

Remarks by Mead Treadwell, Chair
U.S. Arctic Research Commission
Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment Workshop
University of the Arctic/University of Alaska Fairbanks/Dartmouth College
October 22, 2009 – Fairbanks, Alaska

Good morning. Our meeting is the second circumpolar meeting I've attended this week, here in Alaska, to help the world get ready for an accessible Arctic Ocean.

Earlier this week, national representatives, fisheries scientists and managers, and others came together in a non-governmental setting to discuss cooperation in the management of Arctic fisheries. It was the first circumpolar meeting of this type, and, as chair of the U.S. Arctic Research Commission, charged with building international cooperation in Arctic research, I am not dissatisfied with the result: participants agreed to work harder to understand the changing biology of the Arctic Ocean, and the interdependence of all parts of the circumpolar region.

Here, this week, we celebrate another first. To Chancellor Brian Rogers of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, I suggest you take a copy of the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment, put a leather binding on it, and put it in the Rasmuson Library on the long shelf which includes chronicles of those explorers searching for sea routes in the Arctic. For half a millennium –500 years -- mankind has explored the possibilities of Arctic shipping, a shortcut between the continents. In this generation, regular shipping is likely to be possible, and I'm proud of our role in leading the Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment, the first time in history that Arctic nations have come together to discuss this issue.

We have many people to thank as we get started here. Chancellor Rogers and Professor Sfraga, thank you for hosting us. Lars Kullerud, President of the University of the Arctic, thank you for your leadership. Ross Virginia of Dartmouth, thank you for co-organizing this meeting, and thank you for one of your Arctic Studies Institute's previous sessions in Hanover, which helped us in the United States lay the groundwork for the first Arctic policy ever made completely public. For those of you who don't know, the National and Homeland Security Document signed by President Bush on January 9 of this year was the first public U.S. policy, and I'll return to that in a moment.

It is also important to recognize, as we start this meeting, the work of the Arctic Council's Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) project, and the leadership of NOAA's Tom Laughlin (now part of IUCN) and his successor at NOAA, Elizabeth McLanahan, in this effort. Thank you. I want to specifically welcome our participants from Japan's Ocean Policy Research Foundation here, and our representatives from China. If Arctic sea routes are to link the continents, it is good to have Asia so well represented here. Pablo Clemente-Colon, of the National Ice Center in the United States, thank you for your work in

convening U.S. parties, three times over the last decade, to understand our interests in this region, and thank you and your colleagues in ice monitoring services around the world who help keep mariners safe. Finally, I want to recognize my colleague, Ben Ellis, of the Institute of the North, who spent many hours editing and publishing this AMSA report.

Most of you know that Dr. Lawson Brigham, who chaired the AMSA effort while he was Deputy Director of the U.S. Arctic Research Commission. Tirelessly – for several years, Lawson – criss-crossed the Arctic to make sure that the views of communities throughout the North, of industry, of governments, of shippers, were included in this analysis. Canada and Finland co-led the effort, and Victor Santos-Pedro, here from Canada today, thank you for your help. I think we'd all agree that Dr. Brigham, and the eight nations who contributed time and treasure as we convened this effort, did a magnificent job.

It had some surprises. AMSA taught us that Arctic shipping is not a future thing, it is a now thing. We learned about thousands of vessels using the Arctic Ocean and adjacent icy seas, today, mostly for shipping in and out of the Arctic – for tourism, science, supplying Arctic people, fishing, or natural resource development.

We also learned we have to get ready for more. Two ships made trans-Arctic voyages this summer. We may disagree on how much will, or should happen when, but we have to be prepared now.

Let me return now to the U.S. Arctic policy I mentioned before.

To set off discussions, let me point to three words in the policy that Alaskan Dan Sullivan, then a U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, now Alaska's Attorney General, contributed as the basic goal of the U.S. when it comes to Arctic Shipping. Arctic shipping, says the policy, should be "safe, secure and reliable."

