



CHRONOLOGY OF THE FEDERAL U.S. MARINE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM INITIATIVE

Mid-1990s

Various reports call for improvements to navigational safety of the Nation's Marine Transportation System (MTS). The National Research Council's report *Charting a Course into the Digital Era* and the Marine Board's paper *Minding the Helm* are published.

September 1996

INTERTANKO, the international trade association representing private tanker owners, publishes a study proposing a more "holistic approach" to the MTS. Specifically, it calls for federal agencies to improve coordination of the nation's various waterway management systems in order to enhance safety and environmental protection in and around U.S. ports.

May 1997

Lillian Barrone, Director of the Port Commerce Department at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, presents at the Federal Waterways Research and Development Coordination Conference, calling for a restructuring of the roles and responsibilities which have traditionally governed the development and management of waterway infrastructure. She also calls for federal agencies to pursue productive relationships and partnerships with the maritime community.

1997

Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater sponsors a series of seven regional listening sessions at port cities across the country. Stakeholders voice concern about the following:

- aging infrastructure, inadequate channels, and congested intermodal connections;
- the need for a safe and environmentally sound world-class waterway system;
- the need to improve U.S. competitiveness and national security through coordination and cooperation among all MTS stakeholders;
- a nation that is lacking an MTS vision; and
- an MTS that is viewed as a collection of smaller independent systems lacking a national focus.

September 17-19/1998

Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater hosts a national conference on the MTS in Warrenton, Virginia, to develop a shared vision for the MTS and to improve coordination of public and private MTS activities. A need to assess the current state of the MTS is identified in order to support development of a vision for the MTS.

1998

USCG reauthorization act includes a provision to establish a Federal Interagency Task Force to assess the adequacy of the nation's MTS.

1999

Report titled *An Assessment of the U.S. Marine Transportation System* is submitted to Congress. The report provides a comprehensive assessment of the MTS, including 150 recommended actions in seven strategic areas. It recommends the formation of an Interagency Committee on the Marine Transportation System (ICMTS) to improve federal agency coordination and establishment of a Marine Transportation System National Advisory Council (MTSNAC) to improve coordination between MTS stakeholders and the federal government.

April 2000 – May 2005

The ICMTS and MTSNAC are established. The primary role of the ICMTS is to facilitate communication among federal agencies and to develop strategies to minimize or eliminate duplicated efforts. The ICMTS's accomplishments during its five-year existence include establishing working relations with MTS stakeholders through MTSNAC, in addition to developing a comprehensive set of MTS policy papers and sponsoring many significant MTS awareness initiatives.

The Transportation Research Board of the National Academies publishes *The Marine Transportation System and the Federal Role* in 2004.

September 20, 2004

The Ocean Act of 2000 establishes a commission to make recommendations for coordinated and comprehensive national ocean policy.

On September 20, 2004, the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy fulfilled its mandate to submit recommendations for a coordinated and comprehensive national ocean policy to the President and Congress. The Commission's final report, "[An Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century](#)," contains 212 recommendations addressing all aspects of ocean and coastal policy. Chapter 13 of the report, "Supporting Marine Commerce and Transportation" recommends actions specific to the MTS, including raising the level of the "ICMTS" to Cabinet level, chaired by the Secretary of Transportation.

December 17, 2004

President George W. Bush issues the U.S. Ocean Action Plan as a required response to the recommendations of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy (Public Law 106-256) and issues a Presidential directive to establish a cabinet-level interagency committee on the MTS. The new Committee on the Marine Transportation System (CMTS) replaces the ICMTS and elevates it to a Cabinet-level body. The purpose of the committee is to improve Federal agency coordination to promote the safety, security, efficiency, economic vitality, environmental sound integration, and reliability of the US Marine Transportation System (MTS) for commercial, recreational, and national defense requirements. Coordination includes budget and regulatory activities that impact the MTS.

July 11, 2005

The Committee on the Marine Transportation System (CMTS) meets for the first time.

August 11, 2005

The Charter for the CMTS is unanimously agreed to and adopted by the CMTS members, including 11 departments, 2 independent agencies, and 5 ex-officio White House offices. Four initial integrated action teams are approved, including the start of the development of a National Strategy.

July, 2006

The Executive Secretariat of the CMTS is established with a dedicated director and staff support provided by CMTS agencies and housed within the Department of Transportation.

July, 2008

A strategic plan titled *National Strategy for the Marine Transportation System: A Framework for Action* is approved by the CMTS, chaired by DOT Deputy Secretary Thomas Barrett.

To December 2010

Additional integrated action teams and shorter-term task teams are formed since October 2006 to address short- and long-term coordination and collaboration between the 25+ active Federal agencies of the CMTS.

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US Committee on the Marine Transportation System

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