

Headlines:

South China Sea – US demands China return UUV;
White House – water infrastructure bill signed;
USCG – VRP exercises re SMFF;
Chesapeake Bay – proposed anchorage grounds;
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USCG – safety alert re cooling jacket failures;
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Offshore New York – wind energy development;
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Australia – STCW Convention amendments; and
MREN – Sea level in its many aspects.

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Bryant's Maritime News

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South China Sea – US demands China return UUV



The Department of Defense (DOD) issued a [news release](#) stating that it has called upon China to immediately return an unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV) that it unlawfully seized on December 15 in the South China Sea. A Chinese Navy vessel launched a small boat and seized the UUV as the oceanographic survey ship USNS Bowditch was attempting to retrieve it and a second UUV. The incident occurred in international waters about 50 nautical miles northwest of Subic Bay, the Philippines. (12/16/16)

[<http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1032823/chinese-seize-us-navy-underwater-drone-in-south-china-sea>].

White House – water infrastructure bill signed



President Obama signed into law the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act (**S. 612**), to provide improvements to the rivers and harbors of the United States, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, and for other purposes. (12/16/16) [<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-114s612enr/pdf/BILLS-114s612enr.pdf>].

USCG – VRP exercises re SMFF



The US Coast Guard issued a Marine Safety Information Bulletin (MSIB) announcing revisions to its earlier frequently asked questions (FAQ) regarding the 2016 National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program (NPREP) guidelines as they pertain to salvage and marine firefighting (SMFF) exercises and Government Initiated Unannounced Exercises (GIUEs). **MSIB 16-16** (12/16/16) [https://www.uscg.mil/msib/docs/016_16_12-16-2016.PDF].

Chesapeake Bay – proposed anchorage grounds



The US Coast Guard issued a **news release** stating that it is analyzing comments received in response to its proposed anchorage grounds in Chesapeake Bay. (12/16/16) [<http://www.uscgnews.com/go/doc/4007/2908962/>].

USCG – liquefied gas forum



The US Coast Guard issued an **announcement** stating that it co-hosted the second Liquefied Gas Senior Executive Forum with the Society of International Gas Tanker and Terminal Operators (SIGTTO) and the Society for Gas as a Marine Fuel (SGMF). Senior Coast Guard leaders and liquefied-gas-industry experts met for three days in Houston to prepare for increased use of liquefied gases throughout the maritime community and gain a deeper understanding of the intricacies each party faces. (12/16/16) [<http://mariners.coastguard.dodlive.mil/2016/12/16/12162016-2nd-liquefied-gas-senior-executive-forum-held/>].

USCG – safety alert re cooling jacket failures



The US Coast Guard issued a Safety Alert regarding MAN B&W MC-C main propulsion engines. Recent casualties have occurred where vessels with such engines have lost propulsion or suffered reduced maneuverability due to overheating caused by a loss of engine cooling water. Such water loss can be the result of the use of improper bolts or the improper installation of bolts holding the cooling jacket onto the cylinder cover. Engineering officers on such vessels should review applicable maintenance procedures and ensure compliance therewith. **Alert 17-16** (12/16/16)

[<https://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg545/alerts/1716.pdf>].

CMTS – Maritime Topic launch



The Committee on the Marine Transportation System (CMTS) issued a **bulletin** announcing that the CMTS Maritime Data Integrated Action Team (IAT), in conjunction with the Data.gov program office, is proud to announce the launch of the **Maritime Topic** on Data.gov. The Maritime Topic provides the Federal maritime community with a central location to archive and share datasets related to marine transportation. It includes an inventory of publicly available maritime datasets that are accessible through Data.gov as well as blog posts that allow agencies to highlight recent developments in the maritime data community. (12/16/16)

[<http://www.cmts.gov/Bulletin.aspx?id=4125>].

USN – 355-ship Navy sought



The US Navy issued a **news release** calling for a 355-ship Navy in its 2016 Force Structure Assessment, including twelve carriers, 104 large surface combatants, 52 small surface combatants, 38 amphibious ships, and 66 submarines. (12/16/16)

[http://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=98160].

Offshore New York – wind energy development



The Department of the Interior (DOI) issued a **press release** stating that wind energy development rights to over 79,000 acres of the US outer continental shelf offshore New York have been awarded following a competitive lease sale auction. (12/16/16) [<https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/interior-department-auctions-over-79000-acres-offshore-new-york-wind-energy>].

NATO – Operation Ocean Shield ends



NATO issued a press release stating that its counter-piracy mission in waters off the coast of Somalia, Operation Ocean Shield, has ended. Its ships successfully patrolled those waters since 2009. (12/15/16) [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_139420.htm].

Australia – STCW Convention amendments



The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) issued a notice explaining its approach to STCW Convention amendments due to take effect on 1 January 2017. **Marine Notice 20-16** (12/16/16) [<https://apps.amsa.gov.au/MOREview/MarineNoticeExternal.html>].

MREN – Sea level in its many aspects



In the December 2016 edition of Maritime Reporter and Engineering News, you can find my article entitled "**Sea level in its many aspects**". Everyone talks about sea level as it were a specific thing. Actually, sea level is calculated differently around the world. In addition, oceans are not level. Sea level is higher in Bermuda than in Charleston. The Pacific Ocean sea level at Panama is higher than the Atlantic Ocean sea level. Sea level worldwide is slowly rising. The major factor is thermal expansion of the water, but melting of glaciers and ice caps are also important. We should start taking steps now to minimize the impact of these changes. [<http://www.brymar-consulting.com/wp-content/uploads/MREN/MREN161200.pdf>].

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