



# ON STATION

The Newsletter of the American Pilots' Association

December 15, 2021

Page 1



Captain Jorge Viso  
APA President

## HOLIDAY MESSAGE TO APA-MEMBER PILOTS

As we approach the holiday season, we are reminded that it is a time to celebrate family, friends and the blessings we, as Americans, enjoy. For many, it is also a time to honor our faith and to remember the people most important to us – those who are with us and those we wish could be with us. It is also a time to look back on the year and reflect on

all of the things that have happened.

While the challenges associated with COVID-19 lessened in 2021, the pandemic continues to create inconveniences and hardships in our personal lives. This is especially true for those who lost a loved one.

Professionally, COVID-related factors that negatively impacted maritime trade and vessel traffic in our ports have subsided and for most ports tonnage has returned to or exceeded pre-pandemic levels. Cruise ships, which were particularly hard hit by COVID restrictions, are now being piloted in and out of ports at an increasing rate and bookings for 2022 look promising.

Despite these signs of good news, challenges and uncertainty in port operations and movement of maritime commerce will no doubt continue into 2022. As the current year closes, however, I want to focus on the positive and consider all for which we, as pilots, have to be thankful and feel good about. As APA president, I think of the more than 1,200 member pilots who, even at the height of the pandemic, never stopped safely moving ships of all types and sizes into, out of, and within U.S. ports. We should all be proud of this service. I certainly am.

APA members pilot well over 90% of all large ocean-going ships moving in U.S. waters and these ships carry goods and products that Americans need and our economy has come to rely upon. The critical work pilots do to keep maritime commerce moving safely and efficiently continues unabated every hour of every day of the year.

As I've said before, compulsory pilotage is navigation safety regulation and it is the most effective means available to governments to protect the marine environment, assure the safety of the people who live near our ports and waterways, and facilitate responsible waterborne commerce. It is effective because it places on the

bridge of a ship a licensed professional with unmatched knowledge of the local waterways, expert shiphandling skills, and whose sole purpose in being there is to protect the public interest.

At a time of the year when it is customary to think of the welfare of others, it is important that we, as pilots, remind ourselves that our primary responsibility is to serve the citizens of the State in which we are licensed by protecting the marine environment and keeping maritime commerce flowing safely and efficiently.

I'm pleased to say that in our country, the piloting profession is as strong as ever and it is respected by the public and oversight officials. We must, however, keep in mind that we will always face challenges. There will always be those who, to advance their own business interests or agendas, will seek to damage pilotage or weaken pilotage standards. Some of you may have read in the maritime press that this very thing is going on in Brisbane, Australia right now. Collectively, we must always be vigilant, guard against these efforts and keep the focus always on safety and protecting the marine environment.

Piloting is demanding, difficult and – as we are tragically reminded from time to time – dangerous. It is also, however, a career that allows us to do things few in the world can do. Our fellow citizens count on us to safely bring massive oil tankers, passenger ships, cargo ships and container vessels into port so that hospitals are supplied, cars are fueled, homes are heated, store shelves are stocked and people can recreate as they chose. Not many people can say that their careers make such a difference in the lives of others. We are fortunate to be pilots and should always be proud of our profession and grateful for what we do for a living.





## MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE CHARTS WAY AHEAD FOR MASS

The International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Maritime Safety Committee met virtually for its 104th Session (MSC 104) from October 4-8, 2021. Paul Kirchner, Senior Counsel, represented APA. While MSC 104 considered COVID-19 guidance for seafarers, steps to reduce piracy, potential changes to pilot transfer regulations, and other issues, the most significant agenda item at this meeting was the ongoing discussion of Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) and how IMO will deal with this matter going forward.

At MSC 104, it was agreed that, rather than attempting to amend all of the relevant IMO treaties and regulations to accommodate MASS, "a goal-based" stand-alone instrument to address MASS should be developed. The target completion for this new MASS instrument, which to many IMO observers seems optimistic, is 2025. This decision follows completion of the regulatory scoping exercise (RSE) in May 2021. The RSE analyzed IMO treaties to assess what changes might be necessary to regulate MASS. The RSE was discussed in detail in the previous edition of *ON STATION*.

IMO defines "goal-based" as the setting of high-level standards that are met through regulations established by countries that are later verified by independent auditors. In these terms, a stand-alone MASS instrument would consist of broad goals and associated functional requirements that would be enforced through rules and regulations promulgated by national administrations which, in the U.S., would be the Coast Guard.

MSC 104 directed the MSC chair (currently Ms.

