



# MERCHANTS EXCHANGE

[www.pdxmex.com](http://www.pdxmex.com)

503-228-4361



**2024  
ANNUAL REPORT**

# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT



Dear Members and Supporters,

I am pleased to present to you the Merchants Exchange Annual Report for 2024, highlighting the significant milestones and achievements of our association over the past year. As President of the Board, it is both an honor and a privilege to reflect on the progress we have made together.

Throughout 2024, the Exchange has continued to serve as a vital hub for fostering collaboration, innovation, and knowledge sharing within the maritime industry. These endeavors have not only strengthened our organization's ability to serve our members but have also contributed to the advancement and sustainability of maritime practices in the Columbia River region.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Merchants Exchange staff, associations, and members, whose dedication and support have been instrumental in driving our mission forward. Your commitment to excellence and your passion for the maritime industry inspires us all.

Thank you once again for your support and dedication to our shared mission.

Warm regards,

Alex Scott

Board President

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# MISSION STATEMENT

**“TO BE THE LEADING PROVIDER OF INFORMATION AND RELATED SERVICES TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND TO SUPPORT RELATED BUSINESS INTERESTS FOR DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN COMMERCE.”**

## ROLE OF THE BOARD

The principal role of a Board member is stewardship. The Board of Directors of the Merchants Exchange are ultimately responsible for the overall management of the affairs of the Merchants Exchange and to ensure the organization is operated for a not-for-profit purpose. The day-to-day activities are managed by the Executive Director, who presents updates to the Board at their quarterly meetings and sets the standard for top-tier data collection and excellent customer service.

Merchants Exchange is fortunate to have an active and engaged Board, composed of industry members representing agents, grain exporters, stevedores, towboats, ports, and three Ex Officio members, consisting of the Board Presidents for Clean Rivers Cooperative, the Maritime Fire and Safety Association, and the Columbia River Pilots. This year, select Board members and Exchange staff worked together to create the Exchange’s new Five-Year Strategic Plan, which will be used to strengthen our current standard of excellence while guiding the organization to new levels of service, outreach, and achievement over the next five years.



**PRESIDENT**  
Alex Scott  
Anchorage Launch Services



**VICE PRESIDENT**  
Chris Cummins  
General Steamship Corporation



**SECRETARY**  
Gary Hodson  
ACGI Shipping



**TREASURER**  
Alex Hamilton  
IMA Financial Group



Adrian Burkard  
Jones Stevedoring, Co.



Earl Dixon  
United Grain Corporation



Eric Kastner  
Cascade Marine Agencies Ltd.



Todd Krout  
Port of Vancouver USA



Ryan Statz  
Columbia Grain Inc.



Justin Valley  
Foss Maritime Company



Kent Cash  
(ex officio)  
Board President  
Maritime Fire & Safety Assoc.  
Port of Vancouver USA



Doug Lenz  
(ex officio)  
Board President  
Clean Rivers Cooperative  
Columbia Pacific Bio-Refinery



Capt. Jeremy Nielsen  
(ex officio)  
Board President  
Columbia River Pilots



**LEGAL COUNSEL**  
Tyson Calvert  
Lindsay Hart LLP

# 145 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE



Founded by Colonel J.R. Farish,  
Office in New Market Building  
September 24th

1879

Farish sells to newly created Merchants Exchange Association. Charles Sweeny, Secretary  
December 9th

Association dissolves, Ownership passed to William Lehigh

1885

William Lehigh dies and ownership passes to his wife Cecella



Cecella Lehigh sells one half interest in Merchants Exchange to journalist Edgar Wright

1898



City directory lists location of Merchants Exchange as Union Block building

1900

Edgar Wright purchases remaining interest in MEX



Fred Clark hired  
September

1901

Move from Lumbar Exchange building to Board of Trade Building



1908

Portland Grain Exchange established  
August



Wright sells MEX to newly incorporated non-profit. George Westgate named manager  
September 12th

1923

MEX moves to Merchants Exchange Building



1924

Grain Futures Market opened  
June 19th

1926

J.S. Patterson becomes manager



Radio station KPK established to communicate with ships at sea  
June 6th

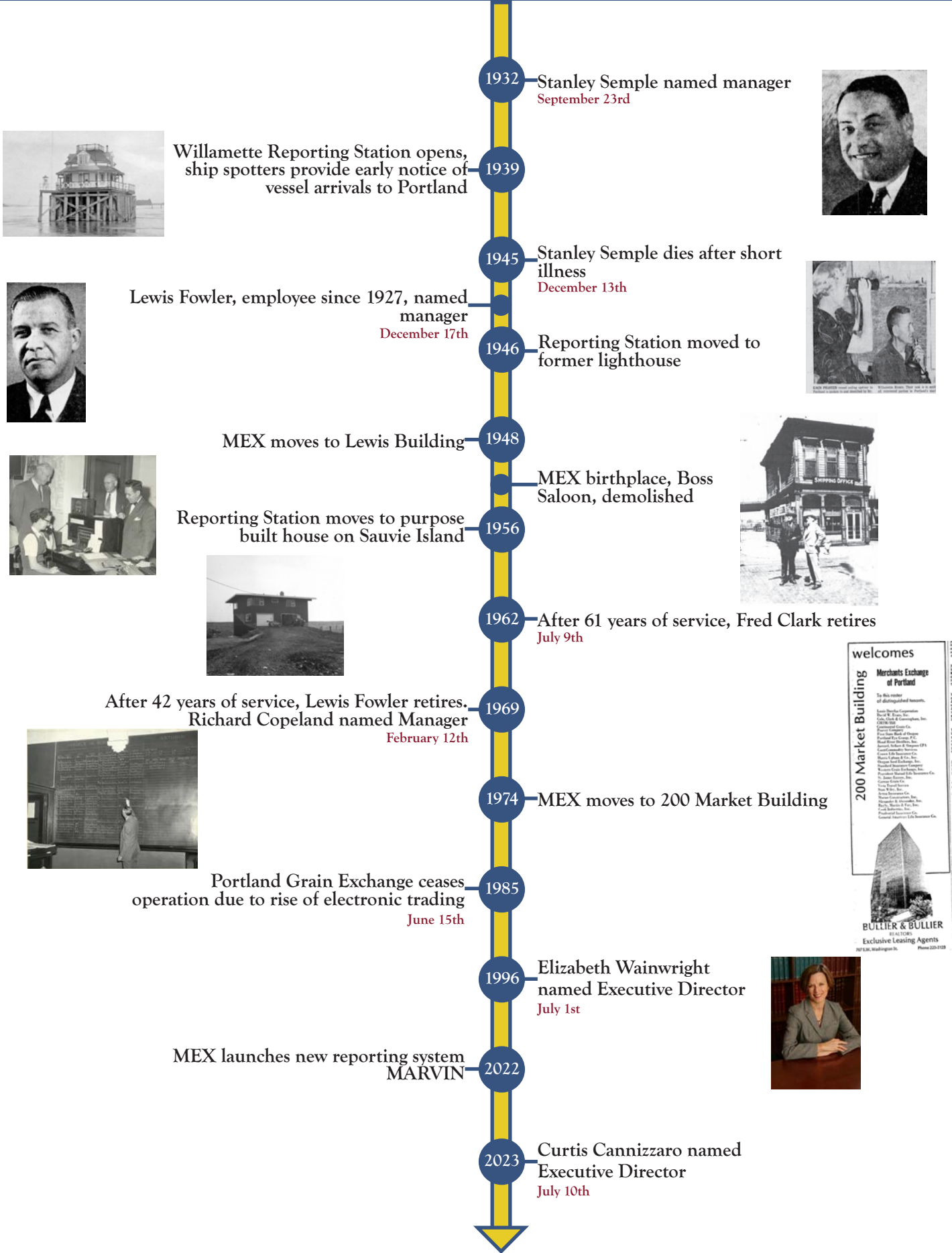
1928

1929

Howard S. George becomes manager  
April 25th



# 145 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE



**1932** — Stanley Semple named manager  
September 23rd



Willamette Reporting Station opens, ship spotters provide early notice of vessel arrivals to Portland

**1939**



Lewis Fowler, employee since 1927, named manager  
December 17th

**1945** — Stanley Semple dies after short illness  
December 13th



**1946** — Reporting Station moved to former lighthouse

MEX moves to Lewis Building **1948**

MEX birthplace, Boss Saloon, demolished



Reporting Station moves to purpose built house on Sauvie Island **1956**



**1962** — After 61 years of service, Fred Clark retires  
July 9th

After 42 years of service, Lewis Fowler retires, Richard Copeland named Manager  
February 12th



**1974** — MEX moves to 200 Market Building



Portland Grain Exchange ceases operation due to rise of electronic trading  
June 15th

**1996** — Elizabeth Wainwright named Executive Director  
July 1st



MEX launches new reporting system MARVIN **2022**

**2023** — Curtis Cannizzaro named Executive Director  
July 10th

# MEMBER SERVICES & BENEFITS

## Over 100 years of service & historical data

The Exchange tracks, records, and reports on commercial vessels that enter the Lower Columbia River Marine Transportation System. As the leading provider of information related to the intermodal transportation system, we maintain over 100 years of data from which we can develop real-time and historical custom reports.

### OVER 100 YEARS OF SERVICE & EXCLUSIVE ACCESS TO HISTORICAL DATA

For over a century, the Exchange has been the trusted source for tracking, recording, and reporting on commercial vessels entering the Lower Columbia River Marine Transportation System. As the leading provider of intermodal transportation data, we maintain an extensive archive spanning more than 100 years, offering both real-time insights and historical analytics. Members of the Exchange have the ability to request customized reports tailored to their specific operational needs, helping them make informed decisions and optimize their strategies. We encourage our members to explore how these valuable resources can enhance their business, providing a competitive edge in an ever-evolving maritime industry.

### REPORTS

Monthly vessel and cargo statistics

- Cargo and Vessel Summary Report
- Columbia River Cargo Statistics Report
- Columbia River Grain Statistics Report
- Custom Report available upon request

### STAY INFORMED WITH THE OUR DAILY NEWS BULLETIN

Our Daily News Bulletin is your go-to source for critical updates and key developments affecting the Columbia and Willamette River shipping industry. Delivered straight to your inbox each weekday morning, this concise and convenient briefing keeps you informed on the latest maritime news, industry trends and essential updates. Designed to enhance awareness of critical issues and events, the bulletin ensures that our partners and members stay ahead in an ever-changing industry.

As a valued member, you also have the opportunity to contribute! We include submissions of relevant news, updates, job postings and industry insights from your organizations, ensuring the maritime community stays connected and informed.

This service is free for our members and industry friends - sign up today and start receiving the latest news or share your updates with us!

### OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- Daily Grain Bulletin
- Merchants Exchange Grain Trading Rules
- Customs of the Port

SCAN TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CUSTOM REPORTS



# MEMBER SERVICES & BENEFITS

## Shared knowledge and education strengthens our industry

### CUSTOMIZED REPORTS TO SUPPORT MARITIME OPERATIONS

At the Exchange, we transform vast amounts of industry data into actionable, easy-to-use reports that support the daily business operations of the maritime community. Our publications, including the Daily Grain Bulletin, Merchants Exchange Grain Trading Rules, and Customs of the Port, provide critical insights tailored to the needs of our members. Each report is developed based on industry requests, ensuring relevance and value to those who rely on them. We continuously refine and enhance our offerings based on member feedback, ensuring that our reports evolve to meet the ever-changing demands of the maritime industry.

Have a specific reporting need? Let us know - we're here to deliver the insights that keep your business moving forward.

### COMPREHENSIVE GRANT MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR INDUSTRY PARTNERS

Grant-funded programs are a key driver of regional development, and the Exchange is proud to offer full-service grant management to help industry partners secure, manage, and successfully close out critical funding opportunities.

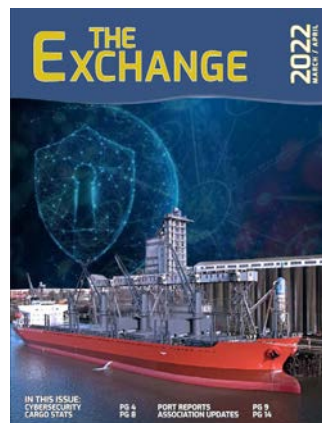
Over the last ten years, the Exchange has administered and managed dozens of Port Security Grants, facilitating millions of dollars in federal funding for vital regional security and infrastructure projects. In 2024, we continued to provide expert grant management services, ensuring compliance and maximizing impact.

### COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

Communication is the heart of the MarOps team. We endeavor to keep all interested parties up to date with vessel movements and provide a 24-hour point of contact for our membership. MarOps operates a robust industry specific answering service to handle inquiries and coordinate activities for both local and non-regional members and clients. In 2024, MarOps managed over 83,000 phone calls and 4,000 SMS messages across 66 separate phone lines. These calls include a wide range of inquiries from routine updates on vessel status to emergency situations requiring immediate attention. The answering service can assist in emergency backup situations, after-hours, or on a full-time basis depending on the member's or client's needs.

### THE EXCHANGE

The Exchange is a bi-monthly newsletter featuring Pacific Northwest Maritime Industry-relevant articles and reviews from regional associations and Columbia River Port Authorities. The Exchange is a magazine-styled newsletter distributed electronically and free to our members and friends.



# SHIPPING EDUCATION SERIES

## Shared knowledge and education strengthens our industry

The Shipping Education Program is dedicated to developing individuals engaged in the maritime industry as well as those looking to enter the field. By bringing together subject matter experts and industry newcomers, we create a dynamic learning environment that strengthens the industry through shared knowledge and professional development.

To ensure greater accessibility and flexibility, our program has moved online, allowing us to reach a broader audience and provide valuable insights to those eager to expand their understanding of maritime operations. The program consists of four weekly classes, each lasting two hours, for a total of eight hours of instruction delivered by industry experts. These sessions offer in-depth professional development opportunities, helping participants gain critical knowledge, build industry connections, and prepare for career growth in the maritime sector.

By fostering education mentorship, we help ensure a well-informed, skilled workforce ready to navigate the future of the maritime industry.

### SHIPPING EDUCATION SERIES

#### *Shipping 101: The Business of Shipping*

The seminar offers an overview of the business of shipping on the Columbia River. The classes cover the history of the River, infrastructure, ports and terminals, and the economic impact of imports and exports in the region. Participants will also learn about the various types of vessels that travel the River, as well as the roles of the key players in the Maritime Industry.

#### *Shipping 201: The Movement of a Ship*

The seminar provides a comprehensive look at the business of shipping from the perspective of a ship. It covers the requirements and regulations for a ship, as well as the crucial roles of agents, pilots, regulatory agencies, insurance, and laws in allowing a ship to move from port to port.

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

**Shipping 101:** The Business of Shipping  
October 2025

**Shipping 201:** The Movement of a Ship  
February 2025

**Shipping 202:** The Movement of Cargo  
April 2025

**Shipping 301:** The Marine Highway  
June 2025

**SCAN TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SHIPPING EDUCATION AND UPCOMING EVENTS**



**Columbia/Snake system background**

Why barging, why not rail?  
Most cost effective and green form of transportation available.

Barge	4-Barge Tow	Jumbo Hopper Car	100 Car Unit Train	Large Semi-Truck
1 Barge = 100,000 bushels of grain	4 Barges = 400,000 bushels of grain	1 Jumbo Hopper Car = 100,000 bushels of grain	100 Car Unit Train = 100,000 bushels of grain	1 Large Semi-Truck = 100,000 bushels of grain
1 Barge = 35 Jumbo Hoppers	1 Barge = 134 Trucks	1 Barge = 1.4 100-Unit Trains	1 Barge = 538 Trucks	

**Tug & Barge**

MERCHANTS EXCHANGE

#### *Shipping 202: The Movement of Cargo*

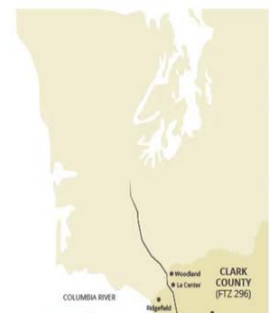
The seminar examines the business of shipping from the perspective of cargo. It covers the types of cargo, labor demands, and different modes of transportation, including rail, barge, and pipeline. The program also discusses the requirements of the supply chain, logistics, and regulatory compliance and their impact on the economy of the Columbia River.

#### *Shipping 301: The Marine Highway*

The seminar focuses on the operations and navigation of the Columbia River as a navigable waterway and its position as an American Marine Highway. It covers topics such as the operations and maintenance of locks, dams, dredging, and buoys, river forecasting, navigation, charts and surveying, and the impacts on the Columbia River transportation system.

### Foreign Trade Zone #296

Port of Vancouver received a Grant of Authority from the Foreign-Trade Zones Board in 2016 to serve as Grantee to sponsor Foreign Trade Zones serving all of Clark County, WA





# ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

## WHAT WE DO

Our association management services are entirely customizable - from basic administrative support to comprehensive turnkey operations. We are equipped to handle a broad spectrum of needs, including:

- Account and Financial Services
- Administrative and Clerical Support
- Meeting and Event Planning
- Marketing, Branding, Website, and Social Media Management
- Governance, Board of Director, and Committee Support

Whether facilitating small, informal gatherings in the Portland area or coordinating every aspect your organization needs throughout the Pacific Northwest, our commitment to increased efficiency, improved effectiveness, a single point of contact, and enhanced communications remains unwavering.

## UNDERSTANDING ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

With a focus on Association Management we act as the hub for non-profit trade and professional associations. Streamlining day-to-day operations so that organizations can focus on their core mission and member needs, our role extends well beyond routine administration. We provide:

- Comprehensive financial management and budget development
- Board and committee governance support
- Strategic planning and policy development
- Membership recruitment, retention, and development
- Legislative advocacy and regulatory affairs
- Full-scale event and conference management
- Digital solutions including website, mobile applications, and social media
- Educational programming and professional development opportunities

This extensive suite of services allows your organization to operate at peak efficiency, ensuring you remain focused on what matters most - serving your members and advancing your mission.

**SCAN TO LEARN MORE  
ABOUT ASSOCIATION  
MANAGEMENT**



## WHY CHOOSE MERCHANTS EXCHANGE?

Being a non-profit ourselves, we are uniquely positioned to understand and align with the goals of the associations we serve. Our specialized expertise and resourceful approach enable us to forge strong, mutually beneficial relationships that lead to tangible improvements in operational efficiency and effectiveness. With Merchants Exchange, you gain a partner committed to your long-term success and dedicated to fostering a collaborative environment for growth.

## OUR TRUSTED ASSOCIATIONS

We proudly serve a diverse portfolio of associations, including:

- Clean Rivers Cooperative
- Columbia River Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association
- Columbia River Shippers Association
- Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee
- Maritime Commerce Club
- Maritime Fire and Safety Association
- Merchants Exchange Scholarship Fund
- Merchants Exchange Grain Committee
- MISNA (Maritime Information Services of North America)
- Working Waterfront Coalition



## GET IN TOUCH

Are you ready to explore how Merchants Exchange can support your associations's journey toward greater efficiency and impact? We invite you to reach out to discuss how you can join the legacy of organizations that have thrived with our support. Let Merchants Exchange be your partner in navigating the challenges of today's dynamic landscape and charting a course toward a successful future.

Contact us today to learn more about our services and how we can help your association achieve its full potential.

# MARINE OPERATIONS SERVICES

The Marine Operations Services Department (MarOps) of the Merchants Exchange provides up-to-date vessel traffic information and communications support as well as an archive of historical information dating back over one hundred years. To achieve this, MarOps works hand in hand with local and state organizations to gather and record information and then disseminates that information depending on the maritime community's needs.

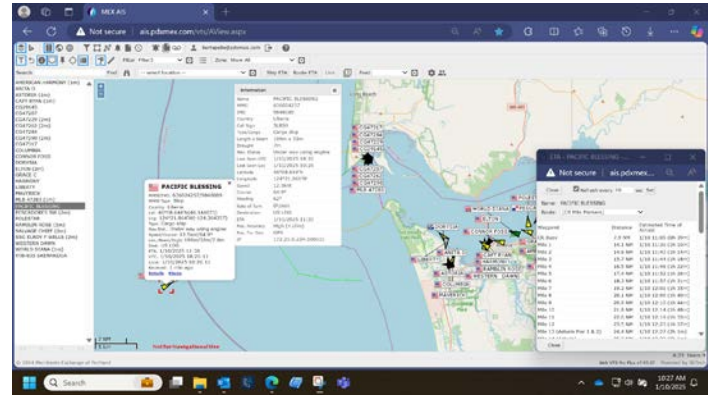
## 96 HOURS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL; SUBMISSION OF NOTICE OF ARRIVAL AND MARITIME FIRE AND SAFETY ASSOCIATION (MFSA) ENROLLMENT

The process begins 96 hours before a vessel's expected arrival at the Columbia River Bar. The ship's agent submits an MFSA Notice of Arrival (NOA). This document includes critical information such as the vessel's particulars, cargo details, estimated time of arrival (ETA), and important emergency contact details. It also contains information required by the MFSA Oil Spill Contingency Plan. This information is used to outline the measures MFSA and the vessel will take in the event of an oil spill, ensuring that MFSA is prepared to respond effectively to an incident.



## VETTING OF INFORMATION

Upon receiving the NOA, MarOps staff meticulously vets the submitted information. They cross-check the details with various commercial and governmental sources to ensure accuracy and compliance with requirements. This vetting process helps identify any potential issues, such as discrepancies in vessel particulars, voyage information, or unverified contact information which could delay the vessel's movement or responses to an emergency.



