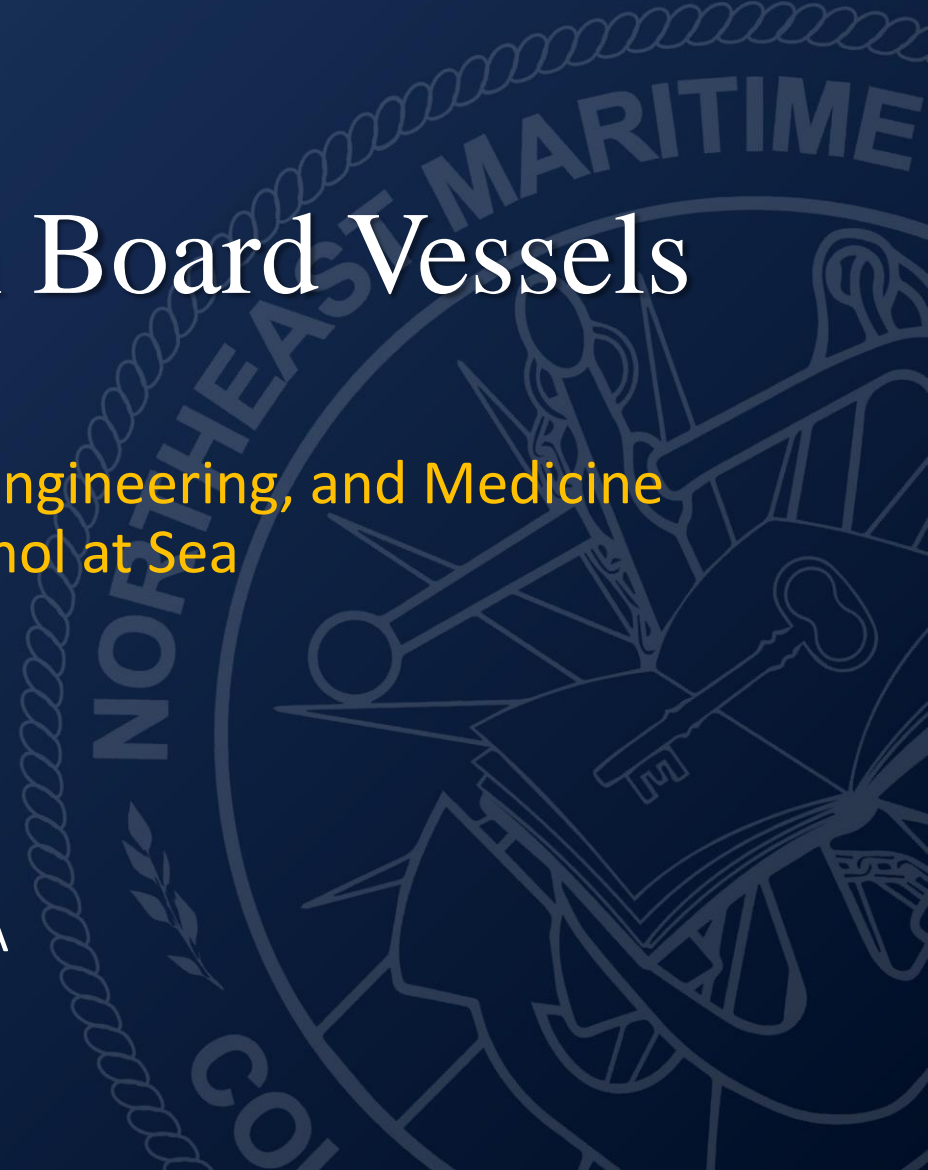


Zero Tolerance for Alcohol on Board Vessels

Presentation to the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine
consensus study committee on Alcohol at Sea

