

Oregon Board of Maritime Pilots



Annual Report
2025

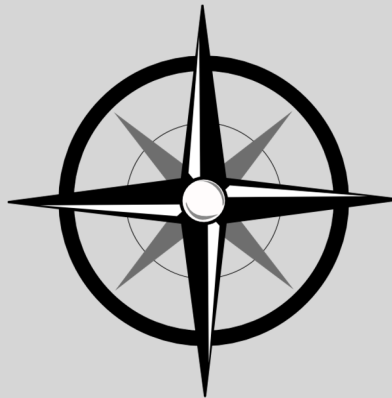


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On the cover: Pilot boarding by helicopter

Inside cover: Pilot preparing to Board



Board of Maritime Pilots
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oregon.gov/puc/bmp

Why a Pilot Board?

The Board of Maritime Pilots licenses and regulates all pilots serving Oregon's designated pilotage grounds. The Board's major responsibilities include establishing license qualifications and training standards, setting rates for pilot service, and investigating maritime incidents. All of the nation's maritime states have similar pilotage authorities because the federal government delegates pilot regulation to the states.

Pilots are essential to Oregon's maritime commerce. They are navigational and ship handling experts who direct the transit of vessels calling on the ports of Coos Bay, Yaquina Bay, Astoria, St. Helens, Columbia County, Longview, Vancouver, and Portland. Their functions have been regulated since 1846, making the Board of Maritime Pilots one of the oldest state agencies in Oregon, even preceding statehood.

Pilots have special knowledge of local conditions including winds, weather, tide, current and geography. Using navigation aids, pilots guide ships to avoid conflicting marine traffic, congested fishing fleets, reefs, shoals and other hazards.

Navigating Oregon's harbors demands the highest levels of piloting skill. The Columbia River bar has a reputation as one of the most hazardous bars in the world. Additionally, the Columbia and Willamette River transit is 85 nautical miles long, winding and shallow in relation to ship size and involves more than 80 charted course changes. The Coos/Yaquina Bay bars have the combined elements of both a breaking bar and a confined waterway. There is no substitute for pilot experience and continued professional training.

Board Members

Public:

Carrie Banks, Chair
Term: 2/14/24 – 2/13/28

John Bogaty, Vice Chair
Term: 6/5/24 – 5/25/26

Peter Johnson
Term: 5/3/25 – 5/2/29

Industry:

Yuki Kakida Danese
Term: 3/1/25 – 2/28/29

Ken Anderson
Term: 6/10/22 – 6/9/26

Capt. Fred Myer
Term: 6/10/22 – 6/9/26

Pilot:

Capt. Mitchell Allgower
Term: 4/26/23 – 4/25/27

Capt. Derek Hill
Term: 12/19/24 – 12/18/28

Capt. George Wales
Term: 6/1/23 – 5/31/27

Legal Counsel: Jason Jones, Assistant Attorney General since 2023

Staff: Capt. Len Tumbarello, Executive Director since 2025
Kim Oster, Administrator since 2024

A Message from the Executive Director

On behalf of the Oregon Board of Maritime Pilots, I am proud to present the Board's 2025 Annual Report and highlight the work accomplished this year to support safe, reliable, and efficient pilotage on Oregon's waterways.



Oregon's maritime pilots play a vital role in protecting life, property, and the marine environment while ensuring the uninterrupted movement of commerce through the Columbia River, Willamette River, Yaquina Bay, and Coos Bay. Their work demands exceptional proficiency, disciplined risk management, and sound judgment—often in challenging conditions where experience and preparation matter most. Our maritime pilots displayed these attributes throughout 2025 which led to an impressive result of zero vessel incidents during the entire year. The Board remains steadfast in its responsibility to uphold high professional standards, ensure public safety, and provide strong oversight of pilotage services across the State of Oregon.

Late in 2025, the Board also experienced an important leadership transition. We said farewell to Captain Tom Griffiths, who served as Executive Director for five years with impeccable professionalism, integrity, and dedication. Captain Griffiths leaves a legacy of steady leadership and trusted service to the Board, Oregon's pilots, and our industry and government partners. I am honored to follow in his wake and grateful for the foundation he helped strengthen during his tenure.

