



MM&P Notice to Members

Email: mmpinfo@bridgedeck.org

410-582-7046

OSG FLEET & ATC FLEET NEWSLETTER 161ST EDITION

MAY 29, 2026

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Saltchuk Throws a Hail Mary to Federal Court

First Contract Momentum Continues

Last week OSG CEO Sam Norton doubled down on dismissal of ATC/OSG LDO's historic NLRB victories, intending to proceed to federal court. MM&P's LDO-run negotiating committee gave a strong response. Our day for bargaining is coming soon. We are prepared.

Despite the Company's continued attempts to delay the bargaining process, the legal momentum remains firmly in our favor. On May 27, 2026, NLRB Region 12 issued a formal Complaint against OSG for refusing to recognize and bargain with the union after the Board upheld the OSG LDOs' election victory. The NLRB's requested remedy is straightforward: an Order requiring OSG to bargain in good faith with MM&P. In plain English, the federal government is now formally seeking to compel OSG to do what the law has required all along—sit down and negotiate with the Licensed Deck Officers who elected union representation and have the legal right to bargain collectively over the terms and conditions of their employment. You can find a copy of the complaint [by clicking here](#).

Delay and obstruction goes hand-in-hand with fear and doubt. The logic is, [according to the multi-billion-dollar union-busting industry](#), the longer people wait, the more time the company has to discourage and cast doubt. In this instance, despite an overwhelming vote to join an already heavily unionized professional field, maximum delay appears to be the only strategy.

Below is an interview with an MM&P Captain who spent his entire life in and around tankers. Saltchuk may have millions of dollars to shape opinion. But we have something money can't buy: countless personal stories and a proud history that lives on.



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Interview with MM&P Tanker Captain Edward "Ted" Markuske

Growing up around tankers, what was the most significant change you witnessed between generations?

I started spending time on the tankers with my father in my teens and remember a trip from Houston to New York coast wise on the SS King, a jumboized midship house T2 tanker. Back then everyone onboard seemed incredibly old and salty. Typically, the third mates were guys in the 40's and 50's who got their license after 15-20 years at sea.



Now tanker officers are young guys right out of school, even my Bosun's have been guys in their 20's recently.

The tanker mate job itself has changed from a brute force job into a highly skilled technical job. Each system on the ship has gotten so complex and technical and success really depends on how well you can understand, operate and maintain these complex machines and systems. Most of which you get no formal training on, just on the job experience. You've got to be smart enough to pick it up and driven enough to spend the time to master your craft. I see a lot of really smart young men and women coming out of school and choosing tankers.

Any wisdom your father passed down about the life of a mariner that you find useful for today?



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My father was a tanker chief mate for over a decade before he became captain. And I am fortunate to have such a strong role model in the industry. He said always treat people with respect, because the third mate you treat badly maybe your boss one day if you decide to start over. He said to look out for the crew, the ship, and the company, in that order and things will work out.



For a group of officers who have recently unionized and are hitting walls in their first contract negotiations, what would you say is the most critical mindset to maintain when the company tries to "wait you out"?

Things don't happen overnight. Ships and companies don't get better overnight. It takes return trips from people who care who make things get better. It's a good feeling when you come back to a ship and an improvement or something you fixed last trip is still working or making life easier for someone onboard. The same is going to be true of the contract. It will take time but once you've got it you are going to be able to look back with pride at how you've improved the ship.

In your experience, how does a solid, enforceable contract directly impact the safety and operational integrity of a vessel?

Strong work rules protect the officers from overreach from the company. They also formalize the process for discipline and addressing problems. I have been able to stand strong in the face of commercial pressure when there was something unsafe or unacceptable. Including not sailing the ship. Because I knew the union would support my stance and protect me from unfair retribution.





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Operating oil tankers involves a lot of risk and responsibility. Why is it essential for the officers to have a seat at the table when it comes to defining working conditions?

The increased workload and regulatory burden on ships officers is the industry's worst kept secret. Every new policy, regulation or inspection puts more on the crew without taking anything else away. It is imperative that when negotiating work rules and compensation this increased burden, that is not seen or experienced by people ashore who have never shipped, is not lost or overlooked. That the ship's officers pick up this workload cannot be taken for granted and needs to be properly understood during contract negotiations.

