



Newsletter  
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Volume 1, Edition 6

## THE FORTNIGHTLY DELIGHTFULLY BRIEF, PITHY AND WHOLLY IDIOSYNCRATIC NEWSLETTER.



### ***Delightfully Brief***

I think the market may be turning. Well, there are a few straws in the wind. Scrap prices are falling suggesting use of older tonnage is rising (the fixtures seem to concur), rates in some sectors are firming, the smart money is selling relatively new ships apparently to buy in the newest overbuilds at rock-bottom prices, OSG may survive, some tanker gunslingers may not. Even though the banks are not lending and bankruptcies are increasing, there is no

reason a purge of the system cannot occur as it is re-integrating. JIT inventory is not dead, slow steaming to save money demands more tonnage afloat for capacity, money is loosening a little, green is seen as economical. However, let me be perfectly clear. It is not the despair that gets you in this business. It is the hope.

## In This Issue

- A Short Straw in the Wind?
- Guards vs. Pirates
- The Bad and The Ugly: The TSA and TWIC Saga
- Urgings

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## ***Pithy***

In contemplating the armed guards vs. piracy debate, one wonders where the power is here: with the proponents of armed guards or with the pirates? Of course the fears of vigilantism is real. We hear that some of these guns for hire now keep their weapons caches in international waters to avoid the pesky transparency requirements of states of those bringing arms inside their borders. However, every day delayed emboldens the pirates further and makes it harder to dig them out, root, branch and sand pile. Then there are states such as India who do not understand reciprocal sovereignty and flag state right aboard. We have 170 (and three associates) maritime states in the IMO. This cat-herding is similar to Charles DeGaulle's reply on being asked about governing France: " How can you govern a country which has 246 varieties of cheese? " Alors. Zoot alors.

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## ***Wholly Idiosyncratic***

It is fitting that on April 1 that I review the recent activities of the TSA and the TWIC. Most recent has been TSA's announcement -- in one of its myriad inconsequential annual reports, that in three years (2009-2011) of meddling in railroad affairs (steady the helm, now!) 21 "enforcement actions" for the TWIC had come down. These were for such egregious and nation-threatening crimes as not snitching, letting or directing another to use one's TWIC or using another's TWIC (got 'em all there) and making fake ones. TWIC's cost \$100 on the open market I hear. I read in the newspapers that \$1.5 billion has been spent on this loser agency running this bizarre program and feeding the cupidity of its grasping and incompetent contractor Lockheed Martin. That sum divided by 11 is \$1.34 million per enforcement action. By those lights the card costs the government \$1000 apiece. I for one feel much more secure and I am sure you do too. The House has yet again called these Keystone Kops to a committee room to inquire into the formal proposition (I do not make these things up): "Is the TSA effective security or security theater?" Why have a hearing? Alas, things did not go well for the credential Rep. Mica a year ago suggested was as useful as a library card. This time he suggested that the TWIC would have been better done as a high school [science] project. Reps. Mica, Issa and Cummings are not amused. I sense patience has run out -- as it should have two years ago

when reports of the TSA tampering with the criminal justice system to make cases disappear which would have embarrassed it (showing how far out of touch TSA is); its Lockheed Martin TWIC enrollers assaulting and battering applicants; an shipmaster and TWIC applicant getting turned down merely and only because he had been born outside the US and had come here at the age of two years; the inability of the TSA to field a card-reader (bank credit card companies have had readers for decades); and the inability of the TSA to select a competent contractor capable of doing the job. It is clear to me in this litany there is no health in either TSA, TWIC. The Coast Guard, the proper and professional government agency which should have the entire maritime security portfolio, is in effect slowly abandoning the TWIC ship. The TSA rats and their apologists, albeit fewer in number by the week, swim toward it. The TSA and the TWIC are bad business run by an incompetent bureaucracy and its former FBI hack leader, John Pistole. Mr. Pistole has shown clearly that he has risen far beyond his Peter Principle level of incompetence. Not even his boss, Secretary Napolitano of maritime Arizona, can defend him. The last important announcement Mr. Pistole made -- that Lockheed Martin, the contractor had passed out 27 thousand faulty TWIC's -- was postponed eight months from his finding out until Congress went home for the 2011 Christmas break. "Airport Johnny", as he is affectionately known by his adoring public, has a political astuteness equalling his leadership ability. He should go. The TWIC should be abolished. The TSA should either be drastically reformed or closed down. The country and its public fisc -- would be more secure and vastly better off without them.

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### ***Urgings***

Want to network? Forget LinkedIn. Go to FOB. It is a marvellous little place where everyone is in real shipping. It is not a place for poseurs who will be sniffed out immediately. [TheFOBNetwork.com](http://TheFOBNetwork.com).

[Maritime TV](#) is where is for good coverage of interesting things and people. Take a look if you have not.

Smooth sailing, fair winds and a following sea.

John A. C. Cartner  
Managing Member, the Cartner Companies  
and Cartner & Co., LLC, maritime consultants

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Cartner & Co., LLC consults in maritime and related law, naval architecture and marine engineering and maritime economics and trade.

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