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US & Canada – Joint Arctic Leaders’ Statement;
White House – US Arctic OCS withdrawal;
White House – US Atlantic OCS withdrawal;
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Denmark – new NOTAM system;
Denmark – mariner certificate validity check;
Singapore – online Change of Agency function;
Scotland – new emergency towing vessel; and
Winter/Summer Solstice – 1044 UTC, 21 December 2016.

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Bryant’s Maritime News

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US & Canada – Joint Arctic Leaders’ Statement



The United States and Canada issued the **Joint Arctic Leaders’ Statement** announcing a new partnership to embrace opportunities and confront challenges in the changing Arctic. The United States is designating the vast majority of US waters in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas as indefinitely off limits to offshore oil and gas leasing. Canada will designate all Arctic Canadian waters as indefinitely off limits to future offshore Arctic oil and gas licensing. Both countries are launching the first processes ever to identify sustainable shipping lanes throughout their connected Arctic waters, including traffic separation schemes, recommended routes, and Areas to Be Avoided. The US and Canadian Coast Guards have begun a strategy to phase down the use of

heavy fuel oil (HFO) in the Arctic. The two nations are calling for a binding international agreement to prevent the opening of unregulated fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean. (12/20/16) [<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/12/20/united-states-canada-joint-arctic-leaders-statement>].

White House – US Arctic OCS withdrawal



President Obama issued a **Memorandum** withdrawing certain portions of the US Arctic outer continental shelf (OCS) from mineral leasing. The portions affected include most of the US OCS seabed under the Chukchi and Bering Seas. (12/20/16) [<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/12/20/presidential-memorandum-withdrawal-certain-portions-united-states-arctic>]

White House – US Atlantic OCS withdrawal



President Obama issued a **Memorandum** withdrawing certain portions of the US Atlantic outer continental shelf (OCS) from mineral leasing. The areas affected currently lie within the North Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic Planning Areas. (12/20/16) [<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/12/20/presidential-memorandum-withdrawal-certain-areas-atlantic-coast-outer>].

USCG – Polar Code reminder



The US Coast Guard issued a **bulletin** reminding stakeholders that the safety provisions of the Polar Code have been incorporated by SOLAS Chapter XIV so as to be applicable to those vessels subject to SOLAS and operating in Polar waters. Compliance with those provisions becomes mandatory as of 1 January 2017. (12/20/16) [<http://mariners.coastguard.dodlive.mil/2016/12/20/12202016-polar-code-solas-applicability/>].

FWS – humpback whale



The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) promulgated a rule removing the current species-level listing of the humpback whale and, in its place, listing the Cape Verde Islands/Northwest Africa, Western North Pacific, Central America, and Arabian Sea distinct population segments (DPSs) as endangered and the Mexican DPS as threatened. Humpback whales in the remaining DPSs are no

longer covered by the Endangered Species Act. The rule enters into effect immediately. **81 Fed. Reg. 93639** (12/21/16)
[<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-12-21/pdf/2016-30483.pdf>].

EMSA – marine casualty overview



The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) posted its Annual Overview of Marine Casualties and Incidents 2016. The overview consists in a high-level analysis of accidents reported by the EU Member States in European Marine Casualty Information Platform (EMCIP). (12/20/16).

Denmark – new NOTAM system



The Danish Maritime Authority (DMA) issued a **news release** stating that, from 2 January 2017, Notices to Mariners will be available via a new and improved online system that also presents navigational warnings and shooting warnings. (12/20/16)

[<http://www.dma.dk/news/Sider/DanishMaritimeAuthorityimprovesinformationforseafarersvianewonlinesystem.aspx>]. *Note: Hopefully, the need for shooter warnings is infrequent.*

Denmark – mariner certificate validity check



The Danish Maritime Authority (DMA) issued a **news release** stating that it is now possible for anyone to check whether a STCW certificate issued by the DMA is valid. Entering the certificate's reference number on the verification webpage will show the certificate's validity and the functions that the certificate entitles the holder to perform. (12/20/16)

[<http://www.dma.dk/news/Sider/Nowitispossibletocheckthevalidityofseafarers%27certificatesonline.aspx>].

Singapore – online Change of Agency function



The Singapore Maritime and Port Authority (MPA) issued a circular announcing that, effective 3 January 2017, the owner or agent of a vessel that is in port will be able to electronically submit via Marinet an application for a Change of Agency. **Port Marine Circular 17-2016** (12/20/16)

[<http://www.mpa.gov.sg/web/portal/home/port-of-singapore/circulars-and-notices/detail/eb333373-51cd-4708-ab43-ob8b6a897cf1>].

Scotland – new emergency towing vessel



The UK Department for Transport (DfT) issued a [news release](#) announcing that a new, more capable vessel, Ievoli Black, will take over emergency towing duties around the north coast of Scotland from the turn of the year. (12/20/16) [<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-emergency-towing-vessel-for-scotland>].

Winter/Summer Solstice – 1044 UTC, 21 December 2016



The loud bang heard 1044 UTC (Universal Coordinated Time) today was the sun colliding with the Tropic of Capricorn. In the past, we might have used Greenwich Mean Time or GMT, but that was so 20th Century. For those in the Northern Hemisphere, this is the longest night of the year – hopefully you slept well. For those in the Southern Hemisphere, this is the longest day of the year – hopefully you paced yourselves. For those in an alternate universe, carry on.

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