Having watched corporate tactics your whole life, how do we keep coworkers focused on what's most important?

Safety on the ship is the most important thing. Events off the ship out of your control can really mess with your focus and ruin a hitch. Your family, your partner, legal troubles can be endlessly distracting and dangerous. What's happening with the company and the contract is no exception to this. Knowing the Union is working for you to protect your rights allows mariners on the ship to focus on their dangerous jobs. Strong consistent communication that lets mariners stay informed is the key to letting people stay focused on work and stay strong in belief.



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SUPPORT UNION LABOR
NO JONES ACT
WAIVER

AS UNION MEMBERS OF A JONES ACT FLEET, WE DEFEND THE WORKERS, VESSELS, AND INDUSTRIES THAT KEEP AMERICA MOVING. EXTENDING THE JONES ACT WAIVER HELPS FOREIGN SHIPPING COMPANIES AT THE EXPENSE OF U.S. MARINERS, SHIPYARDS, AND THE FLEET OUR MILITARY DEPENDS ON.

Take Action



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IN THE NEWS

REP. NORCROSS SECURES VOTES NECESSARY TO BRING FASTER LABOR CONTRACTS ACT TO FLOOR

Rep. Donald Norcross (D-NJ) announced that he has won the support of 218 of his colleagues in the House—the number required to force a vote on his Faster Labor Contracts Act (FLCA).

The legislation will speed up the process of finalizing a first contract between a newly certified union and its employer.

According to Bloomberg Law, it takes an average of 458 days for unions and employers to reach a first contract, and roughly a third of workers are forced to wait more than three years.

The FLCA, which Norcross introduced last September, would establish deadlines for when employers must start and end negotiations with a new union and give workers access to third-party mediation if a new contract is not signed within that timeframe.

In April, Norcross filed a discharge petition for the FLCA because the bill had enough bipartisan support to indicate it would pass if House Speaker Mike Johnson allowed a vote on the House floor.

A discharge petition is a parliamentary tool that allows representatives to force a vote on legislation as long as a majority of House members agree.

Norcross's coalition of 218 supporters includes 211 Democrats and seven Republicans.

“For my entire lifetime, workers have had no recourse when employers make new unions wait years for their first contract,” Norcross says.

“Those days are coming to an end.

“With the House now poised to crack down on bad-faith stall tactics from executives, the message to everyone should be clear.

“Workers’ rights make the American dream possible, and Democrats are capable and determined to force the issue.”



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“At a time when the right to organize is under assault, it is unacceptable that when hardworking Americans come together to form a workplace union, employers can stifle that progress by refusing to bargain,” said House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries.

“The Faster Labor Contracts Act will soon pass on the floor of the House of Representatives, strengthening worker protections and compelling employers to come to the table.”

Now that the discharge petition has earned the required support, seven legislative days must pass before a vote can be forced.

Once that discharge motion is formally offered, the Speaker of the House is then required to schedule floor debate within two legislative days.

The FLCA is endorsed by more than twenty unions and advocates for workers’ rights.

Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) has introduced companion bipartisan legislation in the Senate.

Norcross, the only union electrician serving in Congress, is a co-chair of the Congressional Labor Caucus and a lifelong champion for workers’ rights.

He successfully passed out of the House a provision in last year’s National Defense Authorization Act to overturn President Trump’s executive order which stripped Defense Department employees’ collective bargaining rights.



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OSG and ATC LDOs can upgrade to Chief Mate through the MM&P License Advancement Fellowship by applying for MM&P membership via comptroller@bridgedeck.org and mmpinfo@bridgedeck.org for reimbursement. The Fellowship reimburses 50% of non-reimbursed training costs up to \$10,000 per LDO for approved courses. For more information, email mmpinfo@bridgedeck.org.



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OSG and ATC First Contract PROGRESS BAR



MM&P IS HERE TO LISTEN

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU CAN REACH CAPTAIN SHAWN TUCY OR CAPTAIN TOM LARKIN AT MMPINFO@BRIDGEDECK.ORG OR CALL 410-582-7046

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