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Maritime Exchange, New Orleans Board of Trade Partner on Maritime On-Line

*Local port information system to aid sister port in
cargo operations and maritime security awareness*

Philadelphia, PA – The Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay and its sister organization, the New Orleans Board of Trade, signed an agreement in June to partner on the implementation of the Exchange’s Maritime On-Line (MOL) Ship Reporting program at Mississippi River ports. The Exchange, which upgraded its Maritime On-Line system last year, entered into a similar partnership with the Jacksonville (FL) Maritime Transportation Exchange in 2002.

Ship Reporting, the Exchange’s vessel tracking module of Maritime On-Line, is used by trading partners to monitor anticipated and historical ship movements on the Delaware River. The Exchange collects vessel traffic data through a variety of means, which in turn is made available via the Internet and through published reports to the maritime community. MOL provides on-line tools to not only the business community but also local and national federal government agencies to enhance cargo operations and increase security awareness. Currently, the Coast Guard, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and the Office of Naval Intelligence rely on Maritime On-Line to aid in their Maritime Domain Awareness missions.

“We are excited about working with the Maritime Exchange on this project,” said Board of Trade Executive Director Brett Bourgeois. “Our current ship reporting system is over 15 years old. When we made the decision to upgrade our database, we looked at a number of programs and found that Maritime On-Line best suited the needs of our port community.”

The New Orleans Board of Trade, or NOBOT, was originally founded as the Produce Exchange and has been reporting ship movements at Mississippi River ports since 1880. Today, NOBOT represents 210 businesses and individuals involved in waterborne commerce and interested in the 5,200 ships moving through the river ports

each year. Like the Maritime Exchange, which was formed in Philadelphia in 1872 and today represents nearly 300 members, NOBOT's mission is to promote the interests of commerce and trade and to develop programs and services that expedite the movement of goods through the port.

Because it was built by and for the members of the Delaware River port community, the Maritime On-Line system has developed in response to real commercial needs. "Unlike traditional software providers, the end users – our members – designed the system," said Exchange President Dennis Rochford, "so we know at the front end that the features and functionality of MOL meet the needs of the people who use it."

While the Exchange did not originally design the system with the idea of licensing it to sister ship reporting organizations, Rochford said that there is significant economic advantages to partnering with other Exchanges in software implementation. "Over the last 20 years, the Exchange has continued to invest in MOL in response to both changing port business needs, such as reporting requirements mandated under new Department of Homeland Security rules, and evolving technologies. Rather than each Exchange funding system upgrades individually, by working together we can pay a proportional share of necessary programming changes," he said.

According to George E. Duffy, who serves as First Vice President of NOBOT and chairs its Maritime Committee, "One of the primary reasons we chose the Delaware River system is because of our longstanding relationship with the Maritime Exchange and our close work with them on a variety of maritime issues. As a non-profit maritime trade association, the Exchange brings a value to its reporting system beyond that of traditional software providers." Duffy is President & CEO of NSA Agencies, which operates at both New Orleans and Delaware River ports and has taken the lead within the NOBOT Board to upgrade its system.

NOBOT reached agreements with each of the three state-commissioned pilot associations on the Mississippi River to provide data through the system. "One of the keys to efficient vessel and cargo operations is the early and comprehensive distribution of vessel schedule information," Bourgeois said. "There is no doubt our members, and therefore our commercial maritime industry, will be the ultimate beneficiaries of this partnership."

The Maritime Exchange is a non-profit trade association representing almost 300 port and related businesses throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. Since its establishment in 1872, the Maritime Exchange has served as the primary port advocate on behalf of these businesses, working closely with federal, state and local governmental agencies as well as the tri-state federal congressional delegation to promote commerce along the Delaware River and Bay.

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