



ON STATION

The Newsletter of the American Pilots' Association

December 18, 2024

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MSC 109: HISTORIC WIN FOR PILOT TRANSFER SAFETY!

In what was the most significant achievement for pilots at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) since the 2003 adoption of Resolution A.960 (Recommendations on Training and Certification and Operational Procedures for Maritime Pilots), at the 109th Session of IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 109), major amendments to IMO's pilot transfer arrangement (PTA) requirements were approved. The amendments consist of a shorter SOLAS regulation V/23 and a **mandatory** set of PTA Performance Standards.

Clay Diamond, APA Executive Director-General Counsel, served on the U.S. Delegation to MSC 109, held at IMO Headquarters from Dec. 2-6. The International Maritime Pilots' Association (IMPA) was represented by Captain Simon Pelletier, President, and Matthew Williams, Secretary-General.

Among the improvements to the existing PTA safety regime are: elimination of the "grandfather clause"; maximum service life for pilot ladders/manropes of 36 months from the date of manufacture; strengthened and clearer requirements for combination trapdoor arrangements; rules for securing pilot ladders at intermediate length; "pilot mark" on the side of ships (which is currently not mandated) has been made mandatory; and explicit right of pilots to refuse to use an unsafe or noncompliant PTA.

SOLAS, an international treaty imposing requirements on world shipping, is subject to a diplomatic 4-year approval cycle, so the new PTA regulatory scheme will not "enter into force" until January 1, 2028. MSC 109 did, at IMPA's request, approve a Circular urging governments around the world to voluntarily implement the new PTA requirements prior to the entry into force date.

Achieving this milestone was a 4-year process that included in depth planning and numerous meetings. APA appreciates IMPA's leadership in shepherding these amendments through the IMO process and also recognizes the U.S. Coast Guard for its strong support for APA's efforts to enhanced PTA safety both at home and abroad.



MSC 109 U.S. Delegation (l to r): Clay Diamond (APA), RADM Wayne Arguin (USCG/Head of Delegation) & Jeff Lantz (USCG)

NEW ORLEANS CONVENTION

The American Pilots' Association (APA) held its Biennial Convention in New Orleans, LA from October 21-25. The four Louisiana Pilot Groups hosted the Convention. The 2024 New Orleans Convention was attended by 250 of the Nation's State-licensed and U.S.-registered Great Lakes pilots, along with Captain Simon Pelletier, President of the International Maritime Pilots' Association (IMPA), and numerous pilot leaders from around the world.

APA President Jorge Viso presided over the Convention, which included an address from Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser (R) who spoke to the important role pilots have in ensuring the safe and efficient movement of ships up and down the Mississippi River and the country.

The six APA Regional Vice Presidents (see names on page 2) gave reports on their respective regions. Elections were also held at the Convention. Captain Viso was re-elected as President of the APA. Captain Michael Bopp (Crescent River Port Pilots Association) was elected to serve as the Vice President for the Gulf States (Louisiana) to replace Captain Michael Miller (Associated Branch Pilots). The APA greatly appreciates Captain Miller's work as Vice President and looks forward to (continued on page two)



Captain Jorge Viso (APA President) delivering the President's Report to APA Officers, Trustees, and Pilots.

*The Officers and Staff of the
American Pilots' Association
wish all Members and their families
Happy Holidays and a
Safe, Healthy and Prosperous
New Year!*

NEW ORLEANS CONVENTION

(continued from page one) Captain Bopp joining the leadership at the APA.

There were presentations from RDML Ben Evans (NOAA Coast Survey), Michael Emerson (USCG Office of Maritime Transportation Systems and Senior Arctic Advisor), Thomas Gordon, Col. USMC (ret) (Citadel Commandant of Cadets), Captain Simon Pelletier (President of IMPA), Captain Charles Tweedel (Sabine Pilots), Captain Lee Jackson (New Orleans-Baton Rouge Steamship Pilots Association), Captain Anne McIntyre (San Francisco Bar Pilots), Member Alvin Brown (NTSB), RADM David Barata (District 8 Commander), Captain Bradley Clare (Commanding Officer of the National Maritime Center), Matthew Williams (IMPA Secretary-General), and Captain Don Marcus, President International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots (IOMM&P).

Clay Diamond, APA Executive Director-General Counsel, gave his Executive Director's Report. Captain Viso provided updates on regional, national, and international issues in his President's Report.