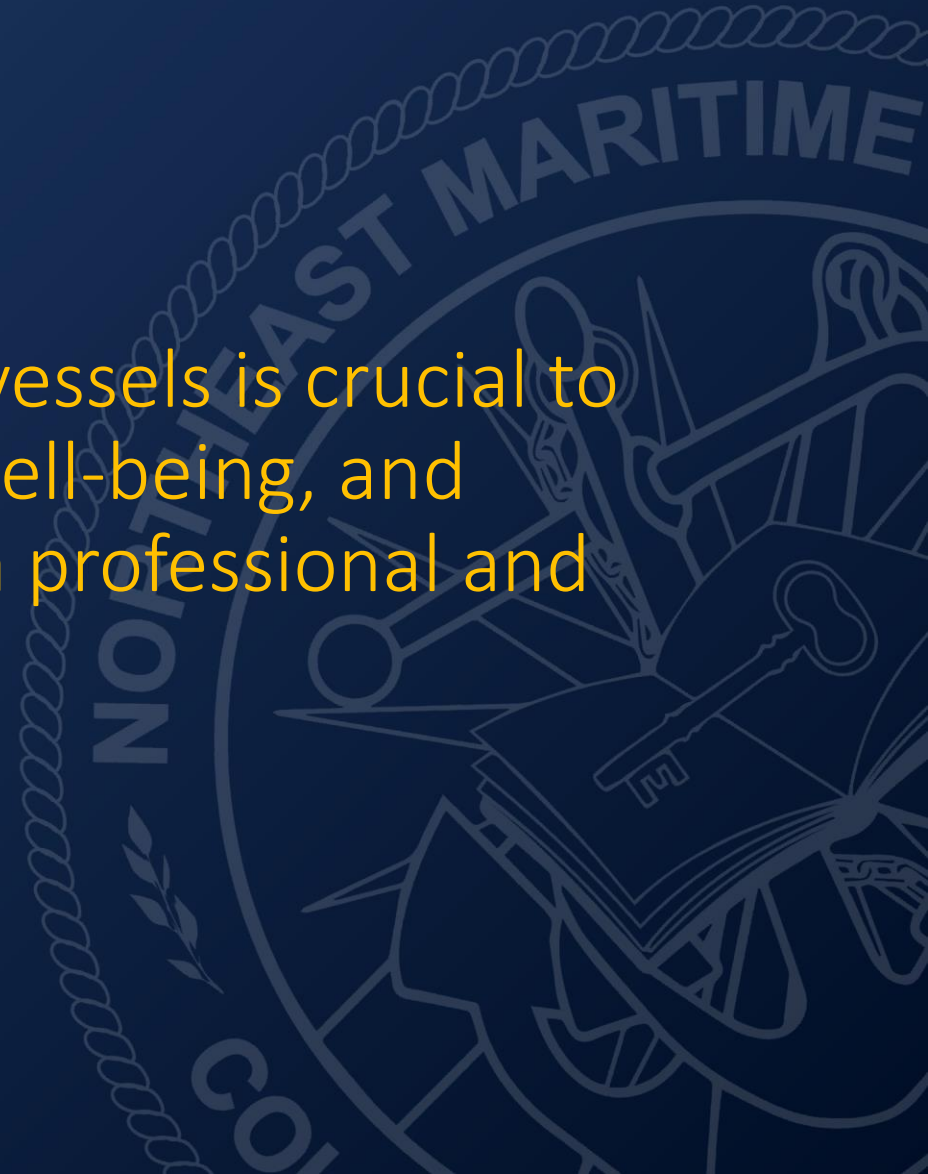
February 5, 2025

By President Eric R. Dawicki, MPA
Northeast Maritime Institute



Policy Recommendation:

A zero-tolerance policy on alcohol aboard vessels is crucial to ensuring safety, promoting psychological well-being, and preventing misconduct, thereby fostering a professional and accountable maritime environment.



