



ON STATION

The Newsletter of the American Pilots' Association

September 30, 2025

APA HIRES NEW ASSISTANT OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

With the impending retirement of long-time APA Operations Director, Lisa Townshend, APA has hired Ms. Sinthia Kim to join the APA staff. Ms. Kim, who will start her employment with APA on October 6, 2025, will initially serve as Assistant Operations Director. Upon Mrs. Townshend's retirement on December 31, 2026—which will mark more than 46 years with APA—Ms. Kim will take over as Operations Director.



Ms. Sinthia Kim

"It is an understatement to say that hiring someone to replace an employee with five decades of experience with APA was a challenge," said APA Executive Director-General Counsel, Clay Diamond. "But Sinthia's education, professional background, and life experience make her immensely qualified, perhaps uniquely qualified, to assume this critical role for our Association," Diamond continued.

In her roles as Assistant Operations Director and Operations Director, Sinthia will provide executive-level administrative support to the President, Executive Director-General Counsel, and Deputy Director-Associate General Counsel. This support includes having the key role in the planning and execution of APA conferences; maintaining the office's administrative records, office equipment and supplies; assisting in the maintenance of the office's financial records; providing clerical support to Association executives; and delivering written and verbal communications to members, government, and private sector partners.

Ms. Kim graduated from the University of Massachusetts Amherst with a bachelor's degree in Business Management with a concentration on Hotel, Restaurant, and Travel Management. She comes to APA after more than 20 years of experiences plan-

ning and executing high-impact conferences, corporate meetings, and strategic initiatives across associations, nonprofits, law firms, and the hospitality industry. She also did a brief stint with Sony where she taught executives English as a Second Language (ESL). Most recently, Ms. Kim was the Manager of Conferences for a very large trade association, the Associated Contractors of America.

Early in her career, Sinthia gained a foundation in hotel operations, including sales, venue management, and end-to-end logistics. She transitioned to Exxon Mobil where she worked for many years in global meetings and events. Sinthia has also worked for three different trade associations and one law firm in Washington, DC where she managed meeting and conference in a national and international setting. Please join us in welcoming Sinthia to the APA.

Of Ms. Kim's hiring, APA President Captain Jorge Viso said, "We are excited to bring Sinthia to our team at APA. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in event planning and execution across national and international organizations. This background, combined with her can do attitude and experiences across multiple industries, make her a perfect fit for her new role with us."

APA MEMBERSHIP CONTINUES TO GROW AS THE SAN JUAN BAY PILOTS JOIN

The San Juan Bay Pilots (SJBP) have rejoined the APA! The SJBP, who have not been APA members for nearly 30 years, applied for reinstatement to the APA in February of this year. After receiving their application, APA had numerous virtual meetings, which led to an in-person site visit, including ship ride-alongs, by APA President, Captain Jorge Viso, Executive Director-General-General Counsel Clay Diamond, and Deputy Director-Associate General Counsel, Brendan O'Shea. In June 2025, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to reinstate the SJBP as APA members. Welcome aboard SJBP!



UPDATE FROM MSC

At the 110th Session of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 110), which was held June 18-27, 2025, the IMO adopted revisions to SOLAS Regulation V/23, as well as the new MANDATORY Performance Standards for pilot Transfer Arrangements (PTA). APA President Jorge Viso and Director-General Counsel Clay Diamond represented the interests of U.S. pilots as members of the International Maritime Pilots' Association (IMPA) Delegation.



Clay Diamond (APA) and IMO Secretary-General, Arsenio Dominguez

The implementation of the new PTA requirements will be phased approach, which is consistent with most major revisions to IMO instruments. In short, the phased entry into force of the new PTA requirements will commence on January 1, 2028, and will be complete by April 1, 2030.

Recognizing the importance of the new PTA requirements, however, MSC 110 also adopted a "Voluntary Early Implementation" Circular urging governments to implement the new PTA requirements prior to the entry into force dates. APA will work with the U.S. Coast Guard to urge the agency to encourage U.S. flagged vessels to implement the new PTA requirements earlier than the formal entry into force dates.

MSC 110 also approved the new PTA poster (which was prepared by IMPA) that is distributed to ships and government authorities around the world to assist in complying with the PTA requirements.

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.