Remember these three words.

By "safe," to get ready, we've been given a list of tasks. The work to upgrade the Polar Code, now going on at the International Maritime Organization, is a start – guidelines for nations. A mandatory code for safer ships, respected by all nations, will follow. (Personally, I *like* the idea of covered lifeboats for cruise ships operating in the Arctic.) The list of safety measures and infrastructure we have to think about is large. Ports. Salvage capability. Aids to navigation. Crew training and certification. We have to take care that ship noise, ship tracks, ship emissions don't hurt the environment, or interfere with the subsistence practices of Arctic residents. (I'm impressed with the efforts, in the public and private sector in our country, Iceland, Japan and elsewhere to see ships powered

by hydrogen rather than fuel oil, to reduce both the possibility of spills and the output of soot which is reducing the Arctic ice cap.)¹

I will make three plugs for specific tasks today. Plug number one in this talk, under the heading safe, is we do what we must, right now, to improve spill prevention and response technologies for oil in ice. The United States collect eight cents a barrel for all oil used in this country. It goes into a fund, primarily to be available for claims if a spill happens. We do not use the law's authorization to fund spill research to any great degree, and this is one of the unfulfilled promises we made to ourselves after Exxon Valdez in the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. Several of us in this room – I point to Margaret Williams of WWF – worked together to reinstate this tax a few years ago, and it is time we put this money to work where it was intended.

By secure, I point to all of the issues we're waking up to with an accessible Arctic. The U.S. military community, intelligence community, the Coast Guard is recognizing new challenges and new missions, because – as Admiral Allen likes to say, "where there was ice, there is now water." I want to compliment a paper written by Japan's Ocean Policy Research Foundation's Admiral Akimoto, which has me sure our allies are beginning to understand the challenges of an open Arctic ocean.²

This brings me to plug number two. In the United States, it is high time we replaced our aging polar class icebreakers. The Coast Guard has many missions in this ocean – border security, sovereignty, law enforcement, environmental protection, search and rescue, aid to shipping – and we are way behind in having the all-weather, all sea-ice conditions capability that we need.

The word "reliable" is perhaps the most controversial word in the Arctic shipping policy. Some people don't want shipping. To them, AMSA reminds us it is there, has been there for centuries, and is relied upon by people around the globe. I also suggest you think of the converse: do you want unreliable shipping? No more, I'd submit, than you want unreliable flying.

To get to reliability, we need not just rulemaking across nations, we need investment. We need to work together to make shipping somewhat seamless in the Arctic – a master heading north through the Bering Strait may choose, according to ice and weather conditions, to ply the Northern Sea route, the Northwest Passage, or trans-Arctic routes to reach the same destination. I like the example of the St. Lawrence Seaway in this regard: a master headed from the Atlantic to Chicago crosses the U.S. – Canada border 23 times. Yet, entering the seaway, there is one number to call, one place to get an inspection,

¹. <http://seanergy.wordpress.com/2009/06/29/the-project-seanergy-foundation-brief/> gives a brief on one effort to make hydrogen fuel available to Arctic shippers.

² Akimoto, Kazumine, RADM (Retired), "Power Games in the Arctic Ocean," papers of the Ocean Policy Research Foundation, Arctic Ocean Quarterly Bulletin, Tokyo, August 2009

one place to pay the bill, and our nations – the U.S. and Canada – coordinate icebreaking and navigation services, together fight things like invasive species, and overall present a united front to the world’s shippers. The Arctic should do the same.

Toward this end, let me make plug number three this morning: for methods of common regime and investment. AMSA’s adopted recommendations speak to this. Pending today, in the U.S. House of Representatives, is a bill, HR 3619, a section of which prepares the United States to help lead this effort.³

³ SEC. 311. ARCTIC MARINE SHIPPING ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION.

(a) Purpose- The purpose of this section is to ensure safe, secure, and reliable maritime shipping in the Arctic including the availability of aids to navigation, vessel escorts, spill response capability, and maritime search and rescue in the Arctic.

