



*An Eighteen Month  
Summary Report on  
the Activities and  
Accomplishments of  
the Committee on the  
Marine  
Transportation  
System (CMTS)*

# 2011-12 SUMMARY REPORT

## INTRODUCTION

What began seven years ago to forge a cabinet-level initiative to maintain and improve the U.S. marine transportation system (MTS) has taken hold as a dynamic and proactive interagency partnership. On behalf of the Coordinating Board of the U.S. Committee on the Marine Transportation System (CMTS), I am pleased to report on the Committee's achievements and a summary of its activities and accomplishments for the eighteen-month period beginning January 2011. The CMTS achieved marked and measureable progress regarding the safety, efficiency, and resiliency of the U.S. MTS to move people and goods, to support the U.S. economy and advance the Nation's trade competitiveness.

This 2011-2012 CMTS Summary Report is divided into nine priority work areas. These priority work areas are listed below and are described in the pages that follow, including the completion of nine interagency projects to improve navigation safety and efficiency, the first-ever development of MTS performance measures, and the first comprehensive guide of Federal MTS programs and functions.

- Safeguarding the MTS through the development of best practices to reduce damage to the MTS by breakaway vessels.
- Improving the delivery and accuracy of navigational information and data to mariners.
- Coordinating U.S. Arctic marine transportation policy coordination to insure safe and secure maritime shipping.
- Promoting interagency collaboration to enhance transportation infrastructure investments.
- Integrating e-Navigation technologies and services to improve the efficiency and reliability of the MTS.
- Supporting U.S. exports increases by monitoring the availability of export containers.
- Fostering MTS program coordination and understanding.
- Researching and measuring MTS performance to identify its status, needs, and value.
- Exchanging and distributing information to improve MTS awareness.

It is also important to note that during this period the CMTS membership grew to 27 Departments and agencies, the most ever for the partnership. Moreover, the membership continues to commit to joint activities with the Executive Secretariat to complete the interagency work members find necessary and prudent to advance the U.S. MTS. To this end, it is my pleasure to report that Federal collaboration to support the U.S. MTS is stronger today than ever before, thanks to the efforts of CMTS members and staff.

Of particular note is the proactive contribution of the CMTS to the development of a Strategic Action Plan for the Arctic, which has been made part of the National Ocean Council's National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan. Additionally, the CMTS has been tasked to provide staff support and expertise to the White House Ports Task Force to develop a national strategy for future port and related physical and informational infrastructure investments to improve the U.S. supply chain and the movement of freight.

While the accomplishments and continued success of the CMTS are a credit to its membership, there remains much work to be done to improve and maintain the U.S. MTS. But with the high level of member support and the potential enactment of pending authorization legislation, the CMTS is well positioned and its future bright, to continue the interagency partnership to make a difference toward making the U.S. MTS a "safe, secure, and globally integrated network that, in harmony with the environment, ensures a free-flowing, seamless, and reliable movement of people and commerce along its waterways, sea lanes, and intermodal connections." (CMTS MTS Vision Statement, 2008)

Thank you for your interest in the CMTS. Should you have questions or require additional information regarding the contents of the CMTS 2011-12 Summary Report, please contact me or Helen Brohl, Executive Secretary to the Coordinating Board, at 202-366-3612.

**Margaret Spring**

2011-12 CMTS Coordinating Board Chair and  
Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce

## Safeguarding the MTS through the Development of Best Practices to Reduce Damage to the MTS by Breakaway Vessels

This work area was in response to lessons learned in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina which highlighted one of the most significant avoidable threats posed during heavy weather events: breakaway vessels which damage MTS infrastructure assets. The MTS infrastructure assets include levees, guide walls, and bridges, threatening the assets' structural integrity. Breakaway vessels include but are not limited to barges, floating platforms, and permanently moored structures.