It has been a privilege to begin service as the Board's new Executive Director, and I am proud to report tangible accomplishments completed in 2025, each reinforcing the Board's focus on readiness, transparency, and long-term capability:

- Columbia River Pilots and Columbia River Bar trainee evaluations were completed, resulting in ranked order lists that were reviewed and approved by the Board, supporting a merit-based and accountable approach to pilot development and qualification.
- The Board completed 10 rule amendments, including expanding on license restrictions, adding clarifications, and updating the pilot license renewal fee.

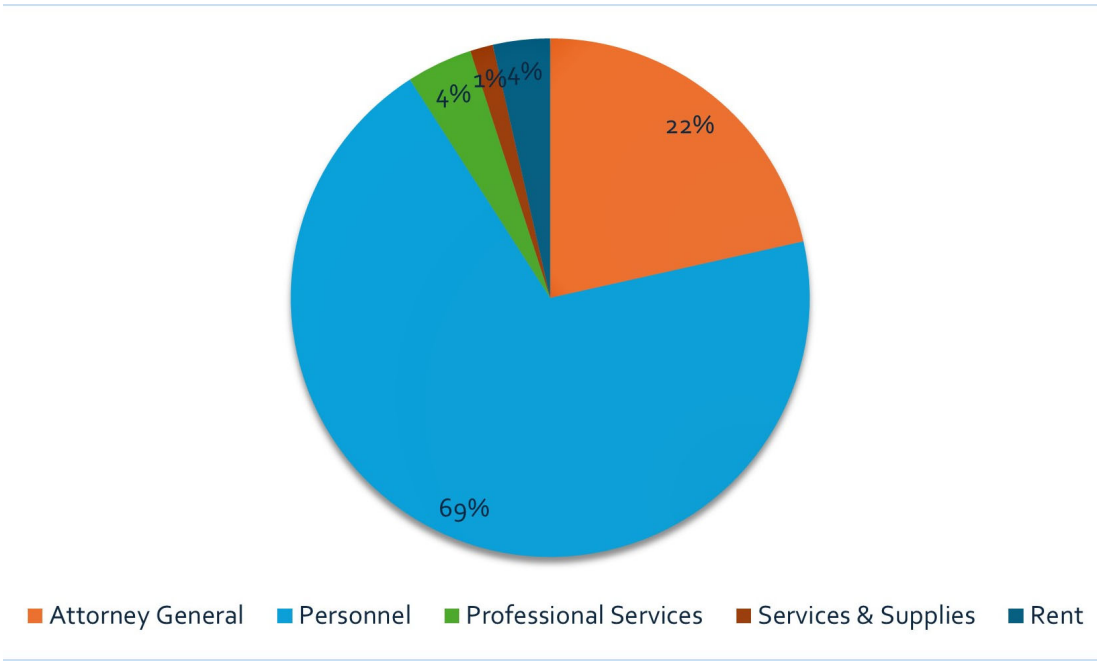
These outcomes reflect the Board's continued commitment to clear standards, responsible governance, and forward-looking investment in the tools and talent necessary to maintain safe and effective pilotage services for Oregon.

I extend my sincere appreciation to Oregon's maritime pilots, the Board's nine Governor-appointed members, Public Utility Commission staff, and our maritime industry partners for their dedication, professionalism, and collaboration throughout 2025. The strength of Oregon pilotage is built on trust, competence, and a shared commitment to safety—and it is an honor to support that mission.

As we look ahead, the Oregon Board of Maritime Pilots will remain focused on continuous improvement, sound oversight, and ensuring pilotage services remain reliable and resilient for the people and economy of Oregon. I look forward to another great year ensuring navigational safety and the efficient movement of goods through Oregon waters.

Captain Len Tumbarello

2025-2027 Budget: \$1,080,248



Revenue

The Board’s revenues come from annual license fees paid by the pilots and a fee paid by ships. For the 2025-27 biennium, the license fee is \$4,322 per pilot. The license fee is COLA-adjusted on a biennial basis. The ship fee is \$100 per port call.

Expenses

Board expenses are primarily for administrative staff, investigation and legal costs. Legal services are provided by the Attorney General’s staff. Legal expenses increase significantly when the Board is involved in a rate proceeding or license action.