(b) International Maritime Organization Agreements- To carry out the purpose of this section, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall work through the International Maritime Organization to establish agreements to promote coordinated action among the United States, Russia, Canada, Iceland, Norway, and Denmark and other seafaring and Arctic nations to ensure, in the Arctic--

- (1) placement and maintenance of aids to navigation;
- (2) appropriate icebreaking escort, tug, and salvage capabilities;
- (3) oil spill prevention and response capability;
- (4) maritime domain awareness, including long-range vessel tracking; and
- (5) search and rescue.

(c) Coordination by Committee on the Maritime Transportation System- The Committee on the Maritime Transportation System established under a directive of the President in the Ocean Action Plan, issued December 17, 2004, shall coordinate the establishment of domestic transportation policies in the Arctic necessary to carry out the purpose of this section.

(d) Agreements and Contracts- The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating may, subject to the availability of appropriations, enter into cooperative agreements, contracts, or other agreements with, or make grants to individuals and governments to carry out the purpose of this section or any agreements established under subsection (b).

(e) Icebreaking- The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall promote safe maritime navigation by means of icebreaking where needed to assure the reasonable demands of commerce.

(f) Demonstration Projects- The Secretary of Transportation may enter into cooperative agreements, contracts, or other agreements with, or make grants to, individuals to conduct demonstration projects to reduce emissions or discharges from vessels operating in the Arctic.

(g) Authorization of Appropriations- There are authorized to be appropriated--

- (1) to the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating--

(A) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2011 through 2015 for seasonal operations in the Arctic; and

(B) \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015 to carry out agreements established under subsection (d);

and

(2) to the Secretary of Transportation \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2011 through 2015 to conduct demonstration projects under subsection (f).

(h) Icebreakers-

(1) ANALYSES- Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act or the date of completion of the ongoing High Latitude Study to assess Arctic polar ice-breaking mission requirements, which ever occurs later, the Commandant of the Coast Guard shall--

- (A) conduct a comparative cost-benefit analysis of--

I'll close by saying one of the questions of the fisheries conference, earlier this week, was whether we need to be doing all of this now – or if we should wait until the fishing vessels come, in their case, or the cargo vessels come, in ours. The point is they are already here. Furthermore, we should be prepared. Lives are at stake. The potential of the Arctic for the globe is tremendous. We should move with deliberate speed.

In other forums, I've made a bet that we'll see regular trans-Arctic shipping by 2020. I've offered a steak dinner to takers that we will. I'm not worried if I win, because the condition of the bet is I get to pick where we have dinner! Whatever happens, let's be prepared.

Thank you very much and Godspeed!

(i) rebuilding, renovating, or improving the existing fleet of icebreakers for operation by the Coast Guard,

(ii) constructing new icebreakers for operation by the Coast Guard, and

(iii) any combination of the activities described in clauses (i) and (ii), to carry out the missions of the Coast Guard;

and

(B) conduct an analysis of the impact on mission capacity and the ability of the United States to maintain a presence in the Arctic regions through the year 2020 if recapitalization of the icebreaker fleet, either by constructing new icebreakers or rebuilding, renovating, or improving the existing fleet of icebreakers, is not fully funded.

(2) REPORTS TO CONGRESS-

(A) Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act or the date of completion of the ongoing High Latitude Study to assess Arctic ice-breaking mission requirements, which ever occurs later, the Commandant of the Coast Guard shall submit a report containing the results of the study, together with recommendations the Commandant deems appropriate under section 93(a)(24) of title 14, United States Code, to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

(B) Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commandant shall submit reports containing the results of the analyses required under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1), together with recommendations the Commandant deems appropriate under section 93(a)(24) of title 14, United States Code, to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

(i) Arctic Definition- In this section the term `Arctic' has the same meaning as in section 112 of the Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984 (15 U.S.C. 4111).