

**TESTIMONY OF ADAM MOILANEN,
VICE PRESIDENT OF HEALTH, SAFETY, QUALITY AND ENVIRONMENT
AMERICAN BUREAU OF SHIPPING
Before the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee
Of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
At a hearing titled, “Commercial and Passenger Vessel Safety:
Challenges and Opportunities”
November 14, 2019 at 2 p.m.**

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, Members of the Committee. First of all, I want to thank the Committee for giving the American Bureau of Shipping, or ABS, the opportunity to participate in this hearing today. My name is Adam Moilanen and I am Vice President of ABS overseeing our Health, Safety, Quality and Environmental Management System.

I'd like to provide the Committee an overview of ABS, of who we are and what we do. ABS is a mission-focused not-for-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of safety in the marine and offshore industries.

ABS was founded in 1862 and we are the sole American classification society. We are an organization of about 2,800 people, made up of naval architects, marine engineers, and other highly technical and experienced professionals, with alumni from each State Maritime Academy in the USA, as well as the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and with a number of employees who are active reservists or retired from our U.S. armed services.

With safety as our core value, ABS has now achieved over three years of zero lost-time work related injuries for our workforce. ABS has implemented an ongoing safety excellence program as well as Life Safety Rules, which includes a Stop Work Obligation authorizing all employees to intervene if safety is in question in any aspect of their work.

The actual day-to-day work of ABS includes research and Rule development; design review; survey during new construction of vessels/units including associated material and equipment; surveys during the operational life of those vessels/units and performing safety audits of companies and their vessels/units. Note that our Rules are the mechanism by which we publish technical safety standards for industry. We also publish the ABS Record which provides an up-to-date status of all vessels and offshore units that are classed by ABS. Training of our qualified workforce is supported by a centralized learning organization and ABS Academy.

ABS also is delegated statutory work on behalf of 110 national flag states/countries where vessels and marine related facilities are registered. In this capacity, ABS and other Class Societies are referred to as Recognized Organizations, or ROs.

For nearly 100 years, ABS has been the official classification society of the United States, under the Merchant Marine Act of 1920. ABS has maintained a long and valued relationship with the U.S. Coast Guard and, along with other Class Societies, performs delegated inspections on behalf of the U.S. Coast Guard, which includes the Alternate Compliance Program or ACP.

As stated, ABS plays an important role in marine and offshore safety, but ABS is only one component of the overall safety chain. Shipowners, crews, shipyards, equipment and material manufacturers, port states, flag states, charterers and underwriters all have vital roles as well to support the safety of the vessel, the crew and the environment.

The control environment at ABS is robust and transparent and includes an extensive internal quality management system. Over 4,000 documented policies, procedures and work instructions guide our employees in their day-to-day work. Secondly, we conduct more than 100 internal audits ourselves to assess the quality of our work, and there are more than 50 external audits of ABS every year. External audits are conducted by flag states, including the U.S. Coast Guard and the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS), among others.

Continuous improvement is an important element of our quality system with input for change from employees, clients, audits and lessons learned.

Port State Control, where vessels are boarded when entering port, is an external indicator of the overall quality of ABS service delivery. In fact, last year, ABS maintained its leading position in overall Port State Control performance, being one of the top performing ROs in all three of the most active regions of the world for the three-year period of 2016 to 2018.

For ABS, our objective remains the same as ever: to set standards for safety and excellence in marine and offshore design, construction and operation and to verify adherence to those standards.

Again, I would like to thank the Committee for its time today, and I look forward to answering your questions.