### Activities and Accomplishments

The Task Team's final report—*Best Practices for Preventing and Managing Breakaway Vessels*—and other deliverables were submitted to the CMTS Coordinating Board on September 30, 2011. The report documents the various authorities of Federal agencies to prevent breakaway vessels and showcases how those authorities may be put into practice. The final “best practices” report was distributed to local maritime industry stakeholders through CMTS member agency field offices.

### Background

An interagency Preparedness Task Team was established by the Coordinating Board on September 10, 2009. The purpose of the Preparedness Task Team was three fold: 1.) to provide coordination and resources to reduce the incidence of breakaway vessels and floating debris in heavy weather and/or high water events; 2.) to ensure continuity of operations, essential public services, and the resumption of commercial marine activities following a disruption of normal operations; and 3.) to define critical infrastructure, identify key stakeholders, document breakaway events, create an outreach plan, and develop a planning template report to address the problem of breakaway vessels.

### **Participating CMTS Members**

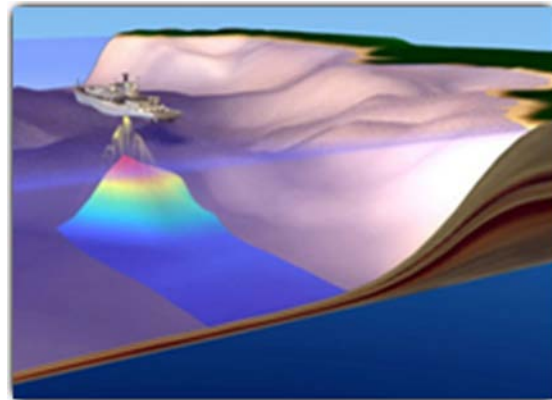
- ❖ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Lead)
- ❖ U.S. Coast Guard (Lead)
- ❖ Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
- ❖ International Trade Administration
- ❖ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- ❖ National Transportation Safety Board
- ❖ U.S. Department of Energy
- ❖ U.S. Maritime Administration
- ❖ U.S. Transportation Command

### **Benefit to the U.S. MTS**

It is intended that the execution of the proposed best practices will minimize potential breakaways and help prevent damage to critical maritime infrastructure during times significant weather events. It is also intended that the planning template report “Breakaway Best Practices” will facilitate better planning and coordination among MTS stakeholders to address prevention of breakaway vessels.

## Improving the Delivery and Accuracy of Navigational Information and Data to Mariners

This work area facilitates the integration and standardization of existing CMTS member agency navigation technologies, services, and data to enhance navigational safety and efficiency, for the purposes of: improving the delivery of navigational information, improving the accuracy of navigational products, and improving the sharing of navigational information across agencies.



### Activities and Accomplishments

**During the eighteen month period from 2011-12 nine projects were completed to improve the delivery and accuracy of navigational information and data to mariners and other MTS users. These projects included:**

- Distribution of NOAA Physical Oceanographic Real-Time Systems (PORTS) data through US Coast Guard Automatic Identification System (AIS). Successful tests were done on software to display PORTS on AIS in Tampa Bay and the Columbia River.
- Initial Lock Operation Management Applications (LOMA) system development. This application forms the backbone for automated communications between mariners and lock operators on the inland waterways. It also links real-time information with USCG to share and leverage AIS expertise and infrastructure. USCG and NOAA teamed to provide precise positions for aids to navigation and the development of a database of precise positions. USCG and NOAA also defined a process to obtain precise positions for range lights and the resolution of charted positions.
- USACE and NOAA collaborated on the development and charting of precise USACE channel limits and controlling depths. In addition, USACE is implementing a geospatial set of tools and new work processes to create a common work flow, standardized business processes, and to utilize standard data formats.
- USACE agreed to provide NOAA digital depth survey data in standard data exchange format, to speed and automatically distribute the information to update NOAA navigational charts.

- USACE and NOAA collaborated on making wave data available to mariners via NOAA's Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS) displays.
- NOAA/USACE/and US Geological Survey set standards for the measurement of tides and currents, and agreed to use the same vertical datum.
- NOAA and USACE are to collaborate on the development of VDatum, with preliminary VDatum models complete for the lower 48 states.
- USACE/NOAA/and US Navy developed and implemented standards for bathymetric and topographic data collected with lidar technology.