## VESSEL TRACKING

After MarOps has received and vetted the NOA, the team then begins to track the vessel. MarOps continuously monitors the vessel's progress and keeps all interested parties informed about key events throughout the vessel's journey. MarOps employs several advanced technologies to track the vessel's progress from the moment the NOA is submitted through the entirety of the vessel's voyage on the river system until the vessel departs the river system. These technologies include:

- 1. Automatic Identification System (AIS): AIS is a radio-based system that transmits the vessel's information to other ships and shore-based stations, such as its name, position, speed, and course. Through a network of **seven strategically located AIS receivers owned and operated by Merchants Exchange**, MarOps has the ability to "see" vessels along 160 miles of the Columbia River, the lower Willamette River, and the entire Oregon Coast. MarOps uses AIS data to monitor the vessel's real-time location and movement. Additionally, MarOps has access to extensive AIS data in other areas through partner institutions. This comprehensive data is displayed on a custom web-based viewer accessible to member organizations, providing them with real-time tracking, planning tools, and historical data.
- 2. Real-Time Monitoring and Communication of Updates and Key Events: MarOps works closely with the Columbia River Pilots to share vessel tracking information. This collaboration ensures that the Merchants Exchange and the Pilots are well-informed about each vessel's movements. MarOps continuously monitors each vessel's progress and keeps all interested parties informed about key events throughout the vessel's journey. These key events include but are not limited to: ETA's to berths and anchorages; departures from and arrivals at berths or anchorages; arrivals and

# MARINE OPERATIONS SERVICES

departures from specific points such as departures from pilot boarding grounds; and ETAs and arrivals to specific timed points along the river transit. Other key events include potential operational disruptions such as a vessel in distress, Columbia River Bar closures, and Maritime Security changes.

## NOTIFICATIONS TO CONCERNED PARTIES

Throughout the process, MarOps sends timely notifications to membership and interested parties that can include **Tug Operators, Pilots and Pilot Dispatch Centers, Launch Services, Ports and Port Authorities, Stevedores, Vessel Agents, Ship Chandlers, Surveyors, Cargo Inspectors, and Local, State, and Federal Authorities.** MarOps can make notifications by several means such as voice/phone, text messaging, and email.

## DATA COLLECTION AND HISTORICAL RECORDS

MarOps collects vessel tracking data and enters it into the “Marine Activity Reporting and Vessel Information Network” (**MARVIN**), a custom-built database designed and maintained by Merchants Exchange. This database is accessible to members, providing them with valuable real-time vessel reporting via its online reports as well as insights and historical data via the MARVIN Custom Report Builder platform. MarOps maintains these records meticulously, with digital records dating back to 1992. Additionally, hard copy vessel data is available back to the early 20th century. This extensive archive allows comprehensive historical analysis and supports various operational and research needs.



## MARINE VHF RADIO NETWORK

MarOps is not restricted to telephone-only voice communication. MarOps in cooperation with MFSA operates a Marine VHF radio network with **four transmission antennas** strategically placed throughout the Lower Columbia River system. This network ensures reliable communication with vessels and provides a vital link for coordinating emergency response and other maritime activities. The VHF radio network is essential for maintaining safety and efficiency by allowing for real-time communication with ships, pilots, tugs, and other maritime stakeholders.

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

MarOps play a crucial role in emergency management. It receives emergency notifications of oil spills and shipboard fires in cooperation with MFSA and Clean Rivers Cooperative. Upon receiving such notifications, MarOps promptly reports the information to relevant authorities and concerned parties, including port authorities, environmental agencies, and emergency response teams. This coordinated response ensures that emergencies are managed effectively and efficiently, minimizing potential damage and ensuring the safety of all involved. *MarOps and the Merchants Exchange also work closely with the US Coast Guard Sector Columbia River to support communications and Emergency Responses. Merchants Exchange and USCG Sector Columbia River have a current Memorandum of Agreement to support this mission.*

## DEPARTURE

Finally, once the vessel has safely departed from the Columbia River, the MarOps Services Department updates the vessel's status, vets all movement data for completeness and accuracy in the **MARVIN** system, and closes the NOA file. They ensure that all records are accurately maintained for future reference.

Vessel Name	Arrival Columbia River Bar	Stevedores	Next Port After Columbia River
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	2/19/2024 01:33	CHEVRON	FORT ANGELES, WASHINGTON
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	2/20/2024 02:02	CHEVRON	NIKORU, ALASKA
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	8/6/2024 03:38	KINDER MORGAN TERMINALS INC.	LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	4/23/2024 05:28	KINDER MORGAN TERMINALS INC.	ANACORTES, WASHINGTON
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	5/19/2024 17:04	KINDER MORGAN TERMINALS INC.	ANACORTES, WASHINGTON
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	6/23/2024 17:09	KINDER MORGAN TERMINALS INC.	MARTINEZ, CALIFORNIA
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	7/10/2024 15:58	KINDER MORGAN TERMINALS INC.	LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	7/24/2024 04:48	CHEVRON	NIKORU, ALASKA
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	6/13/2024 13:26	KINDER MORGAN TERMINALS INC.	ANACORTES, WASHINGTON
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	6/20/2024 17:08	KINDER MORGAN TERMINALS INC.	ANACORTES, WASHINGTON
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	8/4/2024 13:50	CHEVRON	ANACORTES, WASHINGTON
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	10/10/2024 09:30	CHEVRON	VALDEZ, ALASKA
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	11/13/2024 03:13	CHEVRON	LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	11/24/2024 03:13	CHEVRON	ANACORTES, WASHINGTON
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	11/29/2024 04:03	CHEVRON	NIKORU, ALASKA
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	11/12/2024 04:06	CHEVRON	ANACORTES, WASHINGTON
AMERICAN ENDURANCE	1/8/2024 17:17	CHEVRON	ANACORTES, WASHINGTON

# YEARLY REVIEW

## January 28 - Hired Carl Obermeier as MFSA General Manager



Carl Obermeier joined the team on Monday, January 8th, coming to us with an extensive maritime background. He was most recently the Fleet Monitoring Center Manager for Foss Maritime in addition to previous roles as Marine Assurance Superintendent with BP, Marine Operations Coordinator with Hanjin Shipping Company, and as a Lieutenant Commander in the United States Navy. Carl holds an MBA from Western Washington University and also has experience with Incident Management Teams, representing energy companies to state and federal regulators as a commercial analyst and more.

## February 2 - MARSEC East Panel Presentation

Curtis Cannizzaro participated in a panel with Executive Directors from other Marine Exchanges at the 2024 Maritime Security East Conference. The Marine Exchange Panel was titled, "Marine Exchange Leadership Roundtable: Leveraging Interdependencies to Unify Public and Private Stakeholders in Critical Waterways." The Merchants Exchange presentation highlighted our services offered to members and regional stakeholders. The event was a great networking opportunity as well as an opportunity to showcase our services to a national audience.



## February 22 - Signed MOA with Coast Guard



The Merchants Exchange and Clean Rivers Cooperative signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the United States Coast Guard (USCG) Sector Columbia River on February 22, 2024, that will enable the USCG to utilize the Merchants Exchange and Clean Rivers' facilities in the event of an emergency. The signing of the MOA is significant in that it is a safety net for the Columbia and Willamette Rivers that ensures continuous operations for river traffic and the maritime industry. In addition, the MOA continues to foster the positive and collaborative working relationship between the USCG, the Merchants Exchange, and Clean Rivers Cooperative.

## February 26 - Merchants Exchange Tour for Future Maritime Professionals

Approximately 23 students accompanied by adult chaperones visited the offices of Merchants Exchange on February 26. Students received a presentation covering how goods move on the river system, how we at Merchants Exchange track the movement of vessels on the river system, what actions take place in the event of a spill, and how we train firefighters for safety and preparedness in dealing with potential ship fires. The children really enjoyed the visit and their tour of our Marine Operations Center.



## February 28 - Annual meeting and Q1 BOD meeting at Colwood Golf Course



Merchants Exchange held their Annual Meeting and 1st Quarter Board Meeting at Colwood Golf Center. The annual meeting featured the presentation of a plaque by Executive Director, Curtis Cannizzaro and incoming Board President, Alex Scott honoring Todd Krout for his service as Board of Directors President from 2021-2024.

# YEARLY REVIEW

## March 4 - Polly Hyke Promoted to Business Manager

In March, Clean Rivers Cooperative celebrated the promotion of Staff member Polly Hyke, from Administrative Coordinator to Business Manager, in recognition of her professional development, skills and contributions to the Cooperative. Polly has served as a full-time Merchants Exchange employee for two years. Polly coordinates contract management, billing, asset tracking, member training, marketing/social media, and many other tasks that keep our team organized, efficient, and effective. This past year, she successfully managed the re-model of the Clean Rivers training facility, navigating our organization through a complicated permitting and construction process. Next, she plans to begin training to become our next Oil Spill Response Manager.



## April 1 - Hired Lisa Rau as Executive Assistant



Lisa Rau began at the Merchants Exchange on April 1. Most recently, she was an Executive Support Specialist at the Oregon Health Authority and then at the Oregon Department of Education, supporting senior staff at both organizations. In addition to ten years of executive support experience, Lisa was a teacher for twenty years: guiding Montessori preschoolers, teaching music, and working with young gifted/talented students. She is fascinated by the “hidden” industry of maritime commerce and is looking forward to becoming a part of this important work.

## April 15 - Hired Michelle Eyres as Association Account Specialist

Michelle Eyres started on Monday, April 15th as the new Association Account Specialist. She comes to the team with experience as a Media Specialist, Development Manager, and Event and Social Media Coordinator, with additional work as a volunteer. She supports several of the associations we manage such as the Harbor Safety Committee, the Maritime Commerce Club, and the Scholarship Fund. The photo was taken at the CRSOA’s Winter Holiday Party and shows Michelle with her daughter, Abigail Eyres, who has also joined the Maritime industry as a vessel agent at Norton Lilly.



## June 3 - Merchants Exchange Grain Golf Tournament



2024 Merchants Exchange Annual Grain Golf Tournament was another success! A record 94 golfers joined the fun and enjoyed fairly nice June weather. Congratulations to the winning team, composed of Peter Karneus, Tony Anderson and Sean McCarthy. They won first place with a score of 62 and took home a cash prize.

On June 17th, in cooperation with Merchants Exchange Member company Anchorage Launch, new Merchants Exchange staff members enjoyed a tour of Columbia River ports aboard M/V *Triumph VII*. The staff were able to take in waterfront views, learn about *Triumph VII*'s operations, and see vessels and cargo operations all along the river from Portland to Longview. The tour provided a perfect blend of relaxation and education. The experience fostered camaraderie among the team, making it a memorable introduction to their new roles.

## June 17 - New Staff Harbor Tour



# YEARLY REVIEW

## September 5 - Open House and Bocce Tournament



Our Annual Open House and Bocce Tournament fundraiser for the Merchants Exchange Scholarship Fund was held at the offices of Merchants Exchange with the theme, “Come Sail Away.” Fourteen teams competed in a spirited Bocce Tournament with Samantha Shaver and Atsuo Utsumi (Team name - Chicka Bow Wow) winning for the second consecutive year. The event also included a raffle with fabulous prize packages, raising much-needed funds for the Scholarship Fund. Hawaiian-themed food was provided by “808 Grinds” and despite the record-high heat, a good time was had by all.

