

AMPP and TalentForce Launch Maritime Report Highlighting Workforce as Key to Fleet Capacity

New report examines industrial base constraints and the workforce alignment required to strengthen fleet performance

HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES, March 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The ability to build, repair, and sustain the U.S. maritime fleet increasingly depends on one factor: a qualified workforce. That is the central finding of a new maritime industry report released today by the [Association for Materials Protection and Performance \(AMPP\)](#) in collaboration with [TalentForce](#).



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Katerina Pinchuk

The report, [U.S. Shipbuilding and Repair: Workforce Report 2026](#), examines the structural and workforce challenges limiting shipbuilding, ship repair, and long-term fleet sustainment across the United States. While public and private investment in the maritime industrial base has increased significantly, the report finds that persistent shortages of skilled trades and inconsistent pathways to qualifications continue to constrain capacity and delay progress.

“Fleet capacity is not just a question of funding or policy targets,” said Jennifer Merck, Vice President of Maritime

and Defense at AMPP. “It ultimately comes down to whether there are enough qualified people, trained to consistent standards, to do the work across the full lifecycle of a vessel – from design and construction to repair, maintenance, and life-extension.”

According to the report, the U.S. shipbuilding industry includes more than 150 private shipyards and four public naval shipyards, with military shipbuilding accounting for the majority of industry

revenue. Yet attrition rates of 20–30% in critical trades such as welding, painting, blasting, and inspection continue to undermine productivity. Federal initiatives anticipate the need for approximately 250,000 additional skilled workers over the next decade to meet projected construction and sustainment demands.

AMPP CEO Alan Thomas emphasized that policy, investment, and workforce readiness must advance together to strengthen the maritime industrial base.

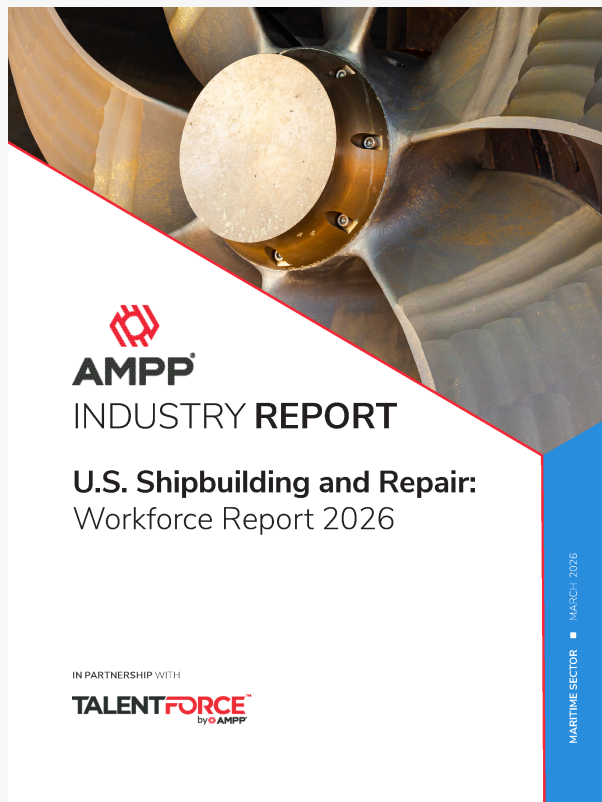
“Policy plays a decisive role in shaping shipbuilding and repair outcomes, particularly through procurement and long-term planning,” Thomas said. “But policy and funding alone will not deliver results unless they are matched with a workforce that is trained, qualified, and aligned to clear technical standards. This report provides a fact-based foundation for strengthening that alignment.”

The report is being released alongside the formal launch of TalentForce, a new charitable workforce development organization backed by AMPP and dedicated to strengthening the workforce that protects critical infrastructure from corrosion and materials degradation. TalentForce expands access to registered apprenticeships, earn-while-you-learn pathways, employer-aligned training partnerships, and stackable credentials aligned with AMPP’s globally recognized standards.

“Workforce development has to be intentional and standards-based to be effective,” said Katerina Pinchuk, Director of Workforce Development and board secretary for TalentForce. “When training aligns with real job requirements and clear progression pathways, workers gain opportunity and employers gain the consistency and performance they need to sustain complex assets.”

TALENTFORCE[™]
by  **AMPP**

TalentForce



AMPP Maritime Report 2026.1

For more than 30 years, AMPP and its legacy organizations have supported the maritime sector through standards, certifications, and contractor accreditation programs that underpin corrosion control, coatings application, inspection, and materials performance across vessel lifecycles.

This publication marks the first report in AMPP's new maritime Industry Report series, which will examine systemic challenges affecting shipbuilding, ship repair, and asset lifecycle management. The series is intended to serve ship owners, operators, shipyards, suppliers, workforce partners, and policymakers seeking coordinated, standards-driven solutions.

The full report is available at: <https://content.ampp.org/industry-reports/US-Shipbuilding-and-Repair-2026>

ABOUT AMPP

The Association for Materials Protection and Performance (AMPP) is a global leader dedicated to the protection of assets and the performance of industrial and natural materials. Established in 2021, AMPP brings together nearly 150 years of combined expertise from legacy organizations to advance solutions that enhance safety, security, and sustainability across industries. Serving more than 40,000 members in over 150 countries, AMPP is the largest organization of its kind, providing innovative standards, certifications, training, and resources. Headquartered in the United States with offices in Houston and Pittsburgh, AMPP also operates regional offices in Brazil, Canada, China, Dubai (training center), Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and the United Kingdom. www.ampp.org

ABOUT TALENTFORCE

TalentForce is a 501(c)(3) workforce development organization launched by the Association for Materials Protection and Performance (AMPP). Created to address structural workforce challenges facing the industry, TalentForce advances clear career pathways, expands student outreach and scholarship opportunities, and develops employer-driven workforce programs — all in close collaboration with employers, educators, workforce systems, and government agencies. Learn more at www.talentforce.org and follow it on LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, X and YouTube.

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