



# Alaska Informational Scuttlebutt

*Providing information, communications, and services to promote safe, secure, efficient, and environmentally responsible maritime operations.*

## A New Captain Takes the Wheel



After 50 years of being involved in the maritime industry Ed Page is relinquishing the MXAK

helm to Steve White. He is most proud of his role establishing the organization in 2001 and growing it into what it is today; an internationally renowned organization fostering a mission everyone can get behind. Ed plans to remain in Juneau and continue to help and advise MXAK as he explores the world.

Steve White joins MXAK with extensive maritime experience including seven Coast Guard tours in Alaska, four of them on ships. In his last assignment he served as Sector Commander and Captain of the Port for Southeast Alaska. Ed and Steve first met in 1999 while transferring back to Alaska on the Alaska Marine Highway ferry. Both were still with the USCG, Ed a Captain and Steve a Lieutenant. Ed said, "Steve's familiarity with the waters and operations up here in Alaska eclipses my own and his spyglass is a little different tint than mine, and that's a good thing".

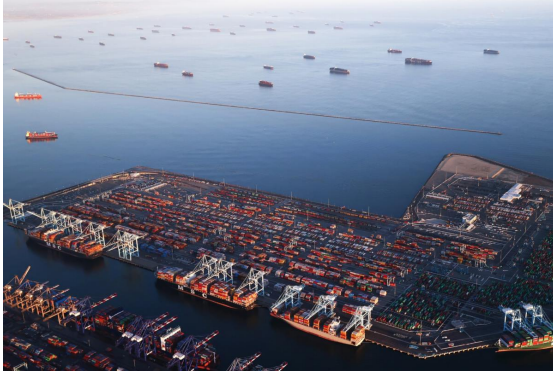


*The Marine Exchange of Alaska thanks Captain Ed Page for his decades of steadfast leadership and welcomes Captain Steve White as its new Executive Director!*

Steve was drawn to the mission and the people at MXAK by working closely with them during his time with the USCG. He was always impressed by the operations of the MXAK and the benefits it provides for all mariners in and beyond Alaska. He's truly honored to be captaining this crew into the future.

Smooth Sailing; Juneau Empire Article

This congestion was caused by accelerated U.S. consumer purchases and shipping companies racing across the Pacific Ocean to deliver these goods. Once container ships reached the 25-



## Marine Exchange of Alaska develops new collaboration

Marine Exchange of Alaska, (MXAK) has conducted long range vessel monitoring and management for many years, which led to gaining vast experience in Sea Traffic Management through our partnership with the [Alaska Chadux Network](#). Recently, MXAK, the Marine Exchange of Southern California ([MXSoCal](#)) and the Marine Exchange of San Francisco Bay Area ([SFMX](#)) teamed up with the container shipping industry to help alleviate the [pressure](#) on container ship ports in Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Oakland by employing sea traffic management principles.

Supply chain congestion caused a historic backup of ships calling the ports of LA/LB which increased safety risks and decreased air quality for Southern California in late 2021. Where there were normally 10-20 container ships handled daily by the Vessel Tracking Service (VTS) within 25 miles of the port complex operated by MXSoCal, the VTS was overloaded with over 100 beginning in October. All the 60+ primary and contingency anchorages were full, and an additional 40 more were assigned to a near-shore drifting area while awaiting labor allocation and berthing to unload.

mile offshore VTS check in point, they claim their place in the queue to be allocated a berth. Overloaded with a pandemic-induced limited workforce, the California based marine exchanges had no capability to address this problem of historic container ship traffic, so they turned to MXAK, a recognized vessel tracking expert.

A voluntary, industry-led working group was formed by Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association (PMSA), MXSoCal and Pacific Maritime Management Services (PacMMS- the business line developed by MXAK) to address the need. Within 3 weeks, procedures were developed to implement a new system which gave container ships their place in the queue based on departure from their last port of call instead of arrival at the VTS check in boundary. After departure, container ships could steam at a slow speed, spread out across the distance of their journey, avoid harsh weather, and remain at least 50 miles clear of the coast until a berth was ready for them to offload. Benefits of this new system include measured near shore air quality improvement, increased at-sea safety, reduced emissions, and increased fuel efficiency. Witnessing such drastic benefits, the Port of Oakland and SFMX joined the new queuing system in January of 2022.

To date, PacMMS has over 534 enrolled container vessels participating in this program, which have completed over 1,500 voyages to California ports.

Learn more about PacMMS or how to enroll [here!](#)

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## MXAK & U.S. Coast Guard Academy Internship Program

Taylor chose to apply for the MXAK internship because she was interested in arctic policy & law. The Arctic is a developing maritime domain creating new shipping, trade, and routes affecting the worldwide blue economy. As a cadet intern at the MXAK, she'll research solutions for maritime standards of care and safety regulations for the Arctic Region. Additionally, she is learning how to operate the Network Operation's Center, the MXAK's watch standing floor. MXAK is providing them with the opportunity to explore relationships between it and the various industries of Alaska that use their services, as well as the United



In the Utqiagvik people are tossed high into the air on sealskin blankets during Nalaqutak which signals the end of the spring whaling season. This photo was taken around 11 pm where the cadets experienced the true midnight sun!

This summer the Marine Exchange is hosting two of the U.S Coast Guard Academy's finest first-class cadets for a 6-week internship. This is MXAK's second class of our summer internship program, and we couldn't be more pleased to have the opportunity to get to know 1/c Jane Alandydy and 1/c Taylor Winters and share our unique role in Alaska's maritime domain.

Taylor and Jane are members of the USCG Academy's class of 2023. Taylor hails from Louisiana and Jane Massachusetts with support from the [USCG Center for Arctic Study & Policy \(CASP\)](#), the focus of their internship is to gain Arctic exposure and to see firsthand the relationships that keep the region running.

From the moment they arrived in mid-June the cadets hit the ground running; they have traveled over 7,000 miles across Alaska, visited three arctic communities, trained under MXAK's Maritime Information Specialists in the 24/7 Vessel Monitoring Center, and met with industry experts throughout the state.

Through it all, the cadets impressed us with their intellect, work ethic, and eagerness to learn. They are full of promise and inspiring representatives of their generation.



States Coast Guard.

As a member of the United States Coast Guard, the concept of Maritime Governance in modern times is critical for preserving the blue economy. Large scale issues such as IUU fishing, climate change, and oil spills. The MXAK is a critical partner with the United States Coast Guard, and she is excited to further understand its role in this strategically and environmentally important region.



At the port of Alaska, the cadets met with Eddie who works with Matson as one of their logistics managers. They provide a lot of the essential goods that come through the state, and Eddie was an excellent tour guide!

Jane applied for this internship because she is interested in maritime governance. She notes it has been amazing so far to learn about all the ways the Marine Exchange of Alaska and Capt. Ed Page have influenced maritime governance, not only around Alaska, but on a global scale.

As a cadet, she says it's cool to see the variety of Coast Guard missions that the MXAK's work touches, including environmental response, prevention, port security and waterways management, and more. Being able to experience the avenue of information sharing, which is crucial to so many different branches of the Coast Guard, has opened her eyes to the need for partnerships in the maritime domain. When she began her cadet career, she did not realize how complex and interconnected maritime issues are. As someone who is interested in environmental protection and safety, she would never have predicted that she would be so interested in using AIS to monitor vessel traffic.

Her aspirations for this internship are to develop an understanding of the blue economy and learn about the emerging issues that it faces. She also hopes to learn from the diverse pool of expertise here at the MXAK. Everyone that she has had the pleasure of meeting so far has blown her away with the depth of their knowledge and the diversity of their career experiences. As a 1/c cadet who will soon have to plan out her own career, she feels extremely

at the [Alaska Chadux Network](#) the cadets got to try their hand at a small-scale corn oil spill response with an electric skimmer.



Checking out one of the North Slope Boroughs Search and Rescue Bell 412 Helicopters with dual-certified pilot Brian.

fortunate to have this experience.

One of the emerging issues that she is working on is regulating vessel traffic in the Arctic. To establish a standard of practice with which vessels will seek to comply and uphold, the MXAK must obtain and analyze data to identify the potential impacts of vessel and geofences. I am so excited to work more with this topic and learn about the planning that goes into these efforts.

## Captain Ed's Page



Captain Ed Page was the founder of the Marine Exchange of Alaska and served as the Executive Director for 20 years from inception in 2001 to 2021 when Captain Steve White took over. Ed first arrived in Juneau in 1973 when sailing on the Coast Guard cutter BOUTWELL. After working in maritime field for over 50 years, refocused most of his efforts on his growing family and passion for kayaking and sailing, but remains actively involved in his new position as Senior Advisor.

At times swapping sea stories can lead to good outcomes. Such was the case in the fall of 2000 when I met up at a bar in Anchorage with Paul Fuhs and Jeff Thompson, where the three of,

Operating under the principle of "if you build it, they will come" MXAK launched the plan to establish a maritime safety net for the last maritime frontier by building a network of Marine Safety Sites across the coast of Alaska to capture and disseminate vessel and environmental data to support MXAK's mission. Two friends, Paul Webb and Bill Benning retired from the Coast Guard to join me in this effort, and we opened up our office in 2001 above a popular local Juneau bar, The Hangar on the Wharf. Building MXAK's vessel tracking network was an "all hands-on deck" undertaking that entailed partnering with local, state, and federal agencies augmented by the close-knit Alaska maritime community. It paid big dividends, as over the next 20 years MXAK's marine safety network has played a major role in saving lives and protecting Alaska's fragile marine environment.



The "Three Amigos" of MXAK from the left: Paul Webb, Ed Page, and Bill Benning

each with extensive maritime experience in Alaska, shared sea stories of Alaska's maritime casualties. After 33 years in the Coast Guard, I had my eyes set on retiring and starting a Marine Exchange in Alaska to provide information to aid search and rescue and environmental protection. They were on board with this vision and willing to help it come to fruition. We developed Articles of Incorporation for the non-profit, used our connections with leaders in the Alaska maritime community to establish a Board of Directors and started this ambitious voyage in uncharted waters in April 2001.

The mission of MXAK was to obtain and "exchange" real time maritime information to aid safe, secure, efficient, and environmentally responsible operations. For over a hundred-year Marine Exchanges around the U.S. visually sighting vessels and brokered information to the maritime community to aid safe and efficient trade through telegraph, radio, and phone. The collection and dissemination of information became more sophisticated with the advent of the internet, satellites, and Automatic Identification System (AIS), technologies MXAK has been the leader in applying to tackle the daunting task of brokering information in the largest, most remote, and hazardous maritime region of our nation.



Captain Page and some of the MXAK crew riding on Asst. Director Brett's sailboat radioing into their first AIS site installation.

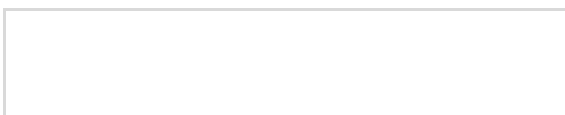
MXAK has grown from a crew of three to a team of twenty-seven today who build, service and operate over 150 Marine Safety Sites in Alaska equipped with a suite of sensors and communications: AIS receivers, AIS transmitters, Digital Selective Calling (DSC) maritime alert receivers and weather stations. MXAK also provides maritime expertise to aid vessels and facilities to comply with state and federal regulations and aid port planning. With over 150 years of Coast Guard experience on MXAK staff we realize the Coast Guard can most effectively carry out their missions of search and rescue and environmental protection if they have accurate and timely information on vessels' locations... that's MXAK's forte. An analogy often used at MXAK is making the goal in hockey, where one player (MXAK) assists another (Coast Guard) by passing the puck to score the goal.

Today all the data and information collected and disseminated by MXAK's network is managed by MXAK's marine information specialists who staff a 24-hour Operations Center. Here, marine weather and maritime activity throughout Alaska is actively monitored in a maritime region of over 1.5 million square miles. It has developed into the world's largest Sea Traffic Management system and MXAK is internationally recognized as a leader in applying innovative solutions to aid safe, secure, efficient and environmentally sound maritime operations.

Are we done? Far from, my replacement Captain Steve White and his hand-picked leadership team are upping the stakes and greatly expanding the services MXAK provides, and I am stepping back to serve as a Senior Advisor. I couldn't be more pleased with how MXAK has developed over the years and where it is going and grateful for the support provided by the Board of Directors, and President of the Board, Captain Hans Antonsen.

## Notes from the field: ready, set, install!

This winter, the Field Operations team has travelled extensively by boat, plane, and helicopters to install several new weather stations, Aids to Navigation (AtoN) transceivers, and Digital Selective Calling (DSC). While not traveling the team has been inventorying and prepping for the busy spring and summer operations. Since Summer has started, they've been traveling great distances ranging from the Akutan, Kodiak, Metlakatla, Nome, and more to keep the data and lights running.





[Click Here to Access Live Weather Reports](#)

## READY TO TAKE YOUR BOATING SAFETY TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

Become a MXAK Member and gain access to the most comprehensive terrestrial and satellite vessel tracking system in Alaska.

Visit <https://www.mxak.org/enrollment/> to join today.



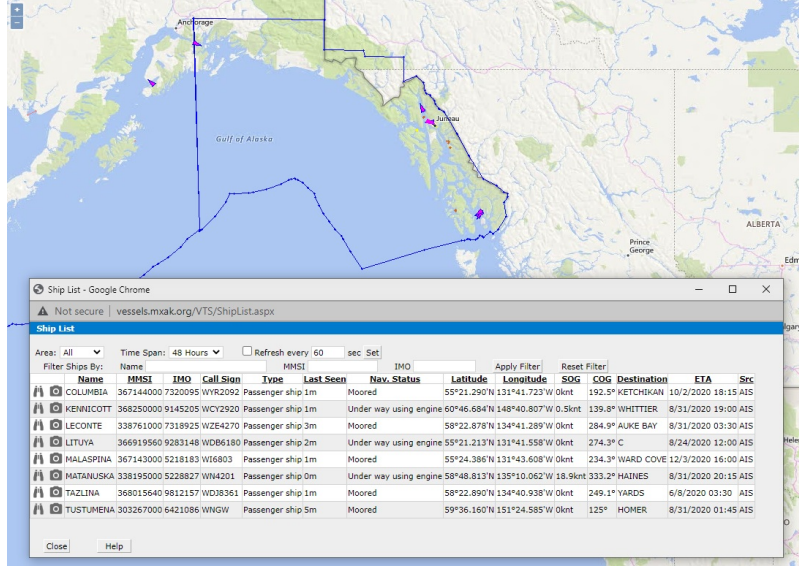
## Rick's PacTracs Tip

### Accessing the Measurement Tool

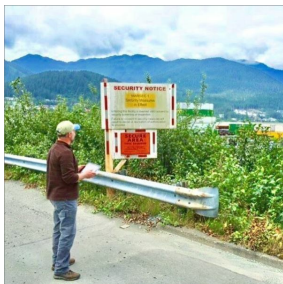


Rick is MXAK's Senior Maritime Information Specialist and PacTracs expert. If you have any PacTracs questions, please don't hesitate to give him a call at 907-463-2607 or e-mail him at [ricksypeck@mxak.org](mailto:ricksypeck@mxak.org)

A new feature that was recently implemented into PACTRACS is a drop-down to the Measuring Stick. This helpful tool enables users to pick the measuring parameter whether you want miles, nautical miles or kilometers. It can now measure smaller distances for example... if you wanted to measure the distance between two ships at dock you can select KM from the drop-down and the measuring stick will measure in meters.



## Ken's Compliance Corner



Ken Phillips is MXAK's Compliance Manager. He spent 22 years in the U.S. Coast Guard with a background in Marine Safety and Inspection. Contact Ken at [kenphillips@mxak.org](mailto:kenphillips@mxak.org)

### TWIC® Cards now permissible for TSA Precheck

Qualifying Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC®) holders are now eligible for TSA PreCheck™ at no cost and no extra enrollment. The TWIC® Program is a regulated vetting program that requires TSA to conduct a Security Threat Assessment (STA) to determine if an individual requiring specific transportation-related access poses a threat to national or transportation security. According to TSA, "Given the similarity of the threat assessment performed on TSA PreCheck members, many TWIC applicants meet the criteria for the TSA Precheck Application Program and may be eligible for expedited security screening."

There are limitations to keep in mind. TWIC® holders must meet citizenship and residency requirements, and the credential must have been approved without a waiver.

Click here for additional details & FAQs

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

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