This effort to enhance PTA began more than five years ago and was the result of our discussions with APA-member groups, constant communications with the U.S. Coast Guard and IMPA, numerous IMO committee/subcommittee sessions, as well as many IMO working group meetings and a culminating IMO drafting group meeting. APA worked closely with the IMPA leadership throughout this 5-year process and wish to thank IMPA President, Captain Simon Pelletier, and Secretary General, Mr. Matthew Williams, for their constant support, leadership, and technical expertise at IMO. This major milestone for pilot safety would not have possible without the efforts of our international association partners!

See the below IMPA link for details on this milestone achievement.

[https://www.impahq.org/sites/default/files/content-files/MSC.1-Circ.1428-Rev.1%20-%20Required%20Pilot%20Transfer%20Arrangements%20For%20Pilots%20And%20Other%20Personnel%20\(Secretariat\).pdf](https://www.impahq.org/sites/default/files/content-files/MSC.1-Circ.1428-Rev.1%20-%20Required%20Pilot%20Transfer%20Arrangements%20For%20Pilots%20And%20Other%20Personnel%20(Secretariat).pdf)

IMPA SAFETY CAMPAIGN



IMPA published a report on its annual pilot transfer safety campaign. The report will be submitted to the IMO to inform pilot safety efforts. Highlights from the report include:

- The number of reports submitted was 5285, with 741 of those reports coming from North America.
- Over 940 pilots participated in the reporting.
- Pilots reported a 14% non-compliant rate.
- There was an 18% non-compliant rate in North America.
- There was no significant change to historic non-compliance trends.
- Pilot ladders remain the leading source of non-compliant observations.
- 10% of non-compliant ladders were not secured to a strongpoint.
- 85% of non-compliant observations were not reported to port State authorities.

APA encourages pilots to continue to report non-compliant or unsafe pilot transfer arrangements to your local Coast Guard Captain of the Port.

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

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Both the House and Senate have now passed their versions of the Coast Guard Authorization Act (CGAA), the legislative “vehicle” where most provisions of interest to pilots end up. The two chambers are in the process of “conferencing,” the process by which the staffs meet to discuss the differences between the two bills and agree on the contents of the CGAA that will be sent back to the House and Senate for a vote before it will be enacted in law.

During the introduction and passing of the House (H.R. 4275) and Senate (S.524) CGAAs, there have been several provisions that the APA has been monitoring, including (in order of appearance in the two bills):

Great Lakes and Saint Lawrence River Cooperation Vessel Traffic Service

Secretary of the Coast Guard

MMC Licensing and Documentation System Requirements

Great Lakes Icebreaking

Report on Condition of Aids to Navigation

Merchant Mariner Credentialing

Grossly Negligent Operations of a Vessel

Designation of Pilotage Waters for the Straits of Mackinac

Improving Vessel Traffic Service Monitoring

Cyber Incident Training

Navigational Protocols

Anchorage

National Advisory Committee on Autonomous Maritime Systems

Pilot Program for Governance and Oversight of Small Uncrewed Maritime Systems

Other Uncrewed Systems Legislation (training, technology report, and capabilities report)

Extension of Cetacean Desk for Puget Sound Region Use of Marine Casualty Investigations

It is important to keep in mind that all of the above draft legislative provisions, as well as other legislative provisions may change, or even be removed entirely from the eventual Coast Guard Authorization Act. However, the fact that the above have passed one or both of the two chambers make it likely that many of the above provisions, or some form of them, will become law. If you have any questions about the contents of the previous listed legislative provisions, or other Federal Legislation, please contact the APA.

APA will continue to monitor these efforts and report on proposed legislation of interest in pilots.

U.S. CONGRESSWOMAN LISA McCLAIN HONORS LAKES PILOTS

On August 15, 2025 Rep. Lisa McClain (R-MI/10th) honored the Lakes Pilots on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives by reading a proclamation. Below are excerpts of Rep. McClain’s proclamation and remarks:

“Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend the Lakes Pilots Association. For over six decades, the Lakes Pilots Association has provided expert pilotage services to foreign-flagged vessels operating in the critical waters of District 2. Under the leadership of President Captain Tony Brandano, the Association has played a vital role in ensuring the safety of navigation, protecting the environment, and supporting economic activity in the Blue Water Area, including the Port Huron region.