Board Activity Summary

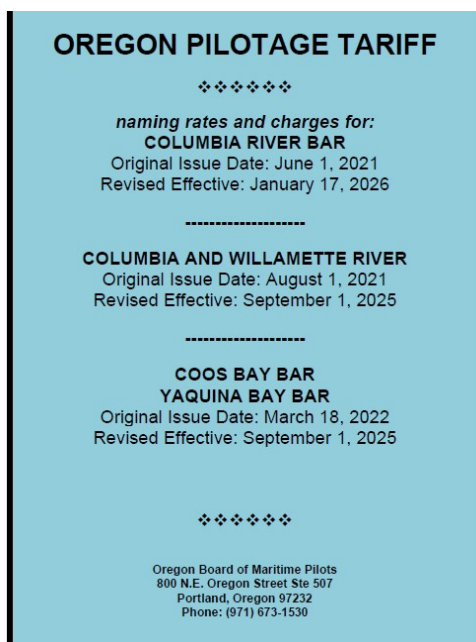


Licensing

- 5 Training Assessments
- 7 License Upgrades
- 56 License Renewals
- 1 Licensee Retirement

Administrative

- 6 Board Meetings
- 7 Committee Meetings
- Ongoing Rule Reviews
- Expanded Use of Simulator



Safety

0 Incident Investigations

Rates

- 5 Tariff Adjustments
- 1 Transportation Oversight Committee Recommendation for annual tariff adjustment for transportation expenses

Go to www.oregon.gov/puc/bmp for the latest tariff publication.

Board Members

Ken Anderson

Ken has been involved in the Columbia River maritime industry for over 30 years. In his role as Dispatch Manager at Shaver Transportation, he manages a skilled team to provide excellent service to the maritime industry, pilots, crews, vendors, and internal contacts. He holds a B.A. in Economics with a Computer Science Minor from California State University, Sacramento.

Mitch Allgower

Mitch graduated with a B.S. from California Maritime Academy and has over 36 years in the maritime industry. He has been a Columbia River Pilot since 2000. He has a reputation for safety, resolving problems, and improving customer satisfaction while balancing the needs of the State of Oregon.

Carrie Banks

Carrie has a PhD from George Mason University, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution and is currently a private investigator licensed in Oregon. She has served on several boards and is currently writing a book for young adults about domestic violence entitled "Talk About It".

John Bogaty

John has a Masters degree in accounting and is currently a small business owner in Portland. John served on the Riverdale School Board for 9 years prior to being appointed to the Oregon Board of Maritime Pilots.

Yuki Kakida Danese

Yuki was appointed to the Board in early 2021 as an industry member managing the logistics of grain cargoes to destinations around the world for the last ten years. She joined the shipping industry not long after graduating from the University of Oregon.

Derek Hill

Derek attended Maine Maritime Academy and spent 24 years sailing aboard deep sea commercial vessels, primarily container ships. He joined the Bar Pilots in 2018. He and his family reside in Astoria, Oregon.

Peter Johnson

Peter is an Insurance executive with 35 years of industry experience. A fourth generation Oregonian, Peter is dedicated to the long-term success and sustainability of the Northwest business community.

Fred Myer

Fred worked at the Port of Portland from 2014 - 2025 as a terminal and marine security manager and waterways planner. Before that he spent 25 years in the Coast Guard, serving on cutters in Alaska and Oregon and as a marine safety and law enforcement professional across New England, Texas, Oregon, Washington and Virginia. His wife Lisa hails from Tacoma, WA. They now live happily in Tigard, OR.

George Wales

As a Coos Bay pilot, George has been working in the maritime industry for over 30 years. He has served in the US Navy, and worked on commercial fishing boats, tugboats and tankers.

