

Commandant of the Coast Guard Tours Ports and Terminals Near New Orleans

Admiral Karl Schultz, the 26th commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, joined Turn Services President Mario Muñoz, Senior Vice President Bob Mueller and a host of maritime industry leaders and elected officials June 19 aboard the Port of New Orleans fireboat Gen. Roy S. Kelley for a tour of New Orleans-area port facilities, including Turn Services' Dockside and Meraux fleets.



Mario Muñoz with Admiral Schultz.

The visit was part of the commandant's coast-to-coast tour of strategic ports and terminals, highlighting the importance of maritime commerce to the economy of the United States. In New Orleans, Schultz had the opportunity to see firsthand the intersection of brown water and blue water operations as the Gen. Roy S. Kelley passed Associated Terminals' facility at St. Bernard Port's Chalmette Slip, Turn Services' fleeting areas, and Associated Terminals' Myrtle Grove Midstream Terminal (MGMT).

At the Chalmette Slip, Associated Terminals team members were busy offloading steel coils. Farther downriver, a pair of Associated Terminals' barge-mounted Gottwald cranes were busy loading directly from barge to a cargo ship. Muñoz explained that Turn Services, thanks to its strategically-located fleets at Dockside and Meraux, is able to serve its sister company Associated Terminals efficiently and safely.

"We have the ability to moor about 150 barges in this fleet, and with these barges, we support midstream and terminal operations through this port as well. Because Dockside is essentially between the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal and the Algiers Canal, Turn Services is also able to now play a bigger role in moving barges east and west on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway" Muñoz said from near Dockside Fleet.

Throughout the tour, Schultz witnessed a variety of ships and tows moving both upriver and downriver—all on a river that's been in flood stage for months. That constant traffic is a testament to the professionalism and team mentality shared on the waterway between the maritime industry and the U.S. Coast Guard. Schultz defined that as "unity of effort" between industry and the Coast Guard, and that effort will be all-the-more crucial in the future as commerce and vessel traffic continues to grow.



Bob Mueller discusses Turn Services with Admiral Schultz.

"One thing the port tour brought to light was the fact that both the Coast Guard and industry are facing some of the same challenges," Mueller said. "What that tells me is that the partnership between the Coast Guard and industry, and collaboration among individual companies, will be even more important as we move into the future."