## September 13 - 3rd Quarter Staff Meeting with guest Jim Merten

Merchants Exchange staff were treated to a special presentation at our third quarter staff meeting that was held Friday, September 13, with guest speaker Chief Warrant Officer Jim Merten of the USCG giving a detailed presentation on “Identifying Coast Guard Ranks.” He brought along three other Coast Guard members who “modeled” the different rank insignias. The information shared will be very valuable to all staff who interact with the Coast Guard and illustrates our commitment to professionalism and knowledge.



## September 18 thru 20 - Merchants Exchange attends San Francisco 175th Anniversary Celebration



The Marine Exchange of the San Francisco Bay Region held their 175th anniversary celebration on September 18th. Curtis Cannizzaro, Executive Director, was able to attend for the evening and offer congratulations from our organization to their Executive Director, Scott Humphrey (pictured). It was a great opportunity to network with our sister organization while showing our engagement and support of other regional Marine Exchanges.

## September 27 - Women in Maritime Lunch Sponsored by Shaver Transportation

On Friday, September 27, Shaver Transportation sponsored a “Women in Maritime Luncheon and Tugboat Ride” at their facility on River Road in Portland. Host Samantha Shaver welcomed everyone, sharing that she was pleased that every year the group gets larger, which only serves to emphasize the increasing roles that women play in the maritime industry. After the delicious lunch, many attendees boarded Samantha’s namesake tug, the *Samantha Shaver*, and enjoyed the beautiful weather while taking an hour-long tour of the river.



## October 13 - Promotion of Ben Robinson to Equipment Maintenance Supervisor



Benjamin Robinson was promoted to the position of Equipment Maintenance Supervisor supporting Clean Rivers Cooperative, effective October 13, 2024. Since Ben joined the Exchange in June of 2022 he has grown exponentially in his capacity and leadership ability. His growth in proficiency with Clean Rivers Cooperative equipment, processes, procedure and response requirements made him the ideal candidate for this position.

# YEARLY REVIEW

## October 16 - Promoted Anthony O'Reilly to MFSA Administrative Coordinator & FPAAC Program Manager

Anthony was promoted to this position on Monday, September 16. Over the last three and a half years with the Exchange, Anthony has supported multiple departments and gained a great foundation and understanding of the work we do here. He has demonstrated a keen interest in supporting our association clients through the Grants program. His administrative capacity and familiarity with MFSA will be a great asset to the program. Anthony reports to the General Manager of MFSA, as well as manages its program FPAAC (Fire Protection Agencies Advisory Council.)



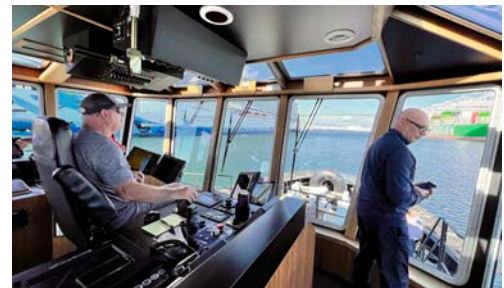
## October 23 - COBALT Presentations by MEX, Clean Rivers Cooperative, and MFSA



In October, The Merchants Exchange, along with Clean Rivers Cooperative and MFSA, presented at COBALT, which stands for “Columbia Basin Maritime Leadership Training.” It is a program produced by CRSOA and designed as an introduction to the Columbia River maritime community for the incoming USCG Captain of the Port and other Coast Guard senior leaders. Civilians often attend as well, and both Lisa Rau and Jem Wilde attended as new employees of the Exchange. The week-long program offered a variety of presentations from a cross-section of the industry, port tours, and a wealth of information about all aspects of the local maritime industry.

## October 29 thru 31 - MISNA Annual Meeting

The MISNA Annual Conference occurred October 29-31 in San Pedro, California. Attended by a number of Marine Exchanges, reports were shared which detailed activity from around the country and discussion occurred regarding current trends, threats and opportunities in the industry. Marine Operations Services Manager Carl Bertapelle accompanied Executive Director Curtis Cannizzaro to participate in the conference. MISNA provides an invaluable resource for the Exchange and is a strong relational group for staff. Photo is from a harbor tour given to attendees aboard the *Bay Delta* tugboat.



## November 19 - Tour of International Delegation

On November 19th, at the Request of the USCG, the Exchange hosted an international delegation interested in relationship building and understanding our region. The international delegation was hosted at the offices of the Merchants Exchange and received a presentation on the critical components of our river system and collaborative nature of the Lower Columbia River.



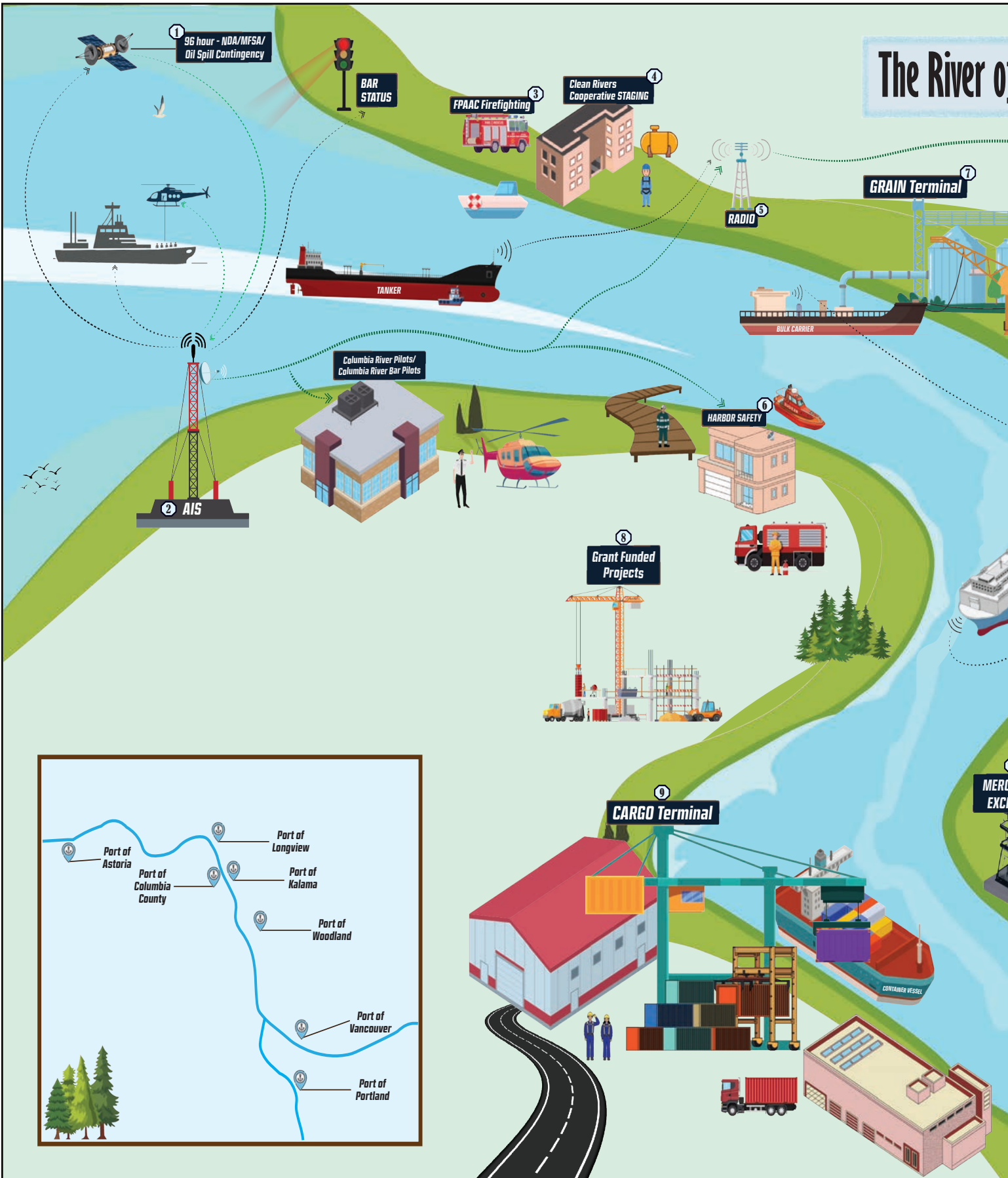
Merchants Exchange staff enjoyed a relaxing and enjoyable Friday afternoon at the Annual Holiday Party in the Propeller Conference Room. Staff walked into a room decorated with holiday trimmings, poinsettias, and a pile of presents for the White Elephant gift exchange. After the gifts were opened, a delicious lunch catered by Burrito Bar followed. After lunch, there were holiday crafts and games to play and snacks to eat while watching “A Christmas Story” on the large screen conference room monitor. It was the perfect way to kick off the holiday season!