Licensed Pilots

Columbia-Willamette River Pilotage Ground

Licensed		Licensed	
Allgower, Mitchell	2001	Hurn, Steven	1997
Amos, Paul	1992	Johnson, Dustin	2015
Aschoff, Jon	2008	Lieziert, Christopher	2022
Balensifer, Wesley	2021	Mash, Joshua	2022
Barrett, Cedric	2021	McGorty, Dustin	2025
Biederman, Fabron	2022	Nielsen, Jeremy	2014
Boyce, Christopher	2014	Olsen, Darren	2011
Bradley, Andrew	2025	Pass, Michael	2020
Brock, Jeremy	2025	Patching, Charles	1985
Burkhalter, Kyle	2025	Reinhofer, Randy	2023
Bybee, Don	2015	Ritter, Nicholas	2019
Coles, Corey	2022	Sigfridson, Brian	2019
Crippen, Kory	2019	Smith, Aaron	2008
Culp, Brian	2017	Smith, Tyler	2023
Davis, Michael	2011	Verbeck, Samuel	2000
Deaton, Brett	2009	Warner, Bradley	2012
Dobbins, Charles	2009	Widme, Aaron	2022
Dobbins, Jason	2018	Williams, Corey	1997
Dobbins, Stephen	1999	Wood, Jeremy	2017
Eckardt, Christopher	2015		
Gill, Richard	2006		
Glaser, Erik	2024		
Harris, Scott	2010		
Harris, Timothy	2010		
Hudkins, Andrew	2025		



Pilot boarding in Astoria



Licensed Pilots

Columbia River Bar Pilotage Ground

Coos-Yaquina Bay Bar Pilotage Grounds

Licensed

Licensed

Ackerman, Steven	2016
Black, William	2014
Boldemann, Bryan	2025
Brady, James	2011
Christian, Nicholas	2017
Farrell, Christopher	2011
Hails, Mark	2015
Hill, Derek	2018
Jordan, Daniel	2004
Julien, Christian	2020
Matteo, Philip (retired)	2008
Nehring, Curtis	2005
Sohlberg, Joseph	2014
Tolley, Michael	2016
Valentine, Justin	2015
Wodehouse, Kahai	2020

Petrusha, Timothy	2019
Wales, George	2011
Woods, Steven	1986



Coos Bay



Vessel Activity

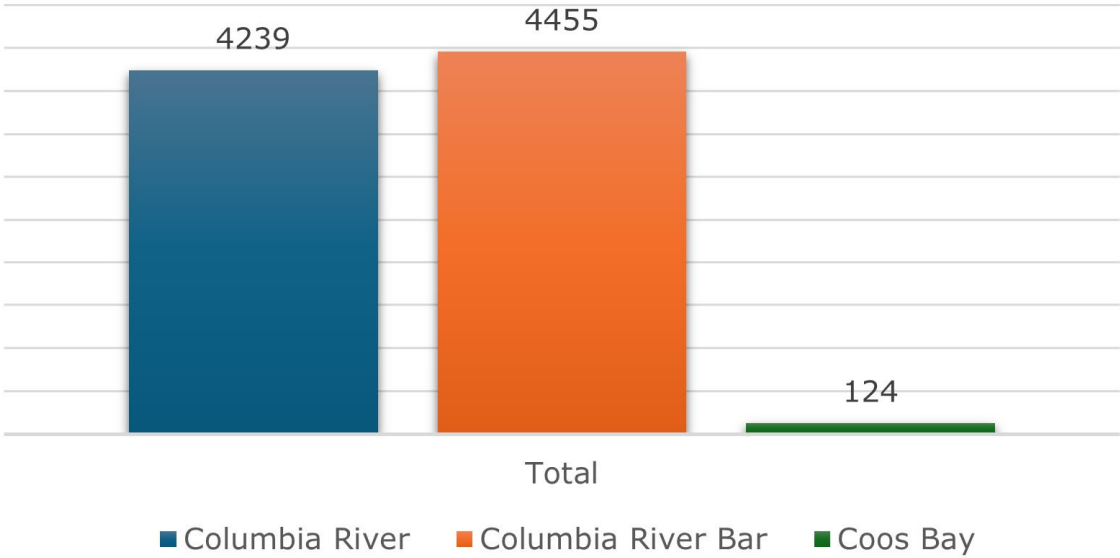
A transit is a one-way trip inbound or outbound between Portland and Astoria.

Harbor and interport moves are trips from dock to dock in port or individual trips between ports.



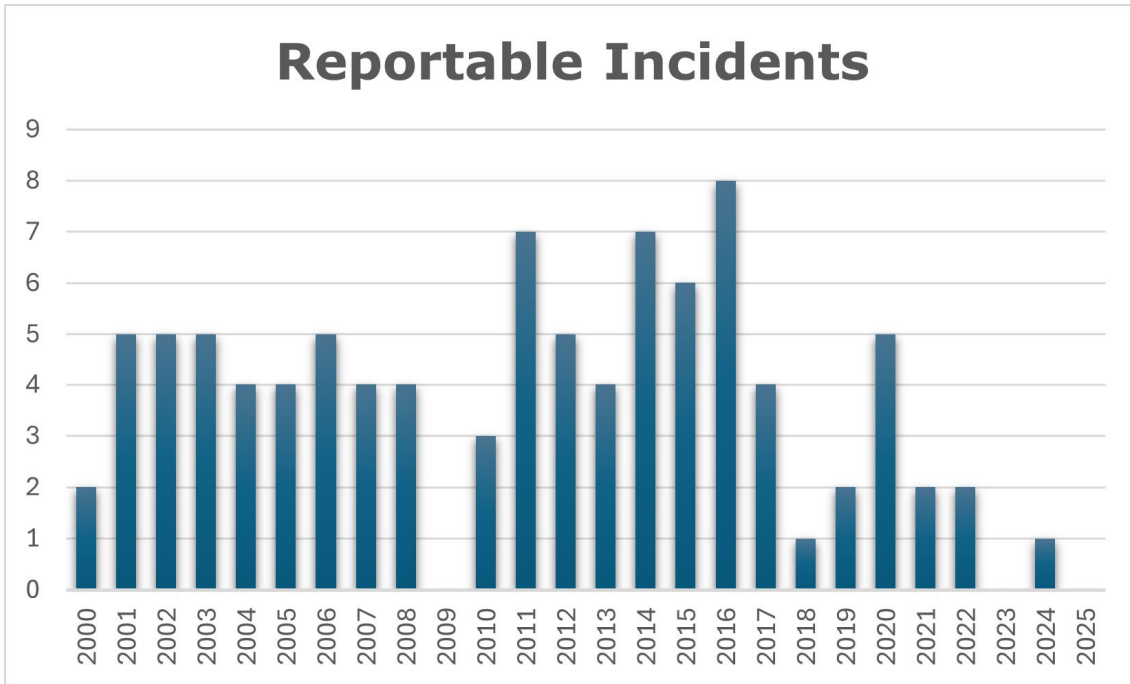
Ship traffic on the Willamette River

Vessel Activity by Grounds

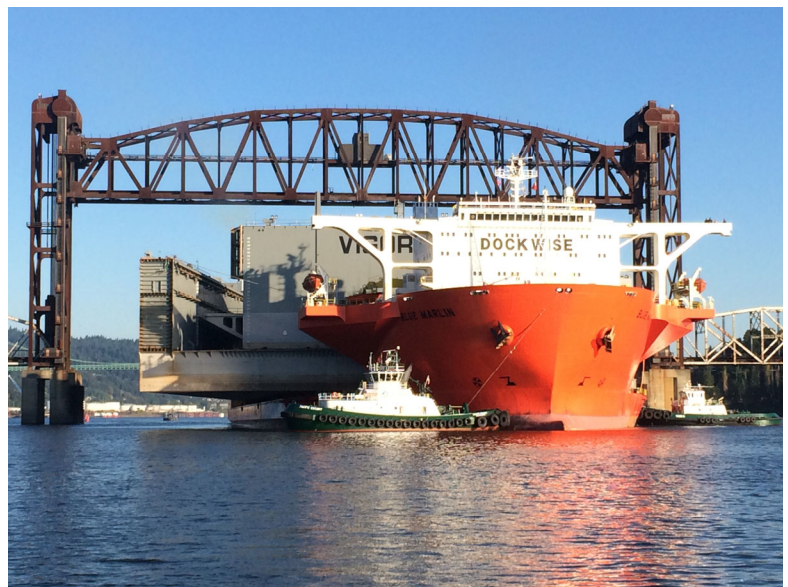


Incidents

The Board has historic records that date back to 1898 documenting incidents. The occurrence of maritime incidents has dramatically declined over the years, due to technological developments, improvements to pilot training and continuing education, and a heightened sense of awareness among pilots. There were no incidents in 2025.



