

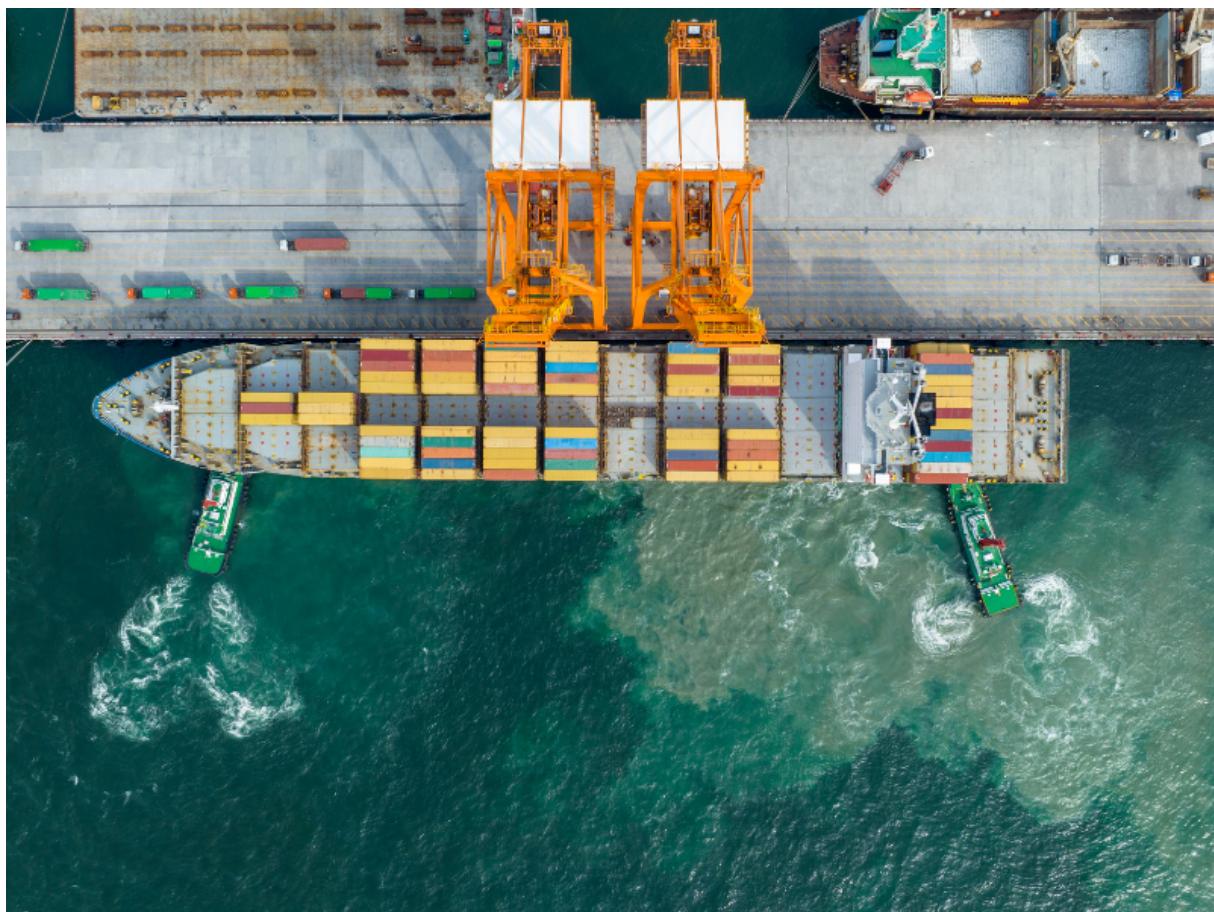
# Addressing alcohol and safety in the maritime industry

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A recent study reveals more about the intersection of alcohol and maritime safety (Getty Images).

Tulane University faculty member [Dr. Mieka Smart](#), associate professor of [Social, Behavioral, and Population Sciences](#), recently served as [a contributing member](#) of a National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine committee that

developed [a new report](#) examining policies related to mariner health, safety, and well-being in the U.S. maritime industry. The congressionally mandated study, Strengthening Alcohol Policies and Supporting Safety and Health in the Maritime Industry, looks at how alcohol policies, substance misuse, and workplace culture intersect with crew safety and health on U.S.-flagged commercial vessels.

The committee's work includes recommendations for modernizing alcohol possession and use policies aboard U.S. vessels, improving reporting and response systems for interpersonal violence and misconduct, strengthening training and credentialing throughout mariner careers, and expanding access to physical and mental health care for mariners while at sea. By drawing on evidence and best practices from other safety-critical sectors, the report provides a comprehensive set of policy and practice suggestions aimed at fostering safer, healthier environments across the maritime workforce.

Smart's participation in this expert panel reflects her broader engagement with public health, policy evaluation, and well-being research. The report, released in January 2026, informs federal agencies such as the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Maritime Administration as they consider updates to regulations and programs that affect the maritime sector's nearly 10,500 vessels and their crews.

For more information on the National Academies study and the committee's recommendations, visit the [National Academies website](#).