Mayte Medina of the U.S. Coast Guard), along with IMO Secretariat staff, to draft a "road map" to guide the development of the goal-based stand-alone MASS instrument. This "road map" would include the scope of the work, steps and timelines, as well as coordination of work with other IMO committees and subcommittees. This road map will be submitted to MSC 105, which meets from April 18-29, 2022, for approval.

MSC 104 also agreed that the MASS Working Group, which worked on the RSE, should be re-established at MSC 105 to begin work on the MASS stand-alone goal-based instrument.

Several papers were also submitted to MSC 104 dealing with pilot transfer arrangements (PTA). In one, China proposed a comprehensive review and rewrite of SOLAS Regulation V/23, the governing PTA provision, and related IMO documents. The International Maritime Pilots' Association (IMPA) submitted a response paper generally supporting the China proposal and discussing a few items in the regulation that should be addressed in such a review. Due to time constraints, action on the PTA papers was postponed until MSC 105.



## CAPTAIN VISO PARTICIPATES IN IMPA EXECUTIVE MEETING

The International Maritime Pilots' Association (IMPA) held its Executive Meeting on December 8. The Executive Committee is comprised of Captain Simon Pelletier, President, and the six Vice Presidents: Captain Jean-Philippe Casanova (France), Captain Alvaro Moreno (Panama), Captain Ricardo Falcao (Brazil), Captain John Pearn (UK), Captain Jason Choi (South Korea), and Captain Oumar Drame (Senegal). The meeting was conducted as a hybrid, with some attendees in-person on the HQS Wellington, and others attending remotely.

The Executive Committee meeting was preceded on December 7 by a meeting of IMPA's Advisory Committee, which consists of Captain Jorge Viso (USA), Captain Johannes Sivertsen (Norway), Captain Erik Dalege (Germany), Captain Peter Dann (Australia), and Captain Michio Nakayama (Japan).

In addition to providing input on a number of agenda items, Captain Viso participated in the meeting of IMPA's Navigation Technology Subcommittee. At this sub-committee meeting, Viso gave an overview of the NAVTECH conference, held in Tampa, FL from December 1-2 (see page 3), and also participated in discussions on IMPA guidelines for PPU and GPS signal jamming/spoofing.

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On December 1-2, the Navtech 2021 conference was held in Tampa, Florida. Previously held in Seattle, starting as the AIS Conference in 2001, and more recently as the eNavigation Conference, the name was changed to Navtech to better reflect the continuing evolution of maritime navigation technology and to broaden the scope of future conferences.

The venue was changed in 2021 from Seattle to Tampa due to COVID restrictions. With attendance this year at pre-COVID levels, the event’s organizer may bring the conference back to Tampa in alternate years. As has been the case in the past 5+ years, APA played an active role in developing the conference agenda and was a sponsor of this year’s event.



Mr. Bill Cairns

Following the opening day keynote address, Captain Paul Amos of the Columbia River Pilots and chair of the APA NAVTECH Committee, moderated the session on *Operators Experiences with Navigation Technology and Automation*. Captain

Amos was joined on stage by panel member Captain Brett Baker of the Tampa Bay Pilots. Captain Jorge Viso, President of American Pilots’ Association, moderated the *Manufacturers’ Session: New Technologies in the Market Today*, which included representatives of several PPU manufacturers.



Captain Carolyn Kurtz

Captain Simon Pelletier, President of the International Maritime Pilots’ Association, opened day 2 with a thought-provoking keynote address offering a critique of autonomous shipping, noting in particular the “autonomous” ship Yara Birkeland was flying the Hotel flag in the picture of its maiden voyage!



Captain Paul Amos

Following Captain Pelletier, Bill Cairns, APA Technical Director moderated the session on *Existing Practices: The Tampa Experience* and was joined by Captain Carolyn Kurtz of the Tampa Bay Pilots, who addressed the pilot’s perspective on the port and their interaction with the USCG Vessel Traffic Services and the NOAA P.O.R.T.S. system.



**APA & CMPA at Navtech Conference**

From left to right: Tristan Laflamme (CMPA Executive Director), Captain Jorge Viso (APA President), Captain Simon Pelletier (CMPA/IMPA President), and Clay Diamond (APA Executive Director-General Counsel)

Other speakers familiar to APA member pilots included Captain Alain Arseneault, President of the Canadian National Center of Expertise On Maritime Pilotage, and also George Burkley of the Maritime Pilots Institute.

Comments and critiques of the conference were all very positive. APA member pilots are encouraged to attend next year’s Navtech Conference, now scheduled for December 6-7, 2022 in Seattle.

**CAPTAIN ED OLSON  
12/4/1971 – 9/3/2021**

The Columbia River Pilots are sad to report that Captain Ed Olson passed away on September 3, 2021. Captain Olson contracted COVID-19 and had been hospitalized for several weeks.

Captain Olson began his maritime career as a commercial fisherman off the Oregon coast before going to work as a towboater for Tidewater Barge Lines in 1991. After obtaining his pilotage for the Columbia River, he joined the Columbia River Pilots on June 1, 2019. Captain Olson had almost completed his two and a half year training program and would have obtained his unlimited Oregon state pilot license in November of this year.



Captain Ed Olson

Captain Olson’s father, Captain Elroy Olson, is also a Columbia River Pilot and is a state Pilot Commissioner representing the Columbia River Pilots on the Oregon State Board of Maritime Pilots.

Captain Olson leaves behind his wife Rena and daughters Hannah (24), Emily (23), and Grace (17).

The Columbia River Pilots issued a statement, reading in part, “We are heartbroken to lose such a fine man and great pilot. We will miss Ed’s positive attitude, his hearty laugh, and his willingness to take on the most demanding assignments.”

The APA officers and staff offer our sincere condolences to Captain Olson’s family.



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEET IN WASHINGTON, DC

The 2021 “off-year” meeting of the Board of Trustees of the American Pilots’ Association (APA) was held in Washington, DC from October 18-20. The meeting, which was presided over by APA President, Captain Jorge Viso, was attended by the 27 Trustees representing the 24 coastal States and 3 Great Lakes pilotage districts, as well as the APA Secretary Treasurer, Captain Whit Smith, and the following regional Vice Presidents:

Captain Eric Nielsen, North Atlantic  
 Captain Crayton Walters, South Atlantic  
 Captain Clint Winegar, Gulf States  
 Captain Michael Miller, Gulf States (Louisiana)  
 Captain Hans Antonsen, Pacific States  
 Captain John Boyce, Great Lakes

APA Operations Director, Lisa Townshend, was appointed as recording secretary for the meeting.

In addition to discussing national issues of concern and receiving updates on the latest APA activities, the Trustees also heard from the most senior U.S. Coast Guard officer.

Captain Jorge Viso, APA President, opened the first day’s session with welcoming remarks and announcements, and then introduced Admiral Karl Schultz, 26th Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard. Admiral Schultz discussed the latest Coast Guard initiatives and priorities, but also emphasized how important the ongoing partnership between the Coast Guard and APA is to maritime safety. He also praised the strong relationships between APA-member pilots’ associations and local Captains of the Port, calling these relationships “linchpins” to navigation and port safety.



Captain George Quick, MM&P

Following Admiral Schultz’ remarks, Captain Viso delivered the APA President’s Report. He discussed the various challenges pilots have faced and met during the past year, the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had, and continues to have, on the entire maritime community, including pilots, and the actions APA has taken to support its membership. Reflecting on an eventful and busy year since the last



Captain Jorge Viso

trustees meeting in 2020, Captain Viso stated, “The State pilot system and the Great Lakes pilot system are only as strong as the pilots within each State and pilotage district...I’m confident that these systems are as strong as they have ever been.”

The President’s Report also featured an update on APA’s international efforts, including an overview of issues at IMO, ISO and IALA. Captain Viso then reported on IMPA activities and provided information on the upcoming IMPA Congress in Cancun, Mexico June 12-18, 2022.

APA’s NAVTECH Committee, under the leadership of its chairman, Captain Paul Amos (Columbia River Pilots), and vice chairman, Captain Jonathan Samuel (Houston Pilots), held a productive, informative, and well-attended meeting on the afternoon of the first day of meetings. APA Technology Director, Bill Cairns, gave a detailed account of the relevant activities at IMO, IALA and ISO. Captain Samuel discussed the ongoing work of APA’s Pilot Boarding Safety Group. Finally, George Burkley (Maritime Pilots Institute) gave a thought-provoking talk on “The Changing Requirements of Piloting Technology.”

During the course of the two-day meeting each Trustee gave a report on his or her respective state or pilotage district. APA Secretary-Treasurer, Captain Whit Smith (Charleston Pilots), updated the Trustees on the Association’s budget and other financial matters.



Executive Director-General Counsel, Clay Diamond, provided a comprehensive overview of APA activities, projects, and plans. Paul Kirchner, Senior Counsel, talked about IMO’s work on autonomous vessels.

Captain George Quick, gave his report as a Vice President of the Masters, Mates and Pilots, and Captain Whit Smith, who is also President of the Charleston Pilots, previewed the APA Biennial Convention, to be held in Charleston, SC from October 16-21, 2022.

See page 4 for more pictures from the 2021 Board of Trustees meeting.