The Lakes Pilots Association is a trusted guardian of our waterways. Their efforts not only safeguard ships, cargo, and crews, but also help maintain the physical and economic integrity of the waterways they serve. The Lakes Pilots Association has fostered public understanding and appreciation of Great Lakes shipping and its importance to our region’s heritage. Their recent investments—including \$1 million in new docks and a seawall—as well as \$3.5 million in new pilot boats, demonstrate a strong commitment to strengthening infrastructure, enhancing operational capacity, and ensuring long-term service to the region.



Captain Tony Brandano and Rep. Lisa McClain.

The Lakes Pilots Association maintains a close partnership with the City of Port Huron and other local harbor stakeholders. Their ongoing collaboration helps preserve the city’s identity as a historic port city, enrich its maritime legacy, and contribute meaningfully to its economic vitality. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and immense pride that we honor and thank the Lakes Pilots Association for their decades of dedicated service, commitment to safety and environmental stewardship, and for their indispensable role in sustaining commerce and maritime heritage throughout the Great Lakes region.

Rep. McClain’s full remarks are available at: <https://www.congress.gov/119/crec/2025/08/15/171/138/CREC-2025-08-15-pt1-PgE766-3.pdf>

APA congratulates the Lakes Pilots and their president, Captain Tony Brandano, for this honor.

PILOT TRANSFER SAFETY TRAINING

Pilot transfers from the pilot boat to ship and vice versa are a dangerous aspect of a job that is centered around safety. Most boarding and disembarkation arrangements require the use of a pilot ladder and while there have been improvements to pilot ladder quality and arrangement, each climb and descent carries the potential for distinct challenges and risks.



Sandy Hook Pilot Captain
John DeCruz

While important to emphasize a pilot's proficient knowledge of local waterways, ship navigation, risk assessment, and decisive actions, the pilot transfer is a critical skill that is typically learned on the job under the guidance of an experienced pilot. But pilot groups have taken an extra turn on transfer safety by utilizing a rock-climbing facility and rigging a pilot ladder for enhanced training.

One such group, the Sandy Hook Pilots Association require all new Apprentice Pilots to visit the rock-climbing facility and train on the ladder in a controlled environment before riding on their first ship. Further, they arrange for a certified climbing instructor to participate in the administration of training with an emphasis on maintaining three points of contact, keeping the body close to the ladder, concentrating on using more leg power and less arm pulling to avoid shoulder injuries, making a transition from the pilot ladder to a platform, and techniques that can be used to mitigate fatigue if ever on a ladder for an extended period of time. Additionally, the controlled environment affords the trainee an opportunity to test out personal protective equipment (PPE) and various climbing styles, such as climbing to the side of the ladder, pointing feet in different directions or straight on, ascending/descending one step at a time, and identifying which shoulder is most comfortable to look over. The goal is that there is some exposure albeit a simulation, and a level of comfort for the Apprentice Pilot before their impending reality.

Captain Paul Klein was instrumental in starting this training program and questions about this program can be directed to the Sandy Hook Pilots' Director Chris Maglin.



NEW LEADERSHIP AT NMC

Captain Patrick Drayer relieved Captain Bradley Claire as the National Maritime Center commanding officer in July. APA wishes Captain Claire fair winds and calm seas in his retirement and looks forward to working with Captain Drayer.

NMC REINSTATES VERIFICATION TOOL

The NMC recently announced the return (in a modified format) of the mariner credential application status tool and the mariner credential verification tool. You may recall that both tools were previously available on the NMC website, but those features were discontinued earlier this year. On July 25, the NMC announced that both tools will now be available via email. Please see the below link for instructions on how to get email updates on your NMC credential application status and verification status of your credential.

https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/NMC/pdfs/announcements/2025/new_app_status_credential_verification_tools_072425.pdf?ver=hphCzUrz8EN-ErEYGMEO0g%3d%3d×tamp=1753455949986

NMC MEDICAL CERTIFICATE ERRORS

The NMC recently announced that some medical certificates issued between July 25, 2025 to September 3, 2025 were issued in error. New certificates are and will be issued, and all medical certificate remain valid in the meantime.

https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/NMC/pdfs/announcements/2025/med_cert_error_090825.pdf

NMC AWARDS CONTRACT TO MODERNIZE MARINER CREDENTIALING PROGRAM

On September 12, the Coast Guard awarded a blanket purchase agreement with a value of up to \$49.6 million to modernize the service's Mariner Credentialing Program (MCP) information technology system. Concurrent with the award, the Coast Guard issued a \$3.8 million order for development of the first release of NAVITA™, a modernized system for issuing merchant mariner credentials and medical certificates to U.S. merchant mariners.