### **Background**

The Navigation Technology Integrated Action Team (IAT) was established October 2006 to assist CMTS agencies in the integration of their technologies, data, and services to enhance navigational safety and efficiency. The nine projects listed were initiated by the IAT and completed by June 2012. Upon completion of these projects, the IAT was terminated, and some of its work, including PORTS/AIS, was transferred to the e-Navigation initiative for implementation.

### **Participating CMTS Members**

- ❖ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Lead)
- ❖ Oceanographer of the Navy
- ❖ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- ❖ U. S. Coast Guard
- ❖ U.S. Geologic Survey
- ❖ U.S. Transportation Command

### **Benefits to the U.S. MTS**

The nine projects focus on improving navigational safety and efficiency in three ways, improving the delivery of navigational information, improving the accuracy of navigational products, and improving efficiency by enabling agencies to better share information of navigational value. With the completion of these projects, mariners and other MTS users may expect significant improvements to navigational safety in and around our Nation's waterways and ports.

## Coordinating U.S. Arctic Marine Transportation Policy Coordination to Insure Safe and Secure Maritime Shipping

In response to recommendations of the Arctic Council's Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA) of 2009, interagency work was begun to facilitate cross-federal agency coordination to address domestic marine transportation and related activities in the U.S. Arctic region. Additional work was also initiated in response to a Congressional directive in the U.S. Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-1281) charging the CMTS with coordinating the development of domestic transportation policies to ensure safe and secure maritime shipping in the Arctic.



### Activities and Accomplishments

During 2011-12, a comprehensive interagency document was drafted in response to the AMSA recommendations and the Congressional directive. The draft document describes the status and trends of U.S. Arctic marine transportation, identifies risks and challenges of Arctic marine transportation, and recommends opportunities to improve elements of a U.S. Arctic marine transportation.

It is important to note that both the 2008 CMTS MTS National Strategy and the AMSA recognized that environmentally safe and sound maritime commerce in U.S. Arctic waters would require enhancements to existing infrastructure and navigational services.

### Background

With the increasing retreat of summer Arctic sea ice, a once inaccessible Arctic region to marine transportation, now offers opportunities and challenges. At current rates, the loss of sea ice may eventually lead to the Arctic Ocean having ice-free summers by the late 2030s. With this dramatic regional climate change, the following drivers have been identified that support this call for action including:

- Arctic commercial vessel traffic amounting to a 30 percent increase from 2008 to 2010;
- Implementation plans for the exploration and development of U.S. Arctic offshore oil and gas resources;
- Expansion of the Red Dog zinc mine and the corresponding coastal marine terminal;
- Future expiration of the current moratorium on Arctic commercial fishing;
- Growth of Arctic tourism and passenger traffic;



- Dependency of indigenous peoples on marine transportation as their primary source to provide supplies and fuel, and marine areas for subsistence and transportation;
- Advancement of national security concerns; and,
- Alaska State interests including a study proposal regarding the development of a deep water port.

The CMTS U.S. Arctic Marine Transportation Policy Response examined the implications of existing and expected increases in maritime traffic in the U.S. Arctic, and proposed a National Arctic MTS improvement plan, including a prioritization of recommended federal actions. The policy recommendations are intended to ensure adequate maritime shipping safety, environmental protection and response, and national security capabilities in the U.S. Arctic.