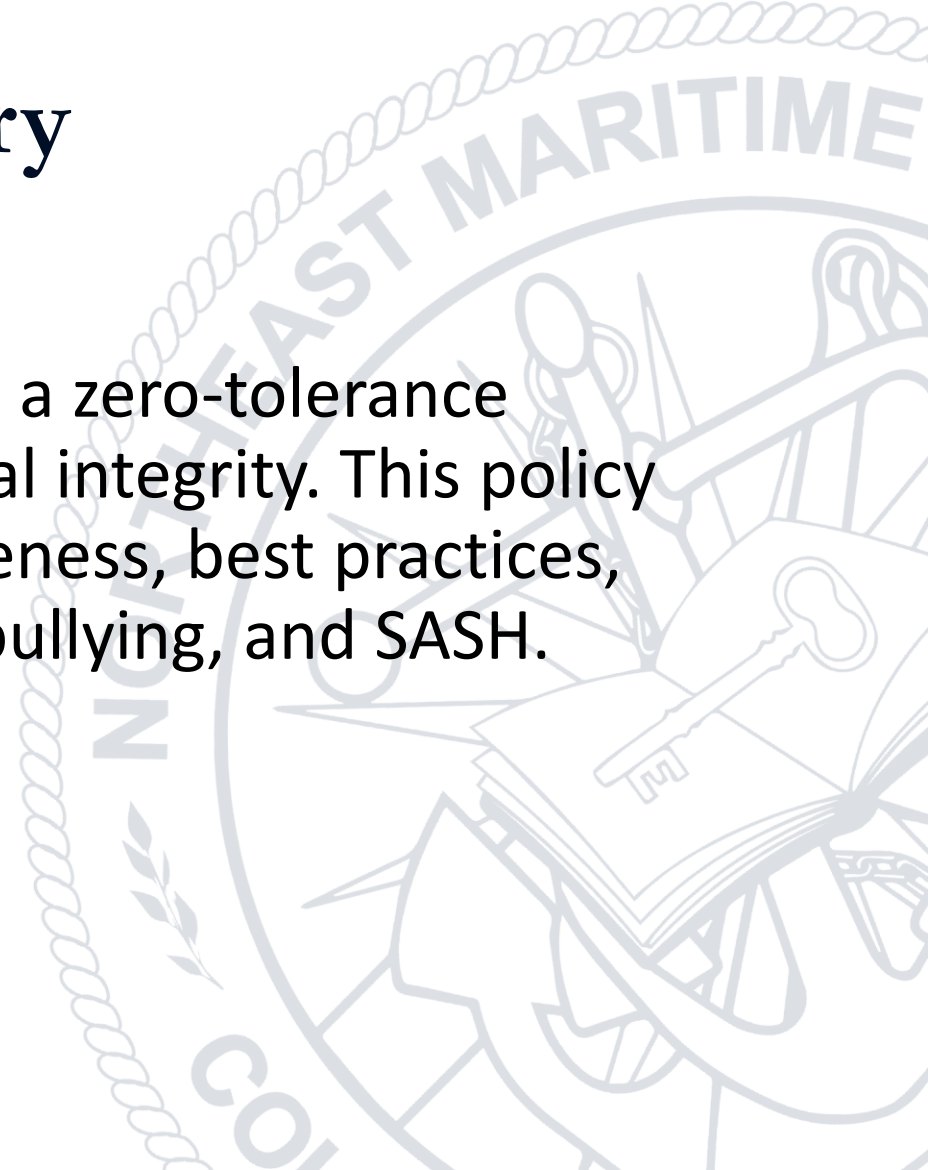
“Would you allow employees operating airplanes or buses to consume alcohol? Of course not. So why should it be acceptable on commercial vessels, where lives are equally at stake? Zero tolerance for alcohol isn’t just a cogent policy—it’s a necessity to protect crew, passengers, cargo, and environment. Safety demands that we hold maritime operations to the same high standards as every other mode of transportation.”