This new system will replace the current labor-intensive manual process with a modern, automated system, making the application process faster and more efficient. Mariners will benefit from on-line applications, mariner profiles, and user-friendly features supporting the timely issuance of credentials. APA will monitor this critical modernization effort.

<https://www.news.uscg.mil/Press-Releases/Article/4305896/coast-guard-awards-contract-to-support-mariner-credentialing-program-modernizat/>



HELLO FROM: The Pilots' Association for the Bay & River Delaware

Founded in 1896, the Pilots' Association for the Bay & River Delaware (PAB&RD) has safeguarded the approaches to the Delaware River and Bay for more than 125 years. Our mission is to ensure the safe and efficient movement of maritime commerce through one of the nation's most vital waterways.

The Delaware River system is home to the fifth-largest port complex in the U.S., supporting a diverse range of cargo from automobiles, containers, to petroleum and liquefied natural gas. Major terminals in Philadelphia, Camden, Wilmington, and Paulsboro make the river a hub for international trade, while the Port of Wilmington remains the premier gateway for fresh fruit imports into North America. In addition, the river serves as a critical energy corridor, hosting numerous oil refineries and LNG facilities.



PAB&RD Pilot Boat
PENNSYLVANIA

To strengthen this economic engine, the Delaware River has undergone a 45-foot deepening project, improving access for larger, modern vessels. Today, the region handles some of the most complex traffic mixes on the East Coast, including commercial shipping, energy transport, fishing fleets, and recreational boaters.

Navigating this dynamic and challenging waterway requires seasoned professionals. Delaware Bay and River Pilots are licensed and regulated by the Pennsylvania Navigation Commission and Delaware Board of Pilot Commissioners and undergo extensive training to achieve the highest levels of proficiency. Through a rigorous apprenticeship program and ongoing professional development, our Association ensures that every pilot is prepared to meet the demands of modern maritime commerce.

As we look to the future (and another Admiral's Cup win at the biennial golf outing!), the Pilots' Association remains committed to safety, service, and innovation. We continue to invest in state-of-the-art technology, modern pilot launches, and protective equipment to provide best-in-class pilotage. Working closely with industry partners and port stakeholders, we proudly serve as stewards of the waterway—



PAB&RD Pilot Boat PENNSYLVANIA

dedicated to keeping commerce flowing safely and efficiently, while at the same time protecting the communities along the Delaware Bay and River.

TAMPA BAY PILOTS ASSOCIATION RESCUE CREW

Several members of the Tampa Bay Pilots Association were recognized for rescuing a crew member who had fallen overboard from an out-bound vessel late at night.

On June 28, 2025, at 2315 local time a crew member on the M/V Saga Pioneer accidentally fell overboard without a PFD in Mullet Key Channel while the vessel was outbound. During a dark overcast night, Tampa Pilot Captain Michael Stutevoss who was on the Saga Pioneer, Deputy Pilot Thomas Sellers also on the Saga Pioneer, and Tampa Pilot Captain Matthew Riley who was piloting the inbound OSG Courageous coordinated a rescue of the seaman via VHF radio and visual observation utilizing the crew of both vessels in the vicinity. Captain Bruce Parson, sole operator of the pilot boat Tampa located the crewman who was barely afloat and single handedly recovered him from the water. A U.S. Coast Guard rescue vessel arrived shortly thereafter and transported the crew member to a local hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

There is little doubt that the heroic actions of the pilot boat captain and pilots saved the life of a fellow mariner in distress.

Deputy pilot Captain Tom Sellers and pilot boat "Tampa" Captain Bruce Parson were presented with a certificate of appreciation from



Boat Captain Bruce Parson
and Captain Tom Sellers

Inchcape Shipping Services manager Richard Bruce at the quarterly meeting of the Tampa Bay Harbor Safety & Security Committee meeting. The three Tampa Bay Pilots involved in the rescue credited pilot boat Captain Bruce Parson with the ultimate rescue and praised his unwavering dedication to our mission of safety of life to the fullest extent possible.