The Navigation and Technology Committee was lead by Chairman, Captain Wesley Moore (Sabine Pilots), and included a presentation from Jorge Arroyo (USCG AIS/VDES/ATON Standards Development). The Safety Committee was led by Chairman, Captain Jonathan Samuel (Houston Pilots).

The Trustees provided updates on their States and Pilotage Districts. The Secretary-Treasurer provided detailed budget and finance reports and APA Committee Chairs delivered reports for the Finance Committee (Captain David Cuff), Bylaws (Captain Ben Borgie), Resolutions (Captain James Mahlmann), and Nominating (Captain Trey Thompson).

Other events included the Admiral's Cup Golf Tournament, Inland Fishing Trip hosted by Captain Bopp, APA Second Line, Dinner and River Cruise on the *CREOLE QUEEN*, Reception and Entertainment at the WWII Museum, nightly camaraderie at hospitality suites, and a spectacular gala on Friday night.

AMERICAN PILOTS' ASSOCIATION

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ON STATION is published by the American Pilots' Association, a non-profit professional association composed of groups of state-licensed pilots operating in each of the coastal states, as well as groups of U.S. registered pilots in the Great Lakes region. Each pilot in APA-member groups receives **ON STATION**, the costs of which are paid from the member's dues. Any comments, suggestions or questions concerning **ON STATION** should be directed to the attention of the APA office at the above address.

LEGAL COUNSEL

Clay Diamond directed the continually growing attorneys' meeting on Monday and delivered his Executive Director's Report. Mr. Diamond reported on a busy two years for the APA, including legal issues impacting safe navigation, liability, lessons learned from casualty investigations, daily operations, and updates to legislation impacting pilots. Brendan O'Shea, APA Deputy Director-Associate General Counsel, assisted Clay with both the attorneys' meeting and Executive Director's Report.



Clay Diamond (APA Executive Director-General Counsel) addressing the convention

ADMIRAL'S CUP WINNERS

The Admiral's Cup was played at Bayou Oaks on October 20. For the first time, a team from the Virginia Pilot Association won the Cup. Congratulations to Captain Chisman and his team!



Captain Avery Waightsill, Captain Whiting Chisman, Captain Adam Halstead (Virginia Pilots Association), and Clay Diamond

"The Virginia Pilots have been chasing us for a long time, but my hats off to them for also being the best dressed team."

- Captain David Cuff (The Pilots' Association for the Bay & River Delaware)

As is customary, the tournament winners were immediately threatened by protest. However, due to a backlog with the Appeals Committee, the Golf Commissioner decided to certify the results

as final regardless.

"Look, I want to protect the integrity of the appeals process. I am waiting for an appeal to process with the APA Golf Commission Review Council from October of 2022. These are volunteers, you can't overwhelm them. Besides, you're never going to make everyone happy, it's golf."

- APA Golf Commissioner O'Shea

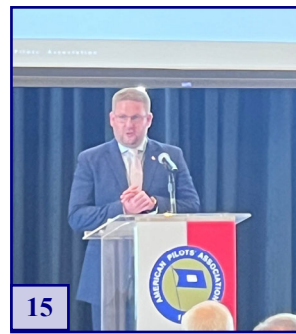
APA looks forward to the 2026 Cup in Hawaii!

DON'T FORGET THE APA PAC FUND

Send your voluntary contribution to:
APA Political Action Committee
499 South Capitol St., SW—Suite 409
Washington, DC 20003-4023

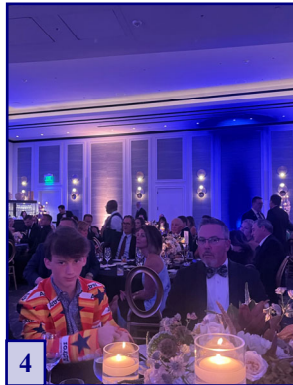
SPEAKERS AT THE 2024 APA BIENNIAL CONVENTION

1. Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser (R); 2. RDML Ben Evans, NOAA Coast Survey and APA President Captain Jorge Viso; 3. RADM David Barata, USCG 8th District; 4. Michael Emerson, USCG Maritime Transportation Systems; 5. Captain Charles Tweedel (Sabine Pilots); 6. Colonel Tom Gordon, USMC ret and Commandant of Citadel; 7. Captain Jonathan Samuel (APA Safety Committee Chair), Jorgo Arroyo, USCG, AIS/VDES/ATON Standards Development, Captain Wesley Moore (APA NavTech Chair); 8. NTSB Member Alvin Brown; 9. Captain Bradley Clare, NMC Commanding Officer; 10. Captain Anne McIntyre (San Francisco Bar Pilots); 11. Captain Lee Evans (New Orleans Baton Rouge Steamship Association); 12. IOMM&P President, Captain Don Marcus and Captain Kip Carlson; 13. Captain Ronald Leighton III (South East Alaska Pilots Association); 14. APA Deputy Director-Associate General Counsel, Brendan O'Shea; 15. IMPA Secretary-General Matthew Williams; 16. IMPA President, Captain Simon Pelletier.