~Eric R. Dawicki

President of Northeast Maritime Institute

Executive Summary

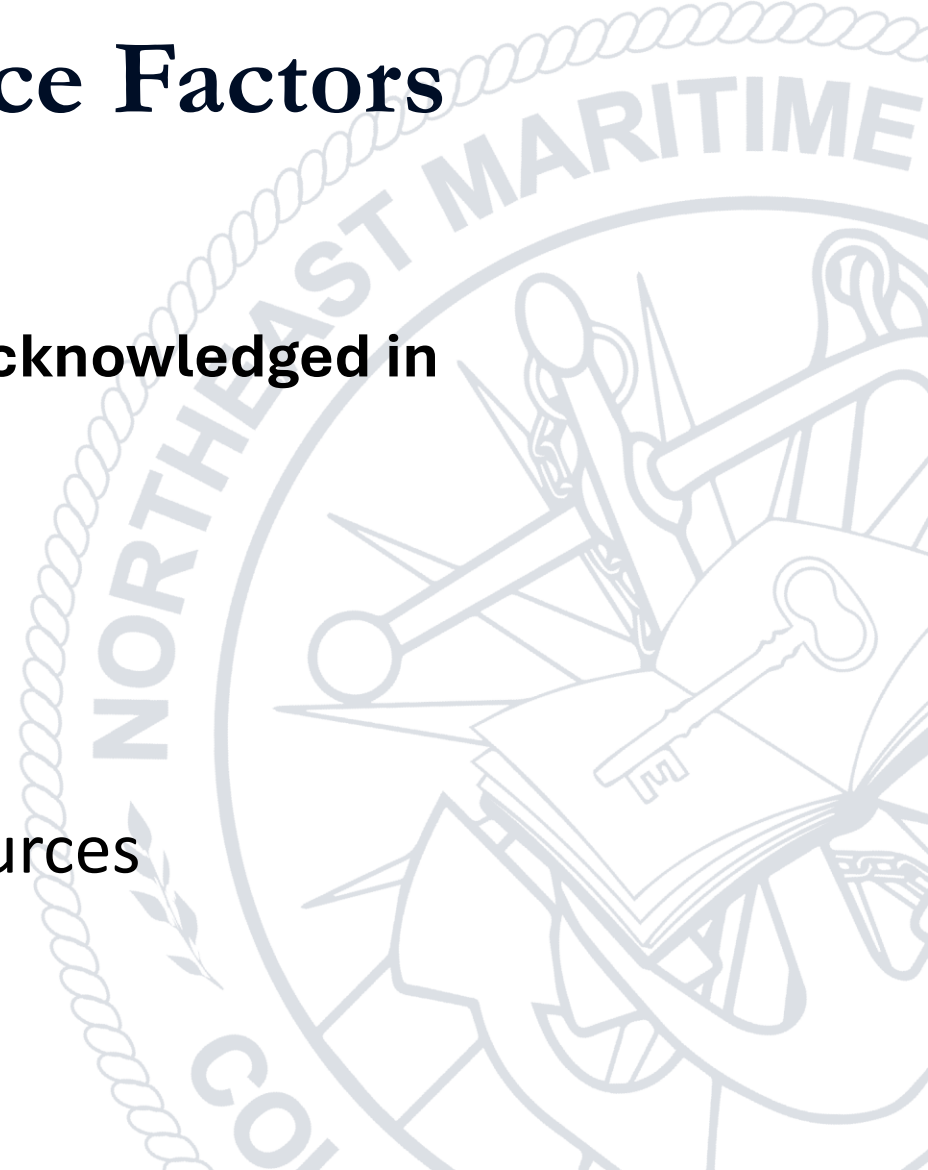
Northeast Maritime Institute (NMI) promotes a zero-tolerance alcohol policy to ensure safety and operational integrity. This policy addresses alcohol misuse, regulatory effectiveness, best practices, as well as its impact on psychological safety, bullying, and SASH.



Operational and Workplace Factors

The following general factors are widely acknowledged in the industry:

- Isolation and Loneliness
- Stress and Fatigue
- Cultural Norms
- Limited Access to Mental Health Resources