NEWS

CAPTAIN CUFF NAMED HONOREE OF THE YEAR

The World Trade Association (WTA) of Philadelphia named Captain David Cuff, President of the Pilots' Association for the Bay & River Delaware as its 2025 Honoree of the Year for his work in constantly striving to improve the port and its business climate. The APA joins the WTA of Philadelphia in recognizing Captain Cuff's work in improving the maritime community locally and nationally.



**Captain David
Cuff**

SUNY MARITIME COLLEGE HONORS CAPTAIN TIM FERRIE

Captain Timothy Ferrie (SUNY 1978) was honored at the SUNY Admiral's Dinner on September 16 for his significant accomplishments in the maritime industry. Captain Ferrie is the President of the United New Jersey Sandy Hook Pilots Benevolent Association and the Vice-President of the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots, Pilot Group.



**Captain Tim
Ferrie**

APA VICE PRESIDENTS MEET



**Front Row from L: Captains:
Crayton Walters, Jorge Viso,
and Eric Nielsen
Back Row from L: Captains:
Clint Winegar, Trey Thompson,
Michael Bopp, John Boyce,
and Hans Antonsen**

In accordance with the APA by-laws, the APA Vice Presidents met at the APA Office in Washington, DC on September 5, 2025. This meeting, one of two annual meetings of the Vice Presidents, serves to provide updates on regional matters and to discuss operational issues that could be instructive to other pilot associations as well as national and international matters of common interest to state pilots and pilot associations.

The next national level meeting will be the Board of Trustees, also in D.C., in October.

PILOT WORD SEARCH

20 words are hidden in the word search puzzle below: aft, baggywrinkle, bearing, capstan, draft, east, fender, galley, helm, jack, keel, lookout, mast, north, pilothouse, quay, rack, sail, topsail, urchin.

The first member pilot or pilot association to provide the correct list of words to the APA Office will win a valuable prize or an APA hat! As soon as you find all words, send your answer to: Lisa@americanpilots.org

S	X	V	N	E	B	T	Z	T	W	Q	R	F	X	D	P
J	G	U	H	G	A	A	F	G	Z	E	J	B	L	D	V
L	T	S	Z	L	G	X	S	A	D	F	A	C	O	L	K
D	B	R	L	J	G	Q	T	N	R	Y	C	K	E	V	V
J	G	H	B	W	Y	F	E	S	E	D	K	P	N	U	F
S	P	T	X	N	W	F	P	C	A	F	G	Q	P	T	E
A	B	R	C	Z	R	D	R	A	W	M	H	M	F	S	H
I	G	O	Y	F	I	G	A	L	L	E	Y	E	U	A	D
L	L	N	O	K	N	T	B	N	R	T	R	O	L	E	F
G	H	H	O	K	K	A	T	Y	O	Q	H	U	U	M	C
W	R	X	S	R	L	B	U	P	J	T	B	A	H	P	J
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G	L	U	D	H	H	O	Y	U	J	E	R	W	S	U	D
X	J	P	A	E	L	Y	A	K	N	N	S	N	D	K	L
B	Y	S	N	H	D	I	F	G	S	X	Y	V	X	B	U
M	C	O	L	Y	E	D	R	O	T	U	O	K	O	O	L
X	V	Y	Y	T	L	H	B	G	Q	U	A	Y	Y	X	A
L	L	Y	J	X	S	W	G	W	F	L	O	X	M	Q	T
P	H	H	O	Q	B	X	D	L	F	Z	M	N	V	Q	K
H	K	E	H	T	N	I	X	A	X	U	O	N	B	R	X
N	A	T	S	P	A	C	K	M	D	P	C	O	J	W	N

ELECTIONS, SELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS, ETC.

The following pilots associations announced new officers:

- ♦ Galveston-Texas City Pilots: **Captain Ryan Malcolm** (Presiding Officer), **Captain Adam Shannahan** (Vice President), **Captain Jon Halvorsen** (Secretary-Treasurer), and **Captain Chris Henry** (Boatkeeper).
- ♦ The Hawaii Pilots Association: **Captain Sinclair Brown** (President), **Captain Ryan Hopkins** (Vice President), **Captain Nathan Silva** (Treasurer), and **Captain Kanoa Parker** (Secretary).