MEMORIES AT THE 2024 APA BIENNIAL CONVENTION

1. Captain Jeremy Nielson (Columbia River Pilots) answers a question on Engine Power Limiters; 2. APA President, Captain Jorge Viso serving beignets after the *CREOLE QUEEN* river boat cruise; 3. Captain William Heu (North Carolina Trustee) delivers a report; 4. Captain Clint Winegar with his son at the gala discuss baseball 5. APA at the WWII Museum; 6. Captain John Carlier (California Trustee) speaking to the crowd; 7. WWII Reception from Above; 8. Captain Rich Astles (Rhode Island Trustee) providing an update from the Northeast; 9. A 100 Piece Band Kicking the Convention Off in Style; 10. Operations Director Lisa Townshend speaking after Captain Viso thanked her for another successful convention—too many to count; 11. Pilots getting ready for the Gala Meal and Band; and 12. Captain John Boyce (APA Great Lakes VP) and son getting a jump start on the next convention.



FHPA ANNUAL MINORITY MENTORING

“Besides Florida’s crystal-clear water, natural springs, abundant wildlife and beautiful palm trees, Florida is also home to a unique piloting system. We have 15 deep-water ports, all the way from the Northwest panhandle Port of Pensacola to the Southernmost Port of Key West, and 9 pilot associations that service all of them (many pilot associations handle more than one Port). There is also one trade association, the Florida Harbor Pilots Association (FHPA), which was established in 1868, that all nine Florida Pilot associations are a member of. FHPA is governed by a Board of Directors, and every pilot association has a set number of votes, depending on the size of their membership. We believe that sharing resources and uniting in our issues, makes us collectively stronger and better. Whether it is a one pilot, or a twenty-pilot association, they have the backing



Pictured left to right: Captain Niall Kennedy, Canaveral Pilots, Abram Chavez, FHPA Scholarship Recipient

of the entire Florida pilotage system behind them.

Another very rewarding result of the FHPA, is our ability to collaborate our mentoring efforts and among other things, fund an Annual Minority Mentoring Scholarship. The

program is open to cadets from one of the seven national maritime academies, who show enthusiasm and aptitude for a possible career as a state harbor pilot. The selected recipients receive a \$2,500 scholarship, plus all their pre-approved travel expenses to attend a short training session with a pilot association in Florida, where they receive the scholarship, get hands-on experience, and are exposed to many aspects of a harbor pilot’s career. Due to the overwhelming popularity and continued support of this program, our Board voted to increase the number of scholarships from two to three. We have been notified that several past scholarship recipients have taken the Florida pilot exam, which is encouraging and helps solidify that the program is working toward the goal of introducing our profession to the next generation of mariners. For more information on our scholarship and general information on the FHPA, visit our website at www.floridapilots.com.”

- Submitted by the FHPA

HELLO, FROM THE WESTERN GREAT LAKES PILOTS ASSOCIATION



“Western Great Lakes Pilots Association (WGLPA) is one of three U.S. pilot groups on the Great Lakes, encompassing Lakes Michigan, Superior, Huron, and the St. Mary’s River (District # 3). WGLPA has 23 Registered Pilots and two Apprentice Pilots, most of whom came up the officer ranks of the domestic Great Lakes Jones Act fleet.

Following the opening of the modern St. Lawrence Seaway in 1959, the Great Lakes Pilotage Act of 1960 established the current structure of pilotage on the Lakes. Great Lakes pilotage is regulated by the U.S. Coast Guard.

District # 3 is the largest of the three districts with 81.5% of the total surface area and 83.4% of the total shoreline (nearly 10,000 miles) of the entire Great Lakes. WGLPA services about a dozen major ports and several dozen smaller ports. Common traffic/cargo trends include steel imports and grain exports. Passenger vessel traffic is responsible for a substantial portion of Western’s overall pilotage hours in recent years.