## December 6 - Staff Holiday Party



# RIVER OF INFORMATION

The River of

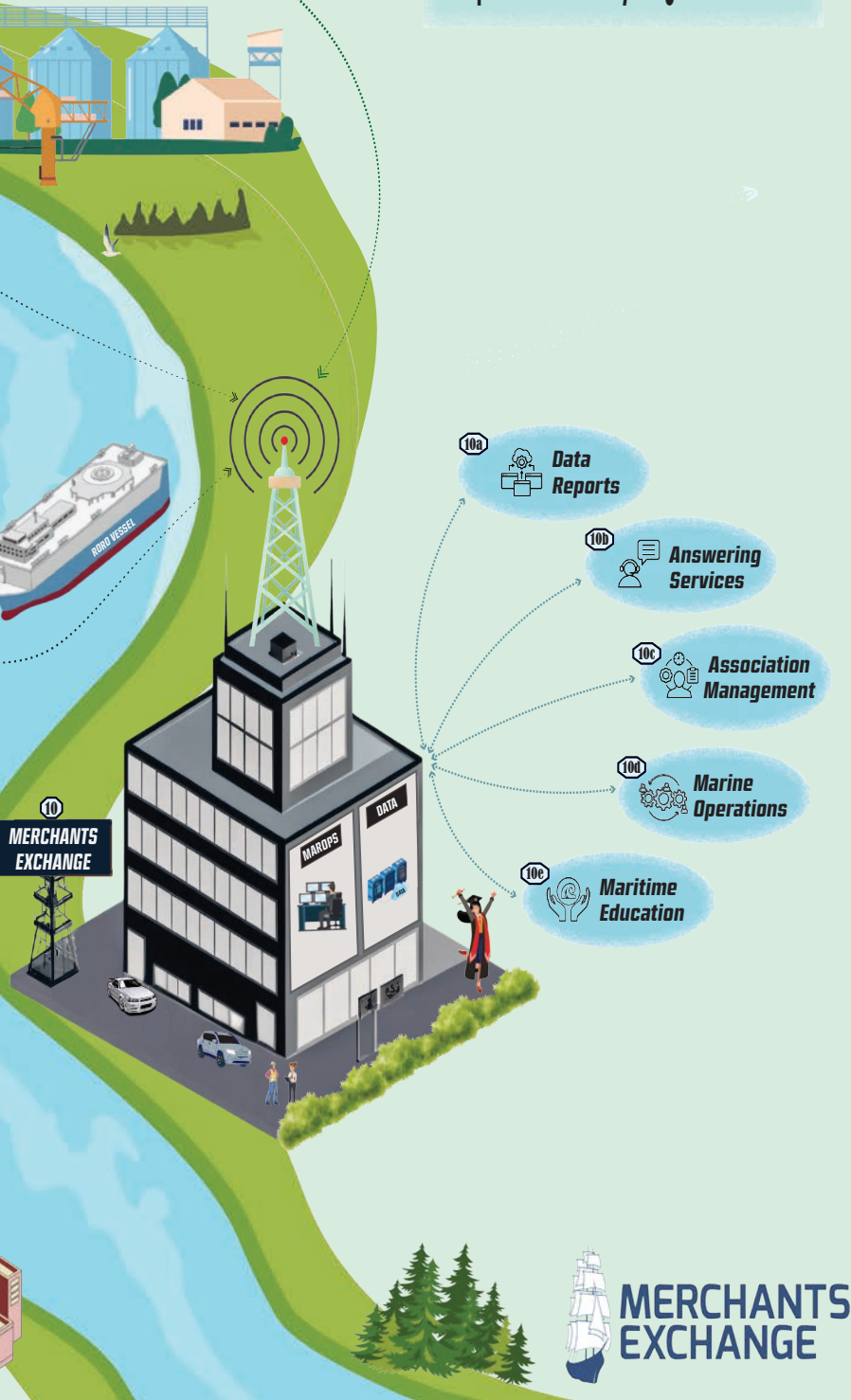




# NAVIGATING MARITIME OPERATIONS

## Source of Information: Navigating Maritime Operations

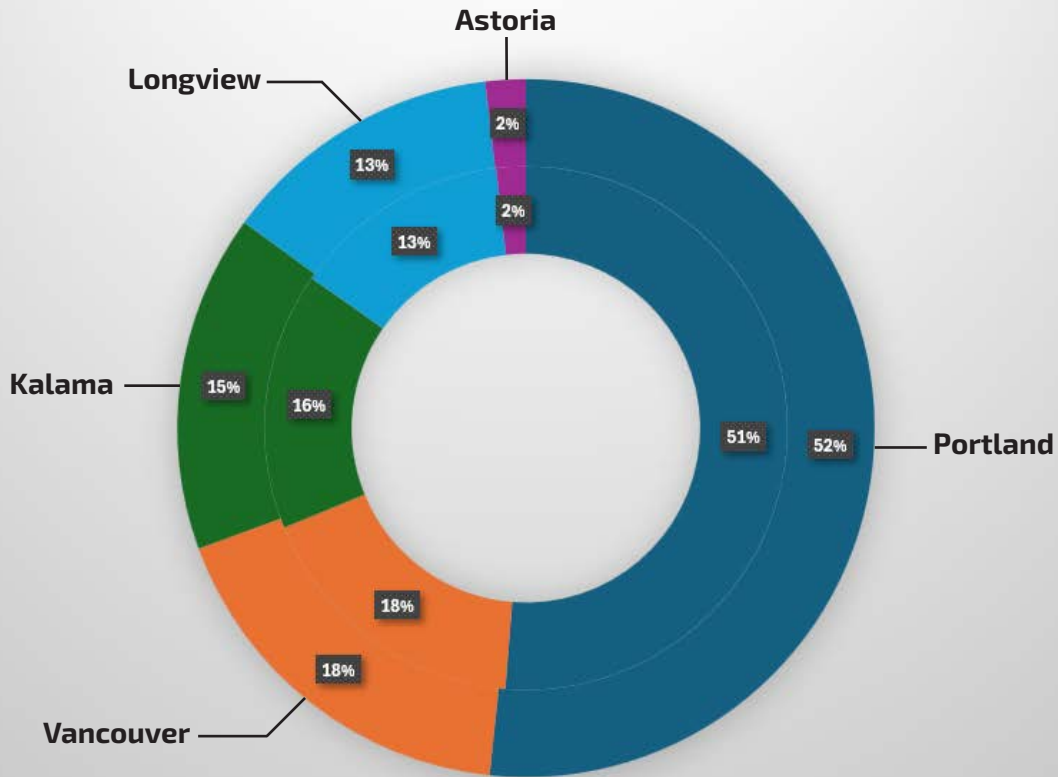
"We're working before you get here, after departure and everything in between."



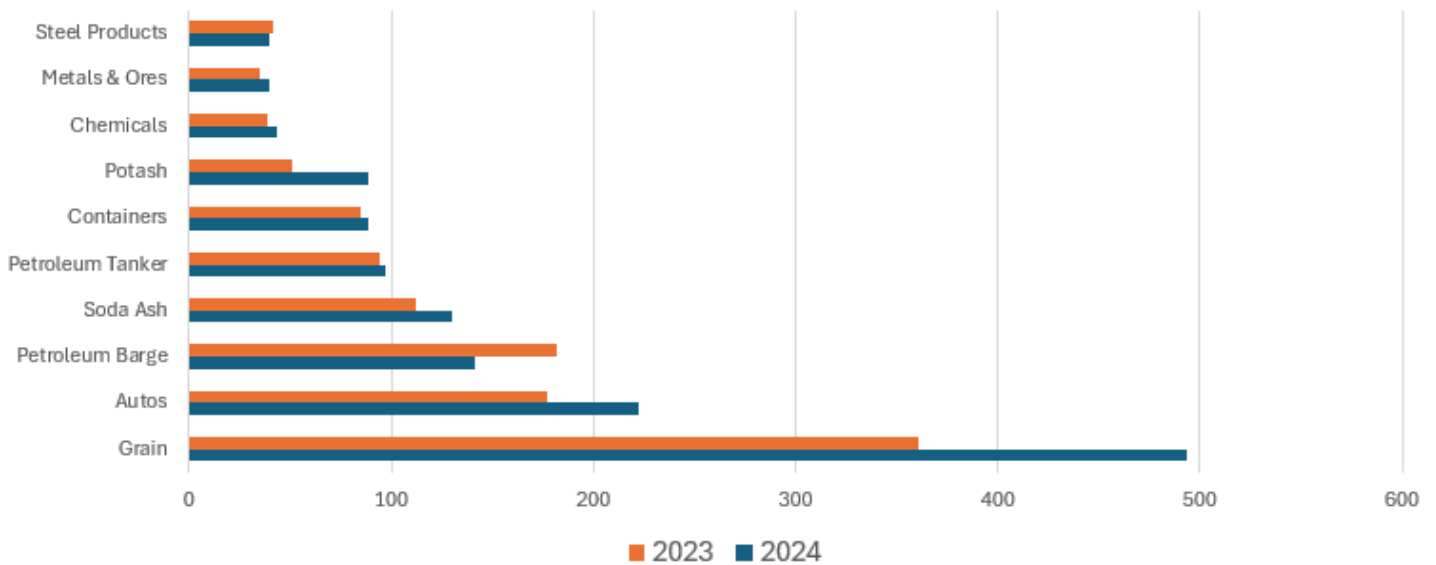
- 1 All commercial vessels above 300 GT are required to enroll in the state-approved Oil Spill Contingency Plan managed by the MFSA by submitting a Notice of arrival 96 hour prior to entering the Columbia River. In coordination with MFSA, Merchants Exchange receives and vets these enrollments.
- 2 Merchant Exchange owns and operates seven AIS receiver stations covering the Oregon coast and 160 miles of the Columbia River System. This allows our staff to monitor ship movement and provides information to members at any time regarding vessels on the Columbia/Willamette River System.
- 3 Merchants Exchange supports the MFSA Fire Protection Agencies Advisory Council (FPAAC) which is comprised of 13 fire agencies located throughout the river system. These agencies voluntarily contribute staff time and equipment costs for participation in meetings, drills and other training exercises to ensure preparedness in the region.
- 4 Clean River Cooperative maintains fourteen strategic staging locations throughout the region, storing response equipment and vessels, in order to meet a two-hour response time requirement anywhere in the area of interest.
- 5 In cooperation with MFSA, Merchants Exchange operates a VHF marine radio network with four transmission and receiving antennas located strategically along the Lower Columbia River to ensure reliable communications and a timely emergency response.
- 6 Merchants Exchange supports the Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee through an association management service agreement to help insure safe navigation and the protection of people, the environment, and property on waterways in the region.
- 7 Merchants Exchange distributes a monthly Columbia River Grain Statistics Report that includes vessel and cargo data, as well as a Daily Grain Bulletin that is published after markets close for the day. This report contains Market News for the PNW, PIKs, and Grain Futures.
- 8 Through our Grant Management services, Merchants Exchange helps industry members reduce administrative burdens associated with the stewardship of federal funds. Leveraging our experience with FEMA's Port Security Grant Program (PSGP), we provide assistance from the application and award stage through the life of a project to enhance port-wide maritime security and resilience across the entire river system.
- 9 MarOps, working closely with the Columbia River Pilots, provides a system for evening and late-night vessel movement through Call Jobs. This allows vessel agents flexibility in the timing of their vessel movements, all while keeping few assets on standby for extended periods
- 10 Merchants Exchange is dedicated to being the leading provider of information to stakeholders of the Pacific Northwest intermodal transportation system.
  - 10a The Exchange tracks, records and reports on every vessel that enters the Columbia River waterways. We maintain over 100 years of historical data from which we can develop historical and current custom reports.
  - 10b Merchants Exchange Department offers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week manned answering service, following guidelines established by members.
  - 10c Merchants Exchange has an established history of collaborative, innovative approaches to association management. For over 100 years, we have been trusted to provide association management services to other not-for-profit organizations starting with the Portland Grain Exchange in 1915.
  - 10d Merchants Exchange Marine Operations Department operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide the Columbia/Willamette River maritime community with valuable information and services including real time tracking of vessel movements, vessel intelligence, and communication services.
  - 10e The Shipping Education Program offers accessible, expert-led online classes designed to support career growth in the maritime industry. Through four weekly two-hour sessions, participants gain essential knowledge, build connections, and develop necessary industry skills.

# YEAR-END STATISTICS

**2023-2024 Vessel Calls by Top 5 Port Areas**  
 The outer ring is the share of each port in 2023.  
 The inner ring is the share of each port in 2024.  
 We track every movement of every ship.

