rena* has been detained in the port of Tacoma due to safety deficiencies, including improper pressurization of the crew's self-contained breathing apparatuses. The vessel will be required to remain in port until the deficiencies are rectified. (9/25/15).

EPA – VGP electronic reporting



The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a **news release** [located at <http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/docf6618525a9efb85257359003fb69d/bf177b9560441ead85257eca006d2bfc!OpenDocument>] stating that it has finalized a rule to modernize Clean Water Act reporting for regulated entities. The rule, to be promulgated in the Federal Register in October, will require regulated entities to use existing, available information technology to electronically report data required by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). This requirement will apply to reports under the Vessel General Permit (VGP) programs. (9/24/15). *Note: This item was brought to my attention by my friend Tracy Royce of **SBM Offshore**.*

GAO – cargo preference and food aid



The Government Accountability Office (GAO) posted its report on international food assistance. It found that, during the period April 2011 through fiscal year 2014, cargo preference for food aid increased the overall cost of shipping food aid by an average of 2% (\$107 million) over what the cost would have been had cargo preference provisions not been applied. The report also noted a difference in application of the cargo preference provisions by the Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Department of Agriculture (USDA). The report recommends that Congress clarify cargo preference legislation regarding the definition of “geographic area” and that the Department of Transportation study the potential availability of all qualified US merchant mariners needed to meet a full and prolonged activation of the reserve sealift fleet. [GAO-15-666](http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/672181.pdf) [located at <http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/672181.pdf>] (9/25/15).

Australia – charges for services



The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) issued a Marine Notice advising stakeholders that new and revised charges for AMSA services will come into effect on 1 October 2015. Charges have been set for a range of services including: inspections; processing of determinations, declarations, exemptions, or approvals; assessing applications; and matters related to the registration of ships. [Notice 17/2015](https://apps.amsa.gov.au/MOREview/MarineNoticeExternal.html) [located at <https://apps.amsa.gov.au/MOREview/MarineNoticeExternal.html>] (9/25/15).

Coral Sea – ship routing



The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) issued a Marine Notice advising stakeholders that the IMO adopted two new two-way routes and an associated area to be avoided (ATBA) in the Coral Sea. These measures enter into effect on 1 January 2016. [Notice 16/2015](https://apps.amsa.gov.au/MOREview/MarineNoticeExternal.html) [located at <https://apps.amsa.gov.au/MOREview/MarineNoticeExternal.html>] (9/25/15).

MREN – sleep apnea



In the September 2015 edition of [Maritime Reporter and Engineering News](#) (MREN), you can find my article entitled "[Sleep apnea](#)". In the article, I discuss the recent recognition of the threats to maritime and transportation safety posed by this hidden medical condition. The US Coast Guard recently announced a proposed change to its policy regarding specific medical conditions, including obstructive sleep apnea, which it would consider in

determining whether a medical waiver is warranted for new or renewed merchant mariner credentials.

Estonia sinking – 28 September 1994



On 28 September 1994, the ro-ro passenger ferry **Estonia** capsized and sank in the Baltic Sea while making its regular passage from Tallinn, Estonia to Stockholm. Of the 803 passengers and 186 crew on board, 138 were rescued alive, although one of these died soon thereafter. The casualty resulted from failure of the bow visor door and subsequent flooding of the open vehicle deck with its large free surface. Subsequently, the IMO adopted special training requirements in crowd and crises management for crews on passenger vessels. EPIRBs were required to activate automatically and voyage data recorders were mandated. Improved damage stability of passenger ships was also mandated.

Anti-Flogging Act – 28 September 1850



The Act making Appropriations for the Naval Service was enacted into law on 28 September 1850. In its time, it was better known as the **Anti-Flogging Act** because included within its various financial provisions was the following: “*Provided*, That flogging in the navy, and on board vessels of commerce, be, and the same is hereby, abolished from and after the passage of this act.”

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If you have questions regarding the above items, please contact the editor:

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