



NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION[®]

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**National Academy of Public Administration Panel
Completes Review of U.S. Maritime Administration**
*Report confirms MARAD's important role in economic
and national security arenas; outlines areas for improvement*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A panel of experts at the National Academy of Public Administration has completed its review of the Maritime Administration (MARAD), an agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation that supports the U.S. maritime industry. The Academy panel today issued its [final report](#), which confirmed that MARAD plays a key role in U.S. economic and national security arenas, and also made recommendations for improvements so that it can better meet its mission objectives.

“The Maritime Administration operates within a complicated tapestry of economic, political and defense-related authorities and stakeholder groups,” said Lewis Crenshaw, Chairman of the Academy’s MARAD Panel. “Given its modest budget and human resources, the agency must prioritize and maximize its activities to address many challenging issues. By acting on the Panel’s recommendations and working with its federal agency partners, MARAD can strengthen its commercial and national security-related programs in support of the maritime transportation industry.”

The Academy Panel’s independent assessment, requested by MARAD, evaluated the agency’s programs and made 27 recommendations for how MARAD might improve its performance by better defining and aligning its mission and programs to meet its mission objectives.

The Panel’s report outlines four categories of recommendations for MARAD:

- Overarching issues, such as clarifying its mission; aligning its programs with its mission; increasing transparency; finalizing the maritime transportation strategic plan; and improving the agency’s management of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.
- Sealift-related issues, such as re-capitalization of the Ready Reserve Fleet and the Maritime Security Program vessels and taking steps to ensure stricter adherence to Cargo Preference laws.
- Mariner training and credentialing.

- Actions to be taken to move some programs to be administered outside of MARAD.

The Panel found that MARAD's defense-related functions play a key role in the mobility and logistical requirements articulated by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). The U.S. Transportation Command and DoD confirmed the agency's effectiveness in meeting sealift needs and the importance of its Maritime Security Program and Ready Reserve Fleet as a needed bridge between the military and civilian merchant marine force. MARAD's role to provide an adequate number of ships and qualified mariners serves our national defense needs.

The Panel also found that MARAD faces challenges with its commercial industry-related work, partly due the sector's enormity. The panel recommended that MARAD must have a greater focus on these activities and a clearer mission, which must be more effectively communicated to stakeholders and the general public.

MARAD manages the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA), but recent challenges have hindered the Academy's ability to provide an adequate number of credentialed mariners. The Panel observed MARAD taking concrete steps to improve USMMA management and found that the Maritime Administration is, on balance, best suited to continue operating the Academy.

The full report is available [here](#).

About the National Academy of Public Administration

Chartered by Congress to provide non-partisan expert advice, the Academy is an independent, non-profit, and non-partisan organization established in 1967 to assist government leaders in building more effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent organizations. Learn more at www.napawash.org

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