State pilots are critical to safely navigate large ships through narrow bridges.



Pilot Selection

The piloting profession is widely considered the pinnacle of a maritime career. Oregon's bar pilots come from careers as masters on deep draft ocean-going vessels. Oregon's river pilots usually come with experience on inland vessels such as tugboats. All state pilots typically have ten to fifteen years of maritime experience. The Board qualifies pilot applicants and selects pilot trainees through an application and periodic evaluation process. Applicants are assigned a point score based upon education, experience, licensure and oral examination. A bridge simulator examination is also required for the Columbia River Bar and Columbia River and Willamette River pilotage grounds. The scores culminate in a ranked list of candidates from which pilot trainees are selected.

Pilot Training

New licenses are issued only after a pilot trainee has completed rigorous program requirements and passed a written training assessment. New pilots are issued limited licenses for a period of at least two years, until they have met qualifications to receive unlimited licenses.

- ✿ There were six pilot trainees who qualified and received an original license.
- ✿ There were seven pilots working on limited licenses during this time period.

Licensed Pilots

There were 62 active licenses in the state at the end of 2025:

- ✿ 44 on the Columbia-Willamette Rivers
- ✿ 15 on the Columbia River Bar
- ✿ 3 on the Coos/Yaquina Bay Bars



Outbound in heavy seas



State of Oregon Compulsory Maritime Pilotage:

Protecting the Marine Environment & Facilitating Responsible Maritime Commerce Thru Safe, Efficient and Reliable Pilotage Service

What is Maritime Pilotage?

Compulsory maritime pilotage is a **navigation safety regulation** & by far the most effective mechanism available to the Oregon government to ensure the safety of human life, protect the marine environment, & facilitate the flow of maritime commerce. It is effective because it places a highly trained, well experienced & government-licensed compulsory pilot on the bridge of required ships:

- possessing **unmatched knowledge** of the local waterways;
- with **expert ship-handling skills**; &
- whose sole purpose is to **protect the public interest** & the waters for which they are licensed.

Why Pilotage is so effective in facilitating the efficient movement of maritime commerce while protecting the marine environment?

Compulsory pilots are required to **exercise informed independent judgment** while resisting the commercial & economic pressures commonly faced by shipping companies. A pilot must continually decide between different courses of action. For example, whether a ship should proceed in heavy fog, heavy weather or other unexpected conditions; whether a ship should wait for particular tides, currents, or weather conditions; whether one route or maneuver should be used rather than another that might take more time; or whether a ship should move at a lower than normal speed despite its schedule. **Pilots are insulated from these economic pressures & are empowered to make decisions based solely on safety considerations.**

Although compulsory pilots are not government employees, they perform what is, in fact, a public service. A pilot's primary responsibility is to **protect the interests of the people & marine environment on waters for which they are licensed.** In that respect, the principal customer of a pilot's service is NOT the ship or shipowner but rather the citizens & the public interests.

How Pilotage is overseen?

Since 1846, compulsory pilotage has been provided through a comprehensive regulatory system administered by the Oregon Board of Maritime Pilots (OBMP). The OBMP does far more than merely set rules for the issuance of pilot licenses to individuals. In addition to requiring ships to use a pilot, this Board seeks to ensure that **trained, competent, and physically capable pilots are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year** through the establishment of pilotage rates that generate adequate revenues.

What it takes to maintain a modern, safe, efficient & reliable Pilotage system?

Although piloting is a service provided by an individual, pilotage operations are necessarily capital intensive. A modern, safe, efficient, & reliable pilotage operation requires such things as pilot boats, crews, maintenance staffs; dispatchers; training programs; radios; & hi-tech electronic navigation equipment. While this infrastructure has a cost, compulsory pilotage services are provided at **no cost to State of Oregon taxpayers.** The costs of maintaining the pilotage systems are funded thru government established pilotage fees, which are paid principally by foreign flag shipping interests.

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an agency within the