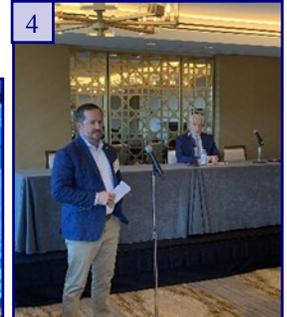
Captain Whit Smith



Clay Diamond

**IMAGES FROM THE 2021 APA BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

1. Admiral Karl Schultz and Captain Jorge Viso; 2. Trustees observe the meeting; 3. Captain Crayton Walters (South Carolina); 4. Captain Ben Borgie (Florida); 5. Captain John Carlier (California); 6. Captain Hans Antonsen (Alaska); 7. Captain Trey Thompson (Georgia); 8. Bill Cairns discusses NAVTECH issues; 9. & 10. Trustees observe the meeting; 11. Captain Michael Miller (Louisiana); 12. George Burkley (MPI); 13. Paul Kirchner (APA); 14. Trustees observe the meeting; and 15. Captain Paul Amos (Oregon/NAVTECH Chair) and Captain Jonathan Samuel (Texas/NAVTECH Vice Chair).



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# APA NEWS



## NIELSEN HONORED AS BALTIMORE'S PORT PERSON OF THE YEAR

In October, the Propeller Club of Baltimore awarded Captain Eric Nielsen, President of the Association of Maryland Pilots, its 2021 "Port Person of the Year Award."

Nielsen, a 1981 graduate of the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, has served as president of the Association of Maryland Pilots (AMP) for more than 20 years. In addition to his role as the President of the AMP, Captain Nielsen has served on numerous local civic and port boards, including as current President of the Baltimore Maritime Exchange.

Captain Nielsen is also currently Senior Vice President of the American Pilots' Association.



Captain Eric Nielsen



## "PHILLY PILOTS" DELIVER CHEESE STEAKS TO COAST GUARD CUTTER

In November, Captain David Cuff, President of the Pilots' Association for the Bay and River Delaware (PABRD), along with Captain Drew Hodgens, pilot with the PABRD and Chairman of the local mariners advisory committee, delivered Philly Cheesesteaks to the crew of the USCG Cutter WILLIAM TATE. Captain Cuff said, "We wanted to thank them for all they do for our country and for our port in particular."



Captain David Cuff (left) and Cutter WILLIAM TATE Commanding Officer



A Pilot Boat for the PABRD pulls along side USCG Cutter WILLIAM TATE so that Captain Cuff and Captain Hodgens can conduct their "underway replenishment."



## TAMPA BAY PILOTS EARN PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

On October 20, 2021, the Tampa Bay Pilots were presented with the Coast Guard's Meritorious Public Service Award. The award recognized the Tampa Bay Pilots' "dedication to the state of Florida's as well as the nation's economic welfare throughout the COVID-19 pandemic [by] ensuring the movement of essential commodities and fuel while the vast majority of citizens sheltered in the comfort of their homes."



Pictured above from left to right are: Captain Glynn, Captain Riley, Captain Matthew Thompson (USCG), Captain Wrasse, Captain Sears, Captain Timmel, CDR Christian Miura (USCG), and Captain Baker.



## BISCAYNE BAY PILOTS SUPPORT USCG JROTC

In November, Captain Geoffrey Pool of the Biscayne Bay Pilots (pictured center in blue shirt) spoke about piloting and the merchant marine to U.S. Coast Guard JROTC students at Mast Academy in Miami. "We are all proud of our profession and the maritime industry and try to make sure young people are fully aware of the opportunities," said Captain Poole.



## ELECTIONS, SELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS, ETC.

The following pilots associations announced new officers:

- ◆ San Francisco Bar Pilots: **Captain John Carlier** (President), **Captain Kris Laakso** (Vice President), **Captain Zack Kellerman** (CFO), **Captain Matt Lingo** (Secretary), **Captain Einar Nyborg** (Board), and **Captain Eric Robinson** (Board).
- ◆ Sabine Pilots Association: **Captain Andrew Guidry** (President), **Captain Brent Goodridge** (Vice President), **Captain Andrew Swan** (Secretary/Treasurer), and **Captain Leslie Hurd** (Pilot Boat Superintendent).
- ◆ Southwest Alaska Pilots Association: **Captain Ian Maury** (President), **Captain Peter Garay** (Vice President), **Captain Joshua Weston** (Secretary / Treasurer), **Captain James Cunningham** (Board), **Captain Matthew Michalski** (Board), **Captain Christopher R. Mitchell** (Board), and **Captain Andrew Wakefield** (Board).