### **Participating CMTS Members**

- ❖ U.S. Coast Guard (Lead)
- ❖ U.S. Maritime Administration (Lead)
- ❖ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Lead)
- ❖ Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation, and Enforcement
- ❖ Oceanographer of the Navy
- ❖ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- ❖ U.S. Department of State
- ❖ U.S. Maritime Administration
- ❖ U.S. Transportation Command

### **Benefits to the U.S. MTS**

The CMTS U.S. Arctic marine transportation policy response offers the first-ever systematic, interagency approach to assess U.S. Arctic marine transportation needs. It also offers a first ever sector-specific plan for the U.S. Arctic. Ensuring a safe and efficient U.S. MTS in the Arctic is essential to meeting the nation's economic development and national security objectives in the Arctic region. Moreover, implementing the proposed U.S. Arctic marine transportation improvement plan will result in a more robust U.S. Arctic MTS that will improve safety and reduce risk of damage to the fragile Arctic environment. It will also support economic activity in and around the Arctic, scientific research, and national security.

## Promoting Interagency Collaboration to Enhance Transportation Infrastructure Investments

This work area was initiated at the request of Deputy Secretary of Transportation John Porcari to facilitate the development of broad evaluation and decision-making criteria that may be used across government programs for advancing the coordination of Federal infrastructure investment.



### Activities and Accomplishments

- March 13, 2012: The Coordinating Board approved the establishment of an Infrastructure Investment Coordination Integrated Action Team (IAT).
- May 30, 2012 – The IAT delivered the MTS-related literature search to the White House Task Force on Ports
- June 12, 2012 – The Coordinating Board approved the IAT’s Terms of Reference and Work Plan
- June 21, 2012 – Department of Treasury delivered a comprehensive review of MTS-related benefit techniques
- Summer 2012 –The IAT provided technical expertise to the White House Task Force on Ports Working Group

### Background

The Department of Transportation (DOT) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) have worked with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to identify and capitalize on opportunities to improve infrastructure investments where shared equities exist since May 2011. At the March 13, 2012 Coordinating Board meeting, Deputy Secretary Porcari asked the Coordinating Board to stand up an integrated action team (IAT) to address the medium and long-term goals that had been outlined in the Work Plan Framework of the DOT-Army Infrastructure Investment Alignment Working Group. This activity is an extension of the work done by DOT and Army to align infrastructure investment, culminating in the MOU signed March 2, 2012 by the Deputy Secretary and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

## **Participating CMTS Members**

- ❖ Department of Transportation – Office of the Secretary (Lead)
- ❖ US Army Corps of Engineers (Lead)
- ❖ Maritime Administration
- ❖ Federal Highways Administration
- ❖ National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration
- ❖ Treasury Department
- ❖ Federal Maritime Commission
- ❖ Department of Commerce
- ❖ Office of Management and Budget
- ❖ Transportation Command
- ❖ International Trade Administration
- ❖ US Coast Guard

## **Benefit to the U.S. MTS**

Capturing and coordinating input from interested Federal CMTS agencies will lead to the development of decision tools for infrastructure investment. These tools will be used by decision-makers to better align Federal infrastructure investment across agencies enabling a safer, more efficient, and resilient U.S. MTS for the movement of our Nation's people and goods.

## **Integrating e-Navigation Technologies and Services to Improve MTS Efficiency and Reliability**

This work area was formalized to facilitate the coordinated and integrated collection, processing, and dissemination of navigation data and information. The objective of this effort is to provide maritime information in a more useable and efficient manner to mariners and other MTS users, to enhance the reliability, efficiency, and safety of U.S. waterways and ports.



The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has defined e-Navigation as “the harmonized collection, integration, exchange, presentation, and analysis of maritime information onboard and ashore by electronic means to enhance berth-to-berth navigation and related services for safety and security at sea and protection of the marine environment.” The goal of the CMTS e-Navigation effort is to make this concept a reality in the U.S. through proactive interagency efforts, building on existing capabilities.