Ship in Soo Locks

Pilot assignments can be as little as an hour or so for a routine harbor move, to up to 48 hours for certain translake assignments. Western’s skilled four-person dispatch team manages the unique logistical challenges of pilotage across such a vast area. The heart of District # 3 is Sault St. Marie, MI in which WGLPA is head-quartered with pilot stations on the north and south ends of the St. Mary’s River. Within this river, the “Soo Locks” facilitate the 21-foot lift from Lake Huron up to Lake Superior. From an economic standpoint, the Soo Locks is one of the most significant pieces of infrastructure in North America and is undergoing a 3-billion-dollar modernization project.

About 35 million people depend on the Great Lakes for drinking water and livelihood. WGLPA helps protect this essential natural resource. ”



APA NEWS

AVOID THE NMC REJECTING AN INCOMPLETE APPLICATION

The NMC announced a significant policy change in October that all pilots should be aware of. Per the notice posted at the below link, the NMC will begin rejecting incomplete merchant mariner credential (MMC) application submissions during initial screening.

This a big change, and is aimed at eliminating the practice of submitting a partial application to “get in line.” Pilots should ensure to submit a complete application as well as other administration NMC guidance, such as submit pdfs, applications should be a single pdf (not 8-10 different pdf pages for the same application), label your files and emails correctly, and keep a record of your submissions.

If an application is found to be missing any of the below items during initial screening, the applicant will be e-mailed a Notice of Rejected Incomplete Application indicating what is missing. The applicant will have to resubmit the entire application with the missing items. The documentation in the original application will not be retained by the NMC or returned to the applicant.

Applications Will be Rejected for the Following

- a complete CG-719B on the current form
- evidence the applicant has or applied for a TWIC
- evidence of payment of the evaluation fee
- evidence of satisfying applicable drug requirements

Pilots are strongly encouraged to pay particular attention to the page 2 notice of rejected incomplete application that lists common errors the areas that often lead to rejected applications, such as missing signatures on page 4, credential requested, etc...

https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/NMC/pdfs/announcements/2024/rejection_of_incomplete_mmc_apps_during_initial_screening_102224.pdf



The APA continues to work with the NMC on these and other issues and is happy to assist with credentialing or other issues that arise with the NMC. On the left is Brendan O'Shea with Captain Clare, Jim Stewart, and Anne Seither at the NMC during a recent site visit by the APA.

2026 CONVENTION

We're going to Hawaii!! The Hawaii Pilots along with the West Coast Pilots have agreed to sponsor the 2026 Convention. Mark your calendars, the 2026 Convention will be held at the Fairmont Orchid on the Island of Hawaii, October 19-23, 2026. The Admiral's Cup will be played on October 18th and the APA is also exploring an alternate activity given the popularity of the fishing event at this past convention.

The APA appreciates the Hawaii and West Coast Pilots willingness to sponsor the 2026 Convention and looking forward to seeing you on the Big Island in October of 2026!



Captain Sinclair Brown (Hawaii Pilots) graciously accepting the “offer” to sponsor the 2026 Convention



ELECTIONS, SELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS, ETC.

The following pilots associations announced new officers:

♦ Houston Pilots: **Captain Clint A. Winegar** (Presiding Officer), **Captain Matthew H. Glass** (2nd Officer), and **Captain William M. Kern** (Boatkeeper).

♦ San Francisco Bar Pilots: **Captain John Carlier** (President), **Captain Kris Laakso** (Vice President), **Captain Matt Lingo** (Secretary), **Captain Zack Kellerman** (Chief Financial Officer), **Captain Einar Nyborg** (Board Member), **Captain Eric Robinson** (Board Member), and **Captain Dylan Epperson** (Board Member).

♦ SouthEast Alaska Pilots' Association: **Captain Ronald Leighton III** (President), **Captain Kristofer Mackie** (Vice President), **Captain Matt Lundamo** (Secretary), **Captain Patrick Brandon** (Board Member), **Captain Eric Collins** (Board Member), **Captain Robert Dersham** (Board Member), and **Captain Douglas Sturm** (Board Member).

♦ Virginia Pilot Association: **Captain J.W. Whiting Chisman**, **January N. Collins**, **Charles I Boggs Jr.**, **Chadwick M. Jamison**, and **Jacob Johnson** (Board of Directors).