

Headlines:

USCG – most probable number;
Mississippi River – collision near Memphis;
Delaware River – safety zone;
FMC - \$334,000 collected in settlements;
House – CG Authorization Act;
IMO – COP21 accord;
UK – certificate of equivalent competency; and
Loss of tanker Argo Merchant – 15 December 1976.

December 15, 2015



Bryant's Maritime News

Bryant's Maritime Consulting - 4845 SW 91st Way - Gainesville, FL 32608-8135 - USA

Tel: 1-352-692-5493 – Email: dennis.l.bryant@gmail.com – Internet: <http://brymar-consulting.com>

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. Plan to be spontaneous.

USCG – most probable number



The US Coast Guard issued a **notice** [located at <http://mariners.coastguard.dodlive.mil/2015/12/14/12142015-coast-guard-decision-on-use-of-most-probable-number-method/>] indicating that the Most Probable Number (MPN) is not considered as an equivalent alternative to the testing method prescribed by the Coast Guard's regulations pertaining to type approval of ballast water management systems (BWMSs). The MPN test method does not measure the efficacy of BWMSs to the performance standard (living organisms v. dead organisms) required by the regulations. Instead, the MPN test method measures the viability of organisms, which some administrations interpret as reproductive capability. (12/14/15).

Mississippi River – collision near Memphis



The US Coast Guard issued a [news release](http://www.uscgnews.com/go/doc/4007/2766574/) [located at <http://www.uscgnews.com/go/doc/4007/2766574/>] stating that two towing vessels collided on the Lower Mississippi River near Memphis. One of the vessels sank in 20 feet of water. A safety zone has been established between mile markers 726 and 728. The incident is under investigation.

Delaware River – safety zone



The US Coast Guard promulgated a final rule establishing, through 15 March 2016, a temporary safety zone on waters of the Delaware River in the vicinity of Marcus Hook while rock blasting, dredging, and rock removal operations are being conducted. [80 Fed. Reg. 77573](https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-12-15/pdf/2015-31488.pdf) [located at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-12-15/pdf/2015-31488.pdf>] (12/15/15).

FMC – \$334,000 collected in settlements



The Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) issued a [news release](http://www.fmc.gov/NR15-20/) [located at <http://www.fmc.gov/NR15-20/>] stating that it completed compromise agreements recovering a total of \$334,000 in civil penalties from five ocean transportation intermediaries alleged to have violated the Shipping Act or FMC regulations. (12/14/15).

House – CG Authorization Act



The [Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015](https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-114hr4188eh/pdf/BILLS-114hr4188eh.pdf) (H.R. 4188) [located at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-114hr4188eh/pdf/BILLS-114hr4188eh.pdf>] as passed by the House of Representatives will be transmitted to the Senate for consideration. (12/10/15).

IMO – COP21 accord



The IMO issued a [news release](http://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/PressBriefings/Pages/55-paris-agreement.aspx) [located at <http://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/PressBriefings/Pages/55-paris-agreement.aspx>] stating that it welcomes the accord reached at the 2015 Paris

Climate Change Conference (COP21) and will continue to contribute to global GHG reduction goals. (12/14/15).

UK – certificate of equivalent competency



The UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) posted a **notice** [located at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-cec-for-deck-and-engineer-officers>] providing guidance for non-UK qualified officers on how to apply for or revalidate a certificate of equivalent competency (CEC) to serve on UK-registered vessels for deck and engineer officers who hold a STCW certificate of competency (CoC) from a country whose standards of competency and training are considered equal to those of the UK. (12/14/15).

Loss of tanker *Argo Merchant* – 15 December 1976



On 15 December 1976, the oil tanker *Argo Merchant* grounded on Middle Rip Shoal in international waters approximately 25 nautical miles southeast of Nantucket Island. The tanker was en route from Venezuela to Boston carrying 7.7 million gallons of No. 6 fuel oil. The US Government refused to grant permission for the jettisoning of cargo in an attempt to lighten the ship. On 21 December, the *Argo Merchant* broke into two pieces, spilling all of its cargo and bunkers. The Coast Guard sank the bow of the ship with gunfire. The prevailing wind and current carried the oil offshore and away from rich fishing grounds nearby. The spill was the largest in US history to that date. Publicity surrounding the casualty resulted in Congress adopting the Port and Tanker Safety Act of 1978, giving the Coast Guard increased authority to inspect and regulate tank vessels, foreign and domestic, operating in US waters.

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

Dennis L. Bryant

Bryant's Maritime Consulting
4845 SW 91st Way
Gainesville, FL 32608-8135
USA

1-352-692-5493
dennis.l.bryant@gmail.com
<http://brymar-consulting.com>

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