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Long-Time Local Mariner Pushes for More “Maritime Firsts” –This Time in Goods Movement

Dec. 17, 2007—Since he joined the maritime industry in 1947, Stan Wheatley has personally been involved in many maritime “firsts.” Those “firsts” include the first nuclear cargo ship, the first marine satellite communications, and the first USA/USSR maritime technology exchange program.

Today, he has his eye on more “firsts.” As Principal Investigator for the Center for the Commercial Deployment of Transportation Technologies (CCDoTT) at California State University, Long Beach, Wheatley is promoting the first-ever magnetic-levitation freight system, designed to reduce truck congestion throughout the Los Angeles basin. And even more “firsts.”

The latest developments in that mag-lev freight system will highlight the numerous research projects made public on January 16, during IMPACT 2008. The event is CCDoTT’s annual research conference, to be held aboard the RMS Queen Mary.

As CCDoTT’s Managing Director, Wheatley has been the guiding vision for the comprehensive, innovative research projects designed to enhance military goods movement and also to be useful in the civilian sector. “Our research represents a win-win for everyone in the U.S.,” said Wheatley. With his long years of experience, Wheatley should be a good judge of both.

Newest “Firsts.” In addition to that magnetic-levitation freight conveyor, “firsts” to be discussed at the IMPACT 2008 conference include:

- the first operational study of a complete West Coast short sea shipping (ferry boat) service;
- the first serious look at the use of heavy-lift aircraft aboard a sea base;
- the first comprehensive assessment of emergency port disruption on the U.S. logistics system.

“I’ve always been a dreamer,” noted Wheatley, “and I’ve been lucky enough to see many of my dreams come to reality. Some, however, were harder than others!”

Wheatley has played the Don Quixote role more than once in his 50-year career. His tales of jousting with windmills—in other words, fighting against conventional wisdom—would fill books.

Today instead of tending massive shipboard engines in search of malfunctions, Wheatley tends researchers and funders, prowling for new technologies that just might work. “I’m always ready to fight for something better—I’ll never be known for standing for the status quo,” he joked. That CCDoTT’s 11-year track record of innovations is now being seriously considered is a testament to Wheatley’s farsightedness. The Office of Naval Research is expected to adopt and advance several of CCDoTT’s “firsts” within the foreseeable future. Both state and federal legislators are strong proponents of CCDoTT’s mag-lev system.

Top-level military logistics strategists will attend the January 16 sessions. The civilian maritime community is also invited to attend IMPACT 2008, along with planners, researchers, public policy strategists, and others interested in improved military and civilian goods movement. Admission to the

event is complimentary. Advance registration is required and a small parking fee will be assessed by the Queen Mary.

CCDoTT is a unit of the California State University, Long Beach, Foundation. Funds for the program come from the federal defense budgets.

For more information, consult the website, www.ccdott.org or phone (562) 985-7395.

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