### **Activities and Accomplishments**

The CMTS Coordinating Board approved an e-Navigation Strategic Action Plan in March 2012 that provided a strategic framework for U.S. implementation of e-Navigation as an interagency initiative to develop an integrated information environment for marine transportation. To implement the e-Navigation Strategic Action Plan, an Integrated Action Team was established. Initial e-Navigation IAT accomplishments include:

- Publication of the final CMTS e-Navigation Strategic Action Plan;
- Development and Coordinating Board approval of the e-Navigation IAT Terms of Reference, Implementation Plan, and initial Work Plan;
- Completion of an initial inventory of Federal e-Navigation Capabilities, including regulatory authorities;
- Initial identification of U.S. e-Navigation stakeholders, building on IMO work;
- Continued participation in international e-Navigation development through representation at IMO, IALA, and other policy and technical bodies; and,
- Engagement with e-Navigation stakeholders on IAT work and planned future outreach.

## **Background**

The e-Navigation Integrated Action Team (IAT) was officially established on 13 March 2012. The purpose of the e-Navigation IAT is to facilitate the coordinated and integrated collection, processing and dissemination of navigation data and information to provide services to stakeholders, eliminate duplication, and enhance the reliability, efficiency and safety of our waterways and ports.

## **Participating CMTS Members**

- ❖ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Lead)
- ❖ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Lead)
- ❖ U. S. Coast Guard (Lead)
- ❖ National Transportation Safety Board
- ❖ Oceanographer of the Navy
- ❖ Research and Innovative Technology Administration
- ❖ U.S. Maritime Administration
- ❖ U.S. Transportation Command

## **Benefits to the U.S. MTS**

The coordination and integration of e-Navigation data and information is intended to improve MTS safety by:

- improved decision support enabling the mariner and competent authorities ashore to select relevant information pertinent to the prevailing circumstances;
- a reduction in human error through provision of automatic indicators, warnings and fail-safe methods;
- enhanced navigation system resilience, leading to improved reliability and integrity; and,
- better integration of ship and shore-based systems; leading to better utilization of all human resources.

The CMTS e-Navigation initiative is also expected to augment security by enabling silent operation mode for shore-based stakeholders for domain surveillance and monitoring. Moreover, it will improve human resource management by enhancing the experience and status of the bridge team. It is also expected to increase environmental protection by:

- reducing the risk of collisions and groundings and the associated spillages and pollution; and,
- advancing the ability and capacity in responding and handling of emergencies such as oil spills.

The e-Navigation initiative will achieve efficiencies and reduced costs by:

- global standardization and type approval of equipment;
- automated and standardized reporting procedures;
- improved bridge efficiency allowing watch keepers to maximize time to keeping a proper lookout and using multiple methods to ascertain the ship's position; and,
- integration of systems that are already in place, precipitating the efficient and coherent use of new equipment that meets all user requirements.

## Supporting U.S. Export Increases by Monitoring the Availability of Export Containers

This work area supports the National Export Initiative (NEI). The NEI is a priority of the President and his Administration to double U.S. exports in five years and to grow U.S. jobs by increasing the number of exporting companies and expanding the number of markets to which U.S. companies sell.



### Activities and Accomplishments

- June 13 and 23, 2011: Meeting of the International Trade Administration, USDA, and the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee.
  - Development of three specific interagency tasks that were adopted by the CMTS Working Group, and presented to and approved by the CMTS Coordinating Board at its July 13, 2011 meeting
  - Established CMTS NEI Task Team - conduct an examination of the issue of export container availability, a National Export Strategy recommended action.
- August 2, 2011: Establishment of the CMTS NEI Task Team
- October 18, 2011: engaged in a comprehensive discussion of the factors affecting the availability of shipping containers to facilitate U.S. exports.
- The NEI Task Team led by the Federal Maritime Commission, established a process to monitor export container availability.

### Background

The 2011 National Export Strategy Report contained a recommendation by the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC) -the interagency body that oversees the NEI - to expand export container availability. It was noted that it was often costly for exporters to gain access to the containers they need to meet the worldwide demand for their products and many exporters are farmers and manufacturers located in rural areas.

To support this and at the request of the TPCC, the CMTS NEI Task Team examined the TPCC recommendation to expand export container availability. As a result of this examination, the Task Team concluded that the issue is complex, involving many factors, and that there is currently no general shortage of export containers. However, to help insure that there is not a shortage, the Task Team on behalf of the CMTS developed an interagency process to monitor availability, and if necessary develop recommended actions to the TPCC and other interested parties to prevent or ameliorate ocean container shortages that could impede the accomplishment of NEI goals. And finally, to work with the TPCC to respond to the recommendations of the President's Export Council regarding export infrastructure, export corridors, export driven projects, and funding strategies.

### **Participating CMTS Members**

- ❖ Federal Maritime Commission (Lead)
- ❖ International Trade Administration
- ❖ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- ❖ Research and Innovative Technology Administration
- ❖ Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation
- ❖ Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee
- ❖ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- ❖ U.S. Coast Guard
- ❖ U.S. Department of Commerce
- ❖ U.S. Department of State
- ❖ U.S. Department of Transportation
- ❖ U.S. Maritime Administration
- ❖ U.S. Transportation Command

### **Benefit to the U.S MTS**

With the MTS moving nearly 80 percent of the nation's overseas trade by weight and approximately 50 percent by value, the CMTS is in a position to help contribute to the success of the NEI. With the success of the NEI and an increase in the export of U.S. goods and services, significant progress will be made to bolster an already recovering U.S. economy, grow emerging markets for U.S. companies and businesses, and ultimately create many new jobs here at home.



## Fostering MTS Program Coordination and Understanding

To provide a foundational document to assist the CMTS in identifying and investigating opportunities for improved interagency program coordination, and to promote awareness and understanding of Federal MTS responsibilities, a comprehensive compendium of Federal marine transportation program and functions was developed. The compendium and its three matrices show that the Federal Government provides a wide range of services and oversight regarding the U.S. MTS. In particular, more than two dozen Federal Departments and agencies have marine transportation responsibilities, covering 75 prescribed program and functional areas.



### Activities and Accomplishments

Beginning in 2011, the Federal Maritime Commission and CMTS Executive Secretariat commenced the development of a draft narrative and matrix of Federal MTS programs and functions. The matrix depicted those Federal Departments and agencies that are actively engaged in a marine transportation program or function. The matrix is intended to provide a means to “at a glance” understand the decentralized nature of Federal MTS responsibilities. Over the next year, the CMTS compendium team met with and obtained comments from CMTS Working Group members to confirm respective agency rolls and responsibilities. These efforts led to development of a final Federal MTS compendium which was accepted by the Coordinating Board at its June 12, 2012 quarterly meeting. The final document included three versions of the Federal program/function matrix, each with increasing complexity, allowing flexibility to tailor the document for specific audiences. Each of these versions and the narrative are to be posted on the CMTS website. In addition, one of the matrix versions is backed by brief program descriptions to help discern Federal responsibilities, and points of contact should more information be sought.

### Background

One of the primary objectives of the CMTS Charter is to improve Federal MTS coordination. In line with this, the CMTS Business Plan (2008-2013) included the goal area of “Federal MTS

Program Coordination” and directed the CMTS to compile a comprehensive compendium of Federal marine transportation programs.

### **Participating CMTS Members**

- ❖ Federal Maritime Commission (Lead)
- ❖ CMTS Executive Secretariat
- ❖ CMTS Working Group

### **Benefit to the U.S MTS**

The review of Federal MTS programs and functions through the completion of the Federal MTS Compendium is a useful interagency initiative to identify potential Federal MTS program coordination opportunities. Once identified, like Federal MTS programs could be examined and efficiencies explored. Moreover, the compendium is intended to serve as an improved MTS governance understanding and management tool. Lastly, Federal MTS stakeholders are able to use the matrix to further educate private sector stakeholders on agency jurisdictions, and the dynamics, value, and complexity of the Federal component of the U.S. MTS.

## Researching and Measuring MTS Performance to Identify Status, Needs, and Value

The CMTS *Strategic Action Plan for Research and Development (R&D) in the Marine Transportation System (MTS)* (2011) responds to the need for additional scientific information to address the challenges identified in the five priority areas identified in the CMTS *National Strategy: A Framework for Action*. The priority areas include: Capacity, Safety and Security, Environmental Stewardship, Resilience and Reliability, and Finance and Economics. The strategic action plan calls for a coordinated research framework aimed at leveraging and linking existing federal MTS research and development programs to improve the U.S. MTS.



### Activities and Accomplishments

From June 26-28 2012, the CMTS and the Transportation Research Board co-sponsored a national biennial conference in Washington, DC entitled: *Diagnosing the Marine Transportation System: Measuring Performance and Targeting Improvement*. The importance of marine transportation performance measurement and system improvement were priority topics at the biennial conference. The conference also highlighted the necessity for a national strategic vision to foster a freight transportation system that is modern, efficient and fully integrated with all other modes of transportation.

Subsequent to the conference, the CMTS R&D IAT has been developing a conceptual framework for analyzing the MTS within the national transportation system. This framework is the first step toward completing by 2013 the first ever set of National MTS performance measures. The MTS performance measures are also intended to complement efforts led by the Department of Transportation to implement freight provisions of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), including the establishment and assessment of a national freight network.

### Background

The CMTS Coordinating Board established the Research and Development Integrated Action Team in March 2009. Charge to the IAT was to provide a strategic capability to identify, develop, and implement innovative research and development to address the pressing

challenges identified in the *National Strategy for the Marine Transportation System: A Framework for Action* (July 2008). The IAT also serves as a crosscutting function among all CMTS IATs, and in particular, coordinates with the e-Navigation IAT by transitioning navigation services and products for national deployment.

#### **Participating CMTS Members**

- ❖ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Lead)
- ❖ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- ❖ Oak Ridge National Lab (DOE)
- ❖ Oceanographer of the Navy
- ❖ Research and Innovative Technology Administration
- ❖ Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation
- ❖ U.S. Coast Guard
- ❖ U.S. Maritime Administration
- ❖ The Volpe Center (DOT)

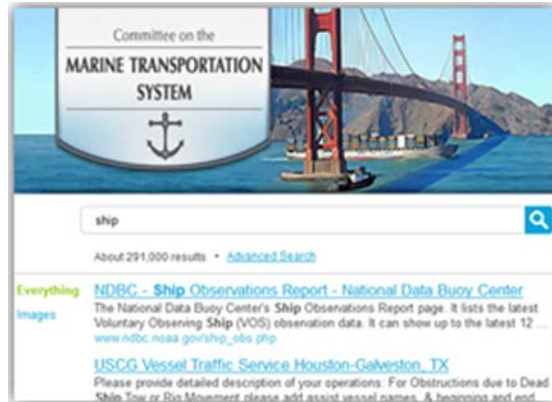
#### **Benefit to the U.S. MTS**

A coordinated MTS research and development agenda will enable the country to efficiently adapt to pressing marine transportation infrastructure challenges, meet increased cargo demand, and address the environmental impacts of the MTS. The development of MTS performance measures will allow for the performance, needs, and value of the MTS to be assessed. These measures will also provide support for the freight initiative of MAP-21 to describe the condition and performance of the national freight network, an integral link to the U.S. MTS.

# Exchanging and Distributing Information to Improve MTS Awareness

## CMTS-MTS DATA PORTAL

The CMTS-MTS data portal allows access to a comprehensive inventory of available web-based information regarding the Marine Transportation System (MTS). The CMTS-MTS inventory includes data and reports published by Federal agencies, either as original data or as products resulting from those data. Through the CMTS-MTS data portal, analysts, researchers, and decision makers can access the data and information for performance-measurement and statistical evaluation. This inventory identifies approximately 200 different websites used by Federal agencies to provide MTS information to the public.



### Activities and Accomplishments

The MTS Data Portal was updated in 2012 to reflect revised and additional information from contributing CMTS agencies. New publications, reports, data and other products were added to the database to reflect the current body of available Federal MTS data. The original links, as well as all additions to the database, are currently searchable using the capacity of “USA Search”. This is intended to improve the functionality of the data portal by using the entire webpage or documents to search for key words and phrases.

### Background

The Data Collection and Information Management Integrated Action Team (IAT) was established to identify Federal data and information to be included in a single web-based Marine Transportation System (MTS) data portal that could be easily accessed by MTS stakeholders. The IAT, led by Maritime Administration (MARAD), compiled an inventory of MTS data generated from over 150 Federal sources, either as original data or as products. This “MTS data portal” went “live” on the CMTS web site in 2008 and maintained until 2009. The MTS portal provided analysts, managers, and decision-makers with data and information useful for statistical and performance measurements.

### **Participating CMTS Members**

- ❖ U.S. Maritime Administration (Lead)
- ❖ CMTS Executive Secretariat

### **Benefit to the U.S. MTS**

Making information on the U.S. MTS more readily available to the general public and MTS stakeholders is fundamental to understanding the U.S. MTS, its needs, challenges, and value. The data portal incorporates a USA Search component, providing comprehensive search capability of the content included on each website. The intent is to provide the most comprehensive return for search terms spanning all Federal agencies connected to the MTS. This type of powerful search ability eliminates the need to search through each individual agency's website.

The domains offer the ability to search many levels of government websites, and the individual URLs provide more specific direction for searching. In addition, an advanced search option will allow the user to define not only terms to include but also terms to exclude from the search.

The Data portal uses a combination of the 200 URLs and parent domains of the Federal departments and Agencies who contributed web pages and documents to the search database parent directory. Each search begins with the information contained within these websites and then is able to access information through other documents and links provided on each page. In doing so, each search is comprehensive of those data available through these websites, but also other publicly available data and reports fitting the search criteria.

The MTS data portal may be accessed at this link:

<https://search.usa.gov/search?affiliate=themarinetransportationsystem&query=&commit=Search>

## ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP DISCUSSION GROUP

In addition to the MTS data portal, another tool the CMTS uses to foster the exchange and distribution of MTS information is the Environmental Stewardship Discussion Group. This discussion group is also intended to advance deliberations concerning environmental stewardship of the MTS, a priority area of the CMTS National Strategy for the MTS.



This forum meets periodically to hear presentations on and to discuss MTS environmental issues of the day. Below is a list of the four discussion group forums and topics held in 2011-12:

### Activities and Accomplishments

- January 26, 2011: The meeting focused on the topic of aquatic invasive species, ballast water treatment technologies and standards, hull fouling, and the Vessel General Permit.
- June 29, 2011: The meeting focused on offshore wind energy development and the question of whether the MTS is currently capable of meeting projected industry requirements for the construction, operation, and maintenance of offshore wind energy facilities.
- January 11, 2012: The meeting raised awareness on current projects regarding the use of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and other alternative fuels on board US vessels.
- April 23, 2012: The meeting explored current regulations and mitigation options for black carbon emissions.

### Background

The Environmental Stewardship Discussion Group is designed to facilitate networking and information sharing for the advancement of knowledge regarding environmental issues, rules, and practices relevant to the MTS.

## **Participating CMTS Members**

- ❖ CMTS Executive Secretariat (Lead)
- ❖ Federal Maritime Commission
- ❖ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- ❖ Oceanographer of the Navy
- ❖ Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation
- ❖ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- ❖ U.S. Coast Guard
- ❖ U.S. Department of Energy
- ❖ U.S. Department of Transportation
- ❖ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- ❖ U.S. Maritime Administration

## **Benefit to the U.S. MTS**

The Environmental Stewardship Discussion Group meeting provides a forum to allow for the free and informal exchange of ideas, information, and viewpoints among participants on emergent and current MTS environmental issues both on policy and on research and development. The Discussion Group also allows agencies an opportunity to share and discuss ideas and projects that may result in collaborative interagency efforts of mutual benefit.





## Committee on the Marine Transportation System

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE

Washington, DC 20590

202-366-3612

[www.cmts.gov](http://www.cmts.gov)