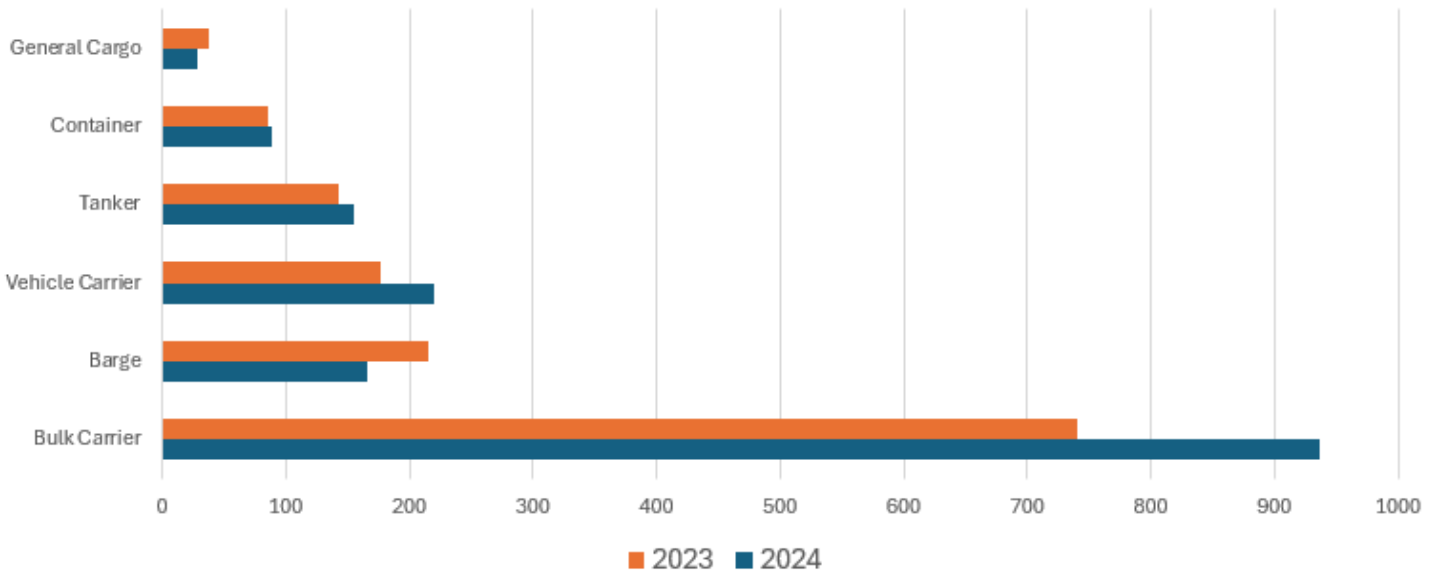


**2023-2024 Vessel Calls by Top 10 Cargo Types**



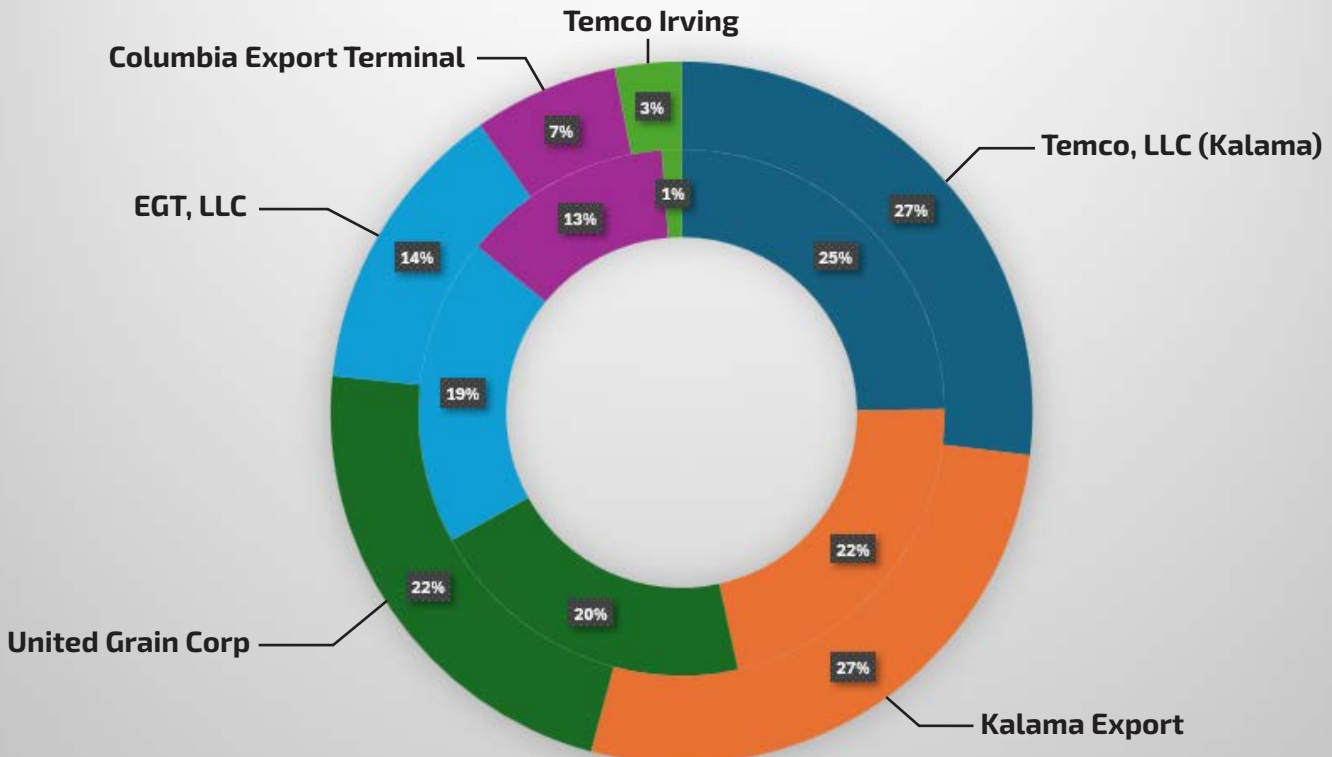
# YEAR-END STATISTICS

2023-2024 Vessel Calls by Ship Type



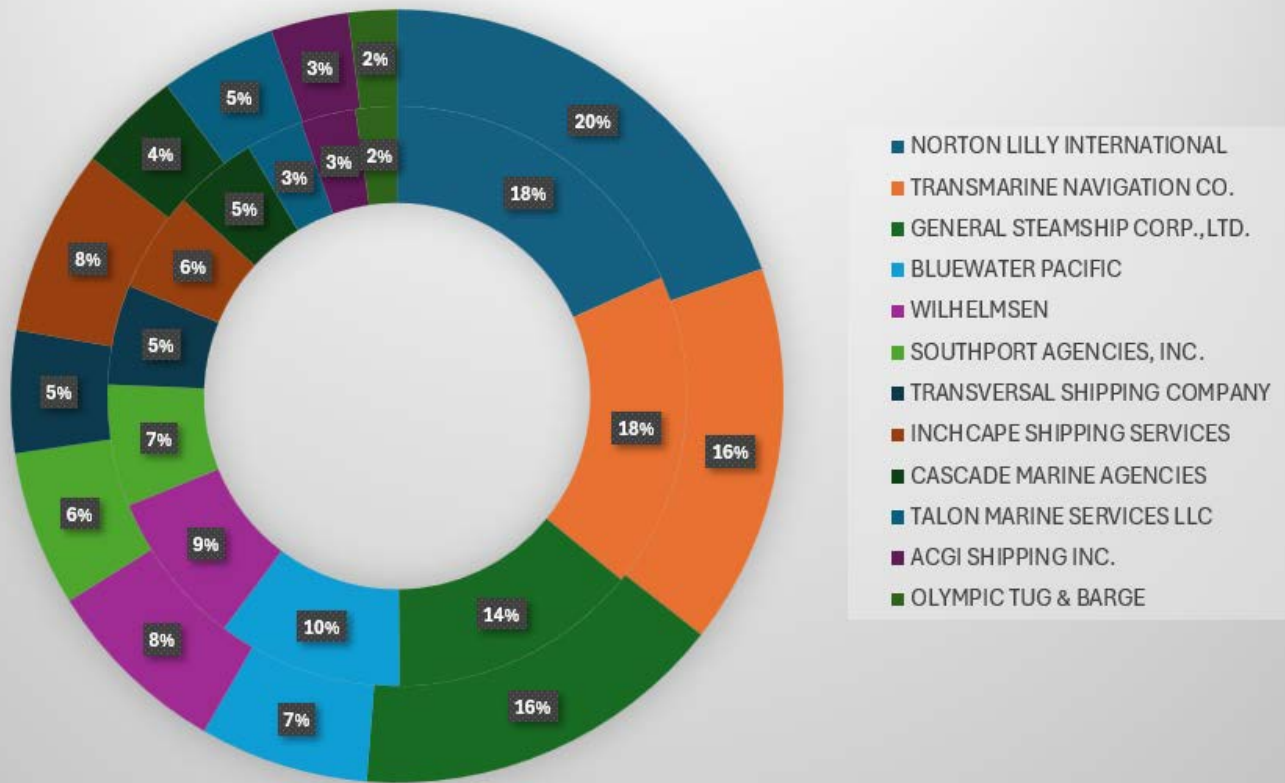
2023-2024 Vessel Calls by Grain Terminal

The outer ring is the share of each terminal in 2023.  
 The inner ring is the share of each terminal in 2024.  
 We track every pound of grain loaded at each terminal.

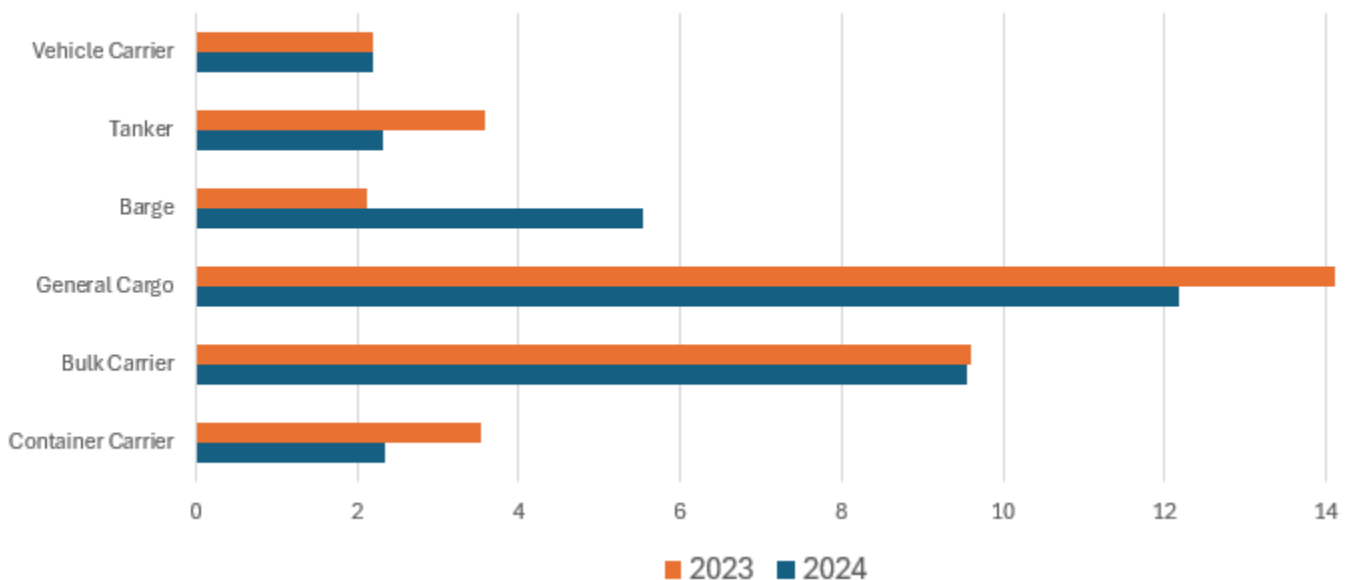


# YEAR-END STATISTICS

**2023-2024 Vessel Calls by Member Agents**  
 The outer ring is the share of each agent in 2023.  
 The inner ring is the share of each agent in 2024.  
 We track the agents involved with each voyage.



