



COMMANDER, NINTH COAST GUARD DISTRICT
CLEVELAND, OHIO 44199-2080

21 October 2008

Dear Great Lakes Mayor,

As the Coast Guard operational commander for the Great Lakes region, it is my sincere desire to continually improve the quality and effectiveness of our domestic icebreaking mission.

As we approach the 2009 ice season, we are reviewing the valuable lessons learned from past seasons and setting a new baseline for our operations. Our objective is to continue to carry out our important maritime safety responsibilities while meeting the needs of industry and the reasonable demands of commerce. We have adopted a strategic approach to this mission to ensure there are no service gaps to the Great Lakes Maritime community.

To that end, we planned our annual Great Lakes Icebreaking Conference to bring all of the mission participants and stakeholders together in Cleveland on 21-22 October to share expectations, provide feedback, and jointly develop strategies to efficiently and effectively employ our icebreaking resources. Industry participation in this conference is critical to the success of our icebreaking mission and I am pleased to report we expect record attendance and participation this year.

I have enclosed a copy of our agenda for your review. As always, I remain available to you and your staffs should you have any questions or require a briefing. We look forward to serving Great Lakes maritime community in the upcoming 2009 ice season. Should you need to reach me, please call me directly at (216) 902-6002 or have your staff contact my external affairs officer, Lt. Dave French, at (216) 902-6021.

Sincerely,



PETER V. NEFFENGER

Rear Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard