

MTSNAC Report  
Meetings 4-5 May 2005

The Marine Transportation System National Advisory Council (MTSNAC) met in Sacramento, CA May 4-5, 2005 to discuss MTS issues with particular emphasis on West Coast (specifically Southern California) system-wide freight movement congestion, requirements, and challenges.

John Jamian, Acting Maritime Administrator, presented opening remarks to the council members before leaving to testify before a joint State Legislative Committee on “Transportation and Goods Movement.” In his remarks, Mr. Jamian thanked the committee members for all the hard work they put into preparing their presentations. Mr. Jamian then advised that Secretary Mineta’s top agenda items for this term would be: SAFETEA and SEA-21. He further stated that he has been asked to take SEA-21 to the next level by identifying issues that do not require funding as well as those that do require funding

Following the opening remarks, Ted Prince of the Education/Intermodal Capacity and Operations Team gave a presentation on the “MTS and international supply chain”. A key point that drew much discussion was the fact that according to 2003 container volumes and growth projections – the nation will need another “Port of Oakland” every year to accommodate expected growth (additional volume equaling the need for supporting infrastructure the size of the Port of Oakland).

On the evening of day one of the meeting, the Council was presented with a State of California Legislative resolution commending its work to expand the MTS. The Council’s Chair, John Gaughan, received the resolution on behalf of the Council.

On day two of the meeting, a public comment session was held, followed by presentations from each of the committee teams. The first MTS Regional Council presentation was made by Gill Hicks of the California Marine and Intermodal Transportation System Advisory Council (CALMITSAC) highlighting California’s problems, challenges, and solutions presently being implemented as well as recommendations for the future.

The Shipbuilding team presented a report on the current capacity for vessel construction and repair within the United States. The report covered all types and sizes of vessels and concluded with cautions on actions necessary to maintain a viable industrial base.

The luncheon speaker, State Senator Alan Lowenthal, Chairman, California State Senate Environmental Quality Committee, spoke on the issues of congestion and goods movement in the Los Angeles and Long Beach port gateway area, with insight into the requirements for additional improvements. He stressed the need for educating the public and his fellow legislators on the importance of the MTS, and the imminent need for system capacity expansion.

Rick Gabrielson of the Waterways & Intermodal Capacity and Operations team presented the “National Marine Container Transportation System” White Paper for discussion by Council Members. Due to its length, only the key points were highlighted and discussed.

MTSNAC members also received a comprehensive survey of U.S. shipyard capacity and capabilities and a report on the nation's inland waterway infrastructure needs and an action plan from the Infrastructure Team.

Additional MTS Regional Council reports were given by David White of the South Atlantic Marine Transportation System Organization (SAMTSO) and Steve Tyndal of the Gulf of Mexico States Partnership (GOMSA) detailing regional awareness and activities for their respective regions.

After setting a general timeframe and location for the next MTSNAC meeting, the session was formally adjourned.

Submitted by Paul Mentz, 13 May 2005