2023-2024 Average Stay in Port (days) by Ship Type



# 2024 YEAR IN REVIEW



## Website Analytics

Started July 2024

**223K** Total Page Views

**24K** Average Monthly Views

Most Popular Page **Bar Status | 133K Views**



## Newsletter & Emails

**1,797** Subscribers

*The Exchange*

**1,928** Reads

**4:52** Average Read Time

## Strategic Planning

- Completed the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan
- Began preparations for the 2025-2029 strategic plan

## Finance & Operations

- Operating revenue exceeded budget by 9.6% and expenses were 3.1% below the budget for 2024.
- Presented financial updates of the budget vs actual expense to the Board at their quarterly meetings and to Exchange staff at all staff meetings..

## Marketing Communications

- Our website has experienced a robust growth in engagement, with total page views increasing by approximately 60% from the previous year. Additionally, the average monthly views have grown by about 4%. The “Bar Status” page remains the most popular, with a 6% increase in views compared to last year.

## Shipping Education Series

- Successfully held virtually. Attendance has remained steady with an average of 20 students per course.
- Our Shipping Education Series was accepted by the Oregon Board of Maritime Pilots as an acceptable Continuing Education Unit for Maritime Pilots. Additional CEU opportunities will be researched in 2025.

## Staffing and Recruitment

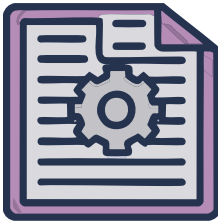
- Managed multiple recruitments including:  
MFSA General Manager; Executive Assistant; Association Account Specialist; Administrative Specialist and Grant Administrator; MFSA Administrative Coordinator; Equipment Maintenance Supervisor; Computer Systems & Digital Marketing Specialist; and Business Manager
- Updated and enhanced the onboarding program for new staff to allow for a smooth transition into the company and to increase retention.

# MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

## ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES/ ASSOCIATION SUPPORT SERVICES

The Merchants Exchange has an established history of collaborative, innovative approaches to association management. For 109 years, we have been trusted to provide association management services to other not-for-profit organizations starting with the Portland Grain Exchange in 1915. We pride ourselves on providing exceptional, cost-effective, professional services for maritime and international trade-related associations.

### Administration



### Operations/Communication Services



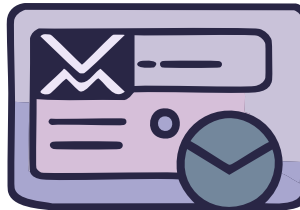
### Financial Administration



### Grant Management



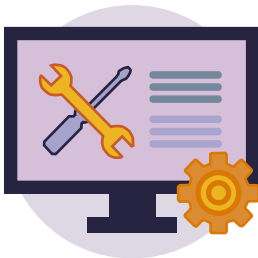
### Marketing



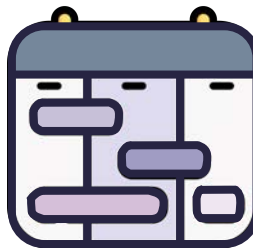
### Education and Outreach



### IT Services



### Event Management



### Web Services



# ASSOCIATIONS



Clean Rivers Cooperative is an oil spill removal organization comprised of 21 member companies with facilities located along the Columbia and Willamette Rivers (located in both Oregon and Washington). Clean Rivers provides spill response equipment and services for its members and their facility response plans. It is also the primary Spill Response Contractor to the Maritime Fire & Safety Association Vessel Response Plan for vessels transiting the Columbia and Willamette Rivers.

## CLEAN RIVERS COOPERATIVE, INC.

[www.cleanriverscooperative.com](http://www.cleanriverscooperative.com)

Association Board President:  
Doug Lenz, Columbia Pacific Bio-Refinery

General Manager: Vanessa Green

Business Manager: Polly Hyke

Operations Manager: Carl Boelter

Equipment Maintenance Supervisor: Ben Robinson

Maintenance Mechanic – Marine: Vacant



This association was organized in 1977 to further the business and interests of the customs brokers and freight forwarders within our area. This association is very active in providing its membership with classes, seminars on procedural updates, speeches, and forums on the current demands of the shipping community. Additionally, the association maintains a forum for open dialog with various governmental agencies and for solving local problems at a local level. CRCBFA currently has 17 full members (voting members that are employed in the business), 15 associate members (non-voting members that are involved in businesses relating to the brokerage business), and three individual members.

## COLUMBIA RIVER CUSTOMS BROKERS & FORWARDERS ASSOCIATION, INC. (CRCBFA)

[www.crcbfa.org](http://www.crcbfa.org)

Association Board President:  
Tia Sandberg, Total Logistics Resource, Inc  
Association Director: Margerie Vis

# ASSOCIATIONS



LOWER COLUMBIA REGION  
HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee (LCRHSC) is an open forum comprised of public and private entities with vital interests in assuring safe navigation to protect people, the environment, and property on the waterways within the Lower Columbia Region. The Lower Columbia Region encompasses the Columbia River and its navigable tributaries from the seaward approaches to the Columbia River Bar to Bonneville Dam. The LCRHSC provides an inclusive, cooperative, and equitable venue for addressing waterways issues to ensure the continuation and improvement of prudent management practices for our local waterways. Throughout the process, the LCRHSC strives to ensure reliable and efficient marine transportation.

## LOWER COLUMBIA REGION HARBOR SAFETY COMMITTEE (LCRHSC)

[www.lcrhsc.org](http://www.lcrhsc.org)

### Association Board Chair:

Larry Landgraver, Port of Longview

Association Administrator: Michelle Eyres



MARITIME COMMERCE CLUB  
*Columbia River*

The Maritime Commerce Club, Columbia River (MCC) was created to further the interests of individuals and businesses involved in maritime trade along the Columbia and Willamette River Systems. The Club provides opportunities for social networking, keeps members informed of the events shaping the maritime industry, and participates in philanthropic endeavors that strengthen our community.

Created from the merger of the Portland Shipping Club and the Propeller Club: Port of the Columbia River, the Maritime Commerce Club brings together members possessing a wealth of industry knowledge and history with individuals who have the vision to keep the maritime industry moving into the future. The Club will continue to sponsor events that honor those who have been invaluable to the maritime community; bring awareness to issues shaping our industry; celebrate the impact our industry has had in developing our region; and give back to the community we live in.

## MARITIME COMMERCE CLUB, COLUMBIA RIVER

[www.maritimemmerceclub.org](http://www.maritimemmerceclub.org)

### Association Board President:

Michael Richards, Omega Morgan

Association Director: Margerie Vis

Association Administrator: Michelle Eyres



# ASSOCIATIONS



**COLUMBIA RIVER  
SHIPPERS  
ASSOCIATION**

The CRSA was established in 1988. Its mission, through the combined commercial strength and influence of its members, is to maintain and improve steamship service to Portland and to ensure stable shipping rates for importing containerized cargo into the region. Services specific to this association include: negotiation of annual service contracts with three steamship lines, new shipping rates negotiated and contracts amended throughout the year. Members also receive individual weekly tracking reports on all booked shipments and Member assistance with steamship line service issues.

## COLUMBIA RIVER SHIPPERS ASSOCIATION (CRSA)

[www.crsa-oregon.tripod.com](http://www.crsa-oregon.tripod.com)

### Association Board President:

Corby Braunger, Richardson Sports

Independent Administrator: Curtis Cannizzaro



The Columbia River Steamship Operators' Association, Inc. (CRSOA), established in 1922, as the Portland Steamship Operators' Association, includes members representing ship owners, operators, agents, launch services, towing, and bunkering, as well as facilities and ports along the Columbia, Willamette, and Snake River systems and Oregon coast.

The CRSOA's mission is to facilitate trade, provide business leadership, exercise principles of environmental stewardship, serve as an industry focal point, and promote operating policies and practices that are safe, reliable, efficient, and cost-effective.

## COLUMBIA RIVER STEAMSHIP OPERATORS' ASSOCIATION, INC. (CRSOA)

[www.crsoa.net](http://www.crsoa.net)

### Board Chair:

Caitlin Sause, Sause Bros.

Executive Director: Kate Mickelson

Accounting Administrator: Chann Noun, Merchants  
Exchange

# ASSOCIATIONS



Established in 1983 in the aftermath of the 1982 M/V *Protector Alpha* fire, the MFSA supports shipboard fire training and equipment for land-based firefighters from thirteen agencies in Oregon and Washington. In 1991, oil spill response and preparedness was added to the mission of MFSA. This association coordinates shipboard fire and spill response needs between two states, fourteen cities and seven port districts along 110 miles of shipping channels. The MFSA has become a national model. The revised Mutual Aid Agreements, signed by all participating fire agencies, enable fire agencies to assist each other in the event of a shipboard fire on the lower Columbia and Willamette Rivers while the MFSA Vessel Response Plan provides oil spill contingency planning and response coverage to approximately 1400+/- ships and barges each year.

## MARITIME FIRE & SAFETY ASSOCIATION (MFSA)

[www.mfsa.com](http://www.mfsa.com)

### Association Board President:

Kent Cash, Port of Vancouver USA

Executive Director: Curtis Cannizzaro

General Manager: Carl Obermeier

Administrative Coordinator, FPAAC Program

Manager: Anthony O'Reilly



In December 2003, the Merchants Exchange established a new entity, the Merchants Exchange Scholarship Fund, which is the successor to the Women's Shipping Club Scholarship Fund, established in 1981. Their goals were to provide scholarships to individuals who had made a commitment to work in the marine transportation industry and international trade. The Exchange continues the work of this Fund. The Exchange scholarships are awarded to those who have demonstrated academic ability and personal qualities that will permit them to benefit from higher education. The scholarships are awarded to students seeking careers in Maritime Affairs and/or International Trade.

## MERCHANTS EXCHANGE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

[www.pdxmex.com/scholarship](http://www.pdxmex.com/scholarship)

### Association Board President:

Alex Scott, Anchorage Launch Services Co.

Association Director: Margerie Vis

Association Administrator: Michelle Eyres

# ASSOCIATIONS

## Working Waterfront COALITION

Established in 2005, the Working Waterfront Coalition (WWC) is an organization of businesses concerned about the environmental health and economic vitality of the Portland Harbor. The WWC advocates for sound public policy that promotes environmental, social, and economic sustainability. Portland's Harbor is a vital employment area; home to thousands of valuable high-wage, high-benefit jobs. The WWC, with its extensive knowledge of harbor industry needs, active industry participation, and record of effective advocacy, is dedicated to working with its

partners to ensure an appropriate balance between environmental concerns and the needs of river-related employers. The Coalition's activities include:

- Advocating with local, state and federal officials, and agencies on behalf of marine-dependent and river-related businesses.
- Working to broaden community understanding of the importance of the Portland Harbor as one of the most impactful employment areas in the region, and the harbor industries' dependence on a limited land supply suitable for business

### WORKING WATERFRONT COALITION (WWC)

[www.workingwaterfrontportland.org](http://www.workingwaterfrontportland.org)

Association Board President:  
Benton Strong, Vigor Industrial  
Association Executive Director: Tanya Hartnett

## M E X S T A F F

Carl Bertapelle	Marine Operations Services Manager
Carl Boelter	Clean Rivers Cooperative Operations Manager
Curtis Cannizzaro	Executive Director
John Cordasco	Marine Operations Specialist
Alex Davis	Administrative Specialist & Grants Administrator
Kara Estabrook	Marine Operations Specialist
Michelle Eyres	Association Account Specialist
Vanessa Green	Clean Rivers Cooperative General Manager
Tanya Hartnett	Executive Director, Working Waterfront Coalition
Polly Hyke	Clean Rivers Cooperative Business Manager
Liam Kohns	Computer Systems & Digital Marketing Specialist
Shawn Kubitz	Marine Operations Specialist
Philip Miller	Finance: Accounting Assistant
Jonathan Nichol	Communications & Computer Systems Manager
Chann Noun	Finance: Controller
Anthony O'Reilly	Maritime Fire & Safety Association Administrative Coordinator
Carl Obermeier	Maritime Fire & Safety Association General Manager
Lisa Pomasl	Finance: Accounting Specialist
Lisa Rau	Executive Assistant
Ben Robinson	Equipment Maintenance Supervisor
Thomas Semrau	Marine Operations Services Supervisor
Jonathan Tuom	Marine Operations Specialist
Margerie Vis	Association Director

# STAFF PHOTOS



# STRATEGIC PLANNING 2025-2029

## 2020-2024 Strategic Plan Ends Successfully

This year, the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan came to a close with all objectives met. The theme of the plan was “Celebrating 140 years of service; planning for the next 140.” Listed below are the five areas of focus, along with some of the main accomplishments in each area.

### 1. Membership and Stakeholder Needs

- With the successful implementation of MARVIN and AIS, receiving and recording data has been digitally optimized for increased accuracy and timely data distribution.
- In the spring of 2024, a Custom Reporting Platform went live with the ability for users to instantly retrieve specific data going back as far as twelve years to create customized reports.

### 2. Succession Planning and Career Development

- A great deal of transition happened in the final year of the plan, with longtime Executive Director Elizabeth Wainwright retiring. Now the Exchange is at full staff with Curtis Cannizzaro leading as the new Executive Director.
- Ten registrations for the online learning platform “Coursera” were purchased for staff’s professional development.
- A formal onboarding program was implemented, and feedback so far is that it is comprehensive, supportive, and much appreciated.

### 3. Maritime Education

- The quarterly Shipping Education Series, composed of four 2-hour classes weekly for a month, moved from in-person to a virtual environment during COVID. Attendance stayed strong with many experts in the industry featured as guest lecturers, generously sharing their knowledge and experiences with students.

### 4. Finance

- The Finance department continued to serve in a supporting role for member needs such as MARVIN, the Custom Reporting Platform, and AIS.

### 5. Marketing

- An Association Business Management Plan was drafted and implemented.
- Membership Works, a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, was purchased to monitor engagement with current members and track potential members.
- Website analytics showed increased traffic to our website and social media sites.



### Staff Preparation for the New Strategic Plan

With a new Executive Director on board, it was decided to re-evaluate the objectives from the last plan and create a new plan from the ground up. Since a Strategic Plan is Board-led and Staff-implemented, a Strategic Planning Workgroup composed of both Staff and Board members was created and met several times over the summer to outline the priorities for the new plan.

To make sure that feedback for the new plan was gathered from all stakeholders, a Customer Survey was sent out in late September to all Merchants Exchange members, customers, and industry contacts, to gather data on how the Exchange is viewed in the community, to gauge the satisfaction level with services provided, and to contribute any suggestions, changes, or improvements they might want to see in the future. Feedback from the survey showed almost all responders fell into the “satisfied” or “highly satisfied” categories in every area presented, and overall, the industry was very pleased and complimentary about our staff and services.

# STRATEGIC PLANNING 2025-2029



## Strategic Planning Retreat at Skamania Lodge

The Strategic Planning Workgroup met at Skamania Lodge for a day of intense brainstorming and writing on October 16, 2024. Trudy Hylemon, Senior HR and Leadership Consultant from Cascade Employers Association, was contracted to lead the retreat and began by reviewing the results of the Customer Survey. Next, workgroup members conducted a SWOT analysis of the Merchants Exchange, listing the organization's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Once identified, members focused on strengths and areas of growth, creating a list of priorities to address in the plan. In order, they were determined to be:

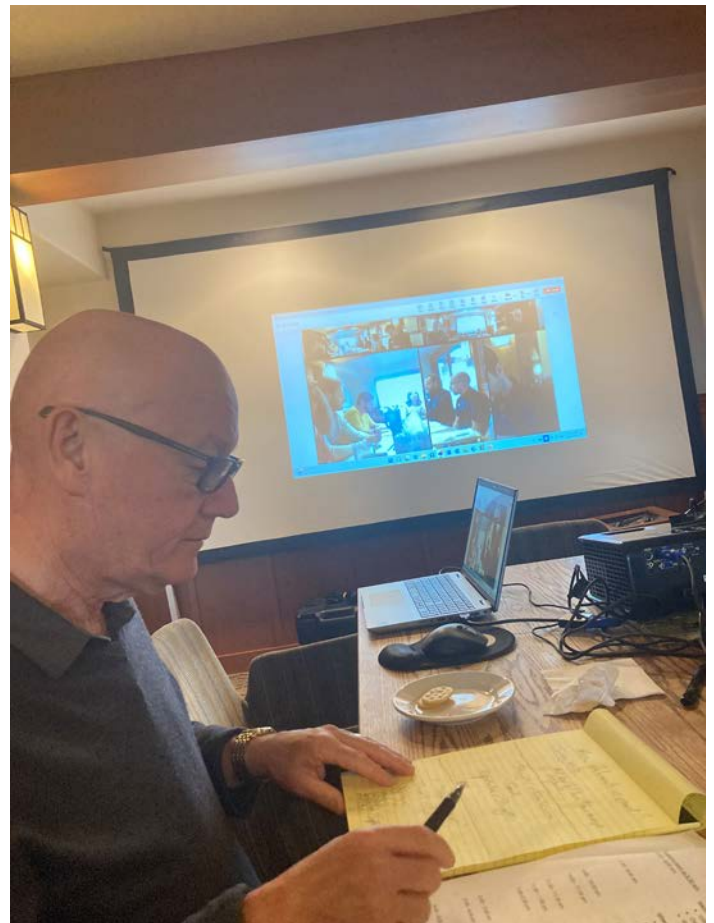
1. Efficiency
2. Leadership
3. Education
4. Expertise
5. Visibility
6. Agility

Once the main themes were identified, the workgroup focused on brainstorming ideas for each theme, reviewing each idea to prioritize its importance to both staff and Board. The retreat ended with a large list of goals and suggestions to be incorporated into a cohesive plan of action.

## Approval By Board and Next Steps

All the data from the retreat was given to Curtis Cannizzaro, Executive Director, who took the suggestions and compiled them into cohesive "Objectives" and "Key Results." To these he added Merchants Exchange's Business Information, an Executive Summary, results of the previous plan, and compiled them into a draft plan.

The proposed 2025-29 Strategic Plan was presented to the Board at its Q4 meeting on November 20, 2024. Once approved, the Executive Director will assign individual tasks to staff members following SMART criteria: making sure goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Updates on the plan will be presented to the Board's Technical & Business Development Committee three times a year to ensure the plan stays on track to achieve its goals.



# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As we reflect on 2024, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for what we have accomplished together. This year has been nothing short of transformative, marked by remarkable achievements, a dedication to excellence, and a collective commitment to advancing our mission.

From the outset, 2024 presented opportunities to innovate and challenges to overcome—and we rose to meet each one. Through the dedication of our team, the support of our members, and the resilience of our community, we achieved key milestones that will shape our future. Whether it was welcoming new key staff, successfully completing our 2020-2024 Strategic Plan, or increasing engagement in all areas, this year has underscored the power of collaboration and vision.

One highlight that stands out is the launch of our Custom Report Builder, which can quickly and efficiently generate the exact information you need from over 100 different data points we collect on arriving and departing ships. Additionally, the creation of our new Merchants Exchange 2025-2029 Strategic Plan will offer a guiding light, ensuring that our progress is both meaningful and sustainable.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the extraordinary individuals who make up our organization—our talented staff, dedicated partners, and valued members. Your belief in our mission fuels our drive to excel and inspires us to aim even higher.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey. Your continued support and engagement are invaluable as we write the next chapter of our story. I am excited about what we will accomplish together in the coming year and beyond.

With gratitude and optimism,

Curtis Cannizzaro

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Curtis Cannizzaro". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Executive Director

# 2024 MEMBERSHIP



ACGI Shipping Inc  
Alexander Gow, Inc  
Anchorage Launch Service Co  
Blue Water Shipping, Inc  
B.R. Anderson & Co  
Cascade Marine Agencies Ltd  
Centerline Logistics / Olympic Tug & Barge  
Columbia Export Terminal  
Columbia Grain International  
Columbia River Bar Pilots  
Columbia River Launch Service  
Columbia River Steamship Operators' Association  
Columbia River Pilots  
Crowley Maritime Corporation  
Durham & Bates Insurance  
EGT, LLC  
Foss Maritime Company  
Fujitrans USA, Inc  
GAC North America - Shipping  
General Steamship Corp Ltd  
Geo. S. Bush & Company, Inc  
Great Western Malting  
Haglund, Kelley LLP  
Inchcape Shipping Services  
International Transport Workers Federation  
Interport PNW LLC  
John R Dudley LLC  
Jones Stevedoring Company  
Kalama Export Company  
Kinder Morgan Bulk Terminals  
Kinder Morgan Energy  
K-Line America, Inc  
Lindsay Hart LLP  
McCall Companies  
Mid Columbia Producers, Inc  
Monarch Inspection Services  
National Cargo Bureau  
North American Shipping Agencies  
Norton Lilly International

Oregon Department of Energy  
Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality  
Overseas Merchandising, Corp (OMIC)  
Pacific International Maritime Medical Services / SphereMD  
Pacific Maritime Association  
Port of Astoria  
Port of Columbia County  
Port of Kalama  
Port of Longview  
Port of Portland  
Port of Vancouver USA  
Portland Lines Bureau, Inc  
San Pedro Harbor Ship Supply  
Sause Bros.  
Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt PC  
Seaport Marine Surveys, Inc  
Shaver Transportation Company  
Ship to Shore Water Taxi  
Southport Agencies, Inc  
T. Parker Host, Inc  
Talon Marine Services  
Temco LLC  
Terra Hydr, Inc  
Tesoro Maritime Company  
Tidal Transport & Trading, Inc  
Tidewater Transportation and Terminals  
Tidewater Environmental Services  
Toyota Tsusho America, Inc  
TradeWest Brokerage Company  
Transmarine Navigation, Corp  
Transversal International, Corp  
United States Customs & Border Protection  
United Grain Corporation  
Vanport Marine  
Vigor Industrial LLC  
Volunteer Ship Ministry  
Washington Department of Ecology  
Wilhelmsen Ship Service