

**MARINE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
(MTSNAC) MEETING SUMMARY
JANUARY 9-10, 2008
SEATTLE, WA**

The Marine Transportation System National Advisory Council (MTSNAC) met at the Westin Seattle Hotel in Seattle, WA on January 9-10, 2008. The meeting focused on:

- Expanding the Council's education outreach initiative to include workforce development and environmental issues;
- Reviewing the methodology and progress toward gaining a more comprehensive understanding of commodity flow throughout the transportation system;
- Updating and revising the Council's Intermodal Report aimed at improving the Marine Transportation System; and
- Addressing local community and regional challenges faced by ports as they expand their facilities and operations.

The Council approved the Education Team's 2008 Work Plan. This Work Plan includes: updating the presentation, *The Marine Transportation System and the Supply Chain*; expanding the information available on the MTSNAC website; developing a presentation on national MTS workforce recruitment and retention issues and potential regional solutions; developing a presentation on port-related environmental disputes and how such issues are being addressed or resolved; and producing a study of new domestic industries that will be dependent on the MTS and surface systems. This expanded outreach program is aimed at senior public and private sector policymakers and Congressional leaders.

The Council's Intermodal Capacity and Operations Team reviewed the progress made by the team in cooperation with the Maritime Administration to identify the information needed to more accurately measure the performance of the system. One of the key missing data elements is the final destination of cargo imported into the U.S. The U.S. Bureau of Customs and Border Protection recently announced its intention to require shippers to report final destination information on all import shipments. The inclusion of this destination data will enable system users to begin to more accurately map commodity flows throughout the system and provide a clearer picture of the value of the Marine Transportation System to the nation's economy.

There was general consensus that although the Council's Intermodal Recommendations report has accurately identified key steps that both the public and private sector need to take to improve the system, the report should be updated and revised to better reflect the changes in the system since the report was first published in the fall of 2005. The Council also agreed that the update and revision must be completed soon so that the both the current and future administration can benefit from its recommendations.

The Council noted that the phenomenal growth in international trade and the accompanying goods-movement impacts on the environment are issues that cannot be ignored. These issues, if not properly addressed, have the ability to bring the nation's international trade to a halt. Many local community and regional challenges are faced by ports as they expand their facilities and operations. The Council agreed that the Education Team should address some of these major environmental issues in its expanded outreach program.

Maritime Administrator Sean T. Connaughton addressed the Council and shared his concerns over the increased road and rail congestion in and around our ports and the need to address this growing congestion. He explained how recent Maritime Administration organizational changes will help the agency to better address these types of issue and commended Congress for including marine highway provisions in the recently enacted Energy Independence and Security Act

During this meeting the Council elected a new Chair – Sam Crane, representing the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; and a Vice-Chair – Rick Gabrielson, representing the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA). The Council also toured a Port of Seattle container facility and visited a Washington State Ferries ferry landing.

The Marine Transportation System National Advisory Council (MTSNAC) is a chartered, non-federal body, sponsored by the Maritime Administration, whose purpose is to advise the Secretary of Transportation on Marine Transportation System issues. Its membership is comprised of leaders from 30 commercial transportation firms, shippers, state and local public entities, labor organizations, academic institutions, and environmental groups.