



# MARITIME EXCHANGE

for the Delaware River and Bay  
*Leading the Way to Port Progress*

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:  
**Lisa Himber at (267) 974-0488**

## **MARITIME EXCHANGE RECOGNIZED FOR “EXCELLENCE IN INNOVATION”**

*U.S. Department of Commerce program pays tribute to those who have introduced a new product or service into the market during the last 12 months*

PHILADELPHIA, PA – On July 30, U.S. Department of Commerce Under Secretary for Technology Robert Cresanti traveled to Philadelphia to recognize the Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay, a non-profit trade association dedicated to promoting waterborne commerce in Southeastern Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey and Delaware. “It is my distinct pleasure to acknowledge the efforts of the Maritime Exchange and express my strong belief that this organization epitomizes exactly the type of innovative and creative thinking we want to showcase.” The Maritime Exchange is being honored for its work on Maritime On-Line (MOL), a community-based maritime information system used by both the private and public sectors to facilitate vessel movement and operations as well as to help improve overall port security.

Citing the Exchange’s work in developing Maritime On-Line, a one-of-a-kind regional maritime information and intelligence network, Secretary Cresanti said that though “most of us outside the port industry have never heard of the Maritime Exchange, they strike me as an ‘unsung hero’ of the port . . . there’s a lot going on in this small, progressive organization.” He noted that “Maritime On-Line has become the single most comprehensive community-based maritime information system in the United States.”

The Recognition of “Excellence in Innovation” program was launched in October of 2006, and the Exchange is the first non-profit organization to receive the prestigious designation. In receiving the certificate on behalf of the Exchange, President Dennis Rochford acknowledged that the Exchange “is only able to achieve the success that it does because of the strong support of its Board of Directors, members, Maritime On-Line participants and public and private sector partners.”

The Maritime Exchange, founded in 1872, serves the \$4 billion tri-state maritime community. By supplying this sector and its participants with the technology platform and connectivity to key trading partners, the Exchange is streamlining the information flow between parties, lowering costs, and improving vessel, cargo and crew processing.

Rochford ascribed the success of Maritime On-Line to the Exchange’s approach to systems development. “We have never had an ‘if we build it, they will come’ philosophy,” he said, “and since we created the original building blocks of Maritime On-Line in the early 1980s, it has consistently been our goal to bring both data users and data providers together to define what features the systems should have and how they should work. First and foremost, new programming must always facilitate commerce, provide a mechanism for participants to comply with regulatory reporting requirements, or, more recently, enhance maritime security in the Delaware River port complex by providing additional tools to federal, state, and local law enforcement personnel.”

In a clear demonstration that the Exchange's partnership approach has been effective, Capt. Ted Harrop, U.S. Coast Guard, told Secretary Cresanti, "Mr. Secretary, we could not agree more with your choice. The Maritime Exchange has been the capillary that holds together the private and public sectors in this region." He specifically mentioned how the recent addition of the Automatic Identification System (AIS) display, which provides real time vessel position information, to MOL has dramatically improved ability of Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay personnel to meet their critical missions. "This is an organization which truly does show that 15 people can have a tremendous impact on international trade," he said.

Also on hand was Allan Martocci, Acting Port Director for U.S. Customs and Border Protection, who has worked with the Exchange since he came to Philadelphia in 1977. "Not only does the Exchange develop and support the information technology systems used by so many in this region, but it is their role as an advocate for the maritime business community that really sets the Exchange apart. The Exchange does more for this port on a daily basis than any other organization in the region," he said.

In looking to the future, Rochford talked about how the Exchange is planning to continue efforts to support initiatives that help achieve the critical balance between trade facilitation and enhanced security. He specifically mentioned the Exchange's participation in the tri-state Regional Fusion Center, which, when fully integrated and operational, will provide the means for streamlined intelligence gathering, sharing and analysis between the three states, 11 counties and the hundreds of municipalities that border the Delaware River. Joseph Liciardello, from the office of U.S. Attorney Patrick Meehan, has taken a leadership role in establishing the Fusion Center and stood with the Exchange to accept the "Innovation" award. "Over the last several years," Liciardello said, "we have worked to connect land assets with maritime assets. It is to the credit of this region that we have been able to unite the private and public sectors. With the Delaware River as the spine that links us, the Exchange has been – and will continue to be – an instrumental partner in this important process."

Secretary Cresanti summed up the key reason that the Exchange was selected as one of the nation's top innovators: "With the addition of AIS to the Maritime Exchange network, ship and tug operators, law enforcement, public safety personnel, shippers, importers, port authorities, terminal operators and a host of others now have access through a single portal to all the information they need to process vessels and their cargoes in a more safe, secure, efficient, and environmentally healthy manner."

*The Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay is a non-profit trade association representing approximately 300 port and related businesses throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. Established in 1872, the Exchange has worked to promote and protect waterborne commerce in this region for over 130 years.*

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