

U.S. Marine Transportation System

MTS Fact Sheet



15th Anniversary

Components and Functions

The U.S. Marine Transportation System (MTS) is composed of an array of interdependent components: Over 25,000 miles of navigable waterways and harbors, 239 locks at 193 locations, hundreds of bridges, and 8,477 U.S. waterway facilities, including docks and locks (Table 1).



The MTS carried 70.3 percent by weight and 41.2 percent by value of U.S. international merchandise in 2017.^{xiii}

MTS in American Life

The MTS is an integral part of the national economic supply chain, bringing food, clothes, oil, manufactured goods, and many other items to our shores and around the country.

Miles of coastline (2019)	12,380 ⁱ
Miles of commercially navigable waterways (2018)	25,000 ⁱⁱ
Total U.S. waterways facilities (2018)	8,477 ⁱⁱⁱ
Lock chambers at 193 sites (2018)	239 ⁱⁱⁱ
Cargo handling docks	8,238 ⁱⁱⁱ
Total U.S. ports handling over 250,000 short tons annually (2018)	181 ⁱⁱⁱ
U.S. mariners with unlimited credentials	11,768 ^{iv}
Vessel calls at U.S. ports (2015)	82,044 ^v
Total U.S. waterborne commerce (short tons) (2018)	2.4 billion ⁱⁱⁱ
U.S. foreign waterborne commerce (short tons) (2016)	1.4 billion ⁱⁱⁱ
Ferry passengers (2016)	118.9 million ^{vi}
Adults and children under that went boating (2016)	142 million ^{vii}
Total sales generated by commercial and recreational fishing (2016)	\$212 billion ^{viii}
Jobs supported by commercial and recreational fishing (2016)	1.7 million ^{ix}
U.S. cruise passengers (2018)	14.2 million ^x
Federal Aids to Navigation including Automatic Identification System (AIS) & Wreck (WR) Buoys (2018)	44,571 ^{xi}

National Security

The MTS enables most U.S. military power to move around the world by ship, providing logistical support for the rapid deployment of American forces and materials.

A typical tow of 15 barges can take over 1,000 trucks off the roads and move a ton of freight almost 600 miles on a gallon of fuel.^{xiv}

Vital to Local Economies

In 2016, deep sea, inland, coastal, and Great Lakes water based transportation generated over \$4 billion in annual wages to over 67,710 employees.^{xiii}

For more info about the MTS, go to:

www.CMTS.gov



Challenges facing the MTS

Growth

Many ports are under pressure to service and supply increasingly larger ships. Operational challenges can impact navigational safety and efficiency, increasing costs to consumers and reducing competitiveness of U.S. exports.

The US Congressional Budget Office estimates that a one week shut down of the container ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach may result in losses of \$65 million to \$150 million per day.^{xvi}

Environment

As waterborne trade increases, stresses to sensitive marine environments will continue. Increased efforts to make the MTS safer and more efficient (e.g. through technologies developed by the CMTS Future of Navigation Integrated Action Team, for example) comes with a corresponding decrease in risks to the environment.

Cybersecurity

The National Maritime Cybersecurity Plan prioritizes actions in support of a secure MTS. The Plan unifies maritime cybersecurity resources and aggressively mitigates maritime cyberspace vulnerabilities while supporting the National Strategy for Maritime Security.

Safety and Security

The Federal Government, along with local entities, is responsible for insuring the safety and security of the MTS. For example, every day the U.S. Coast Guard conducts 45 search and rescue cases, screens 360 vessels for security threats prior to arrival in U.S. ports, and conducts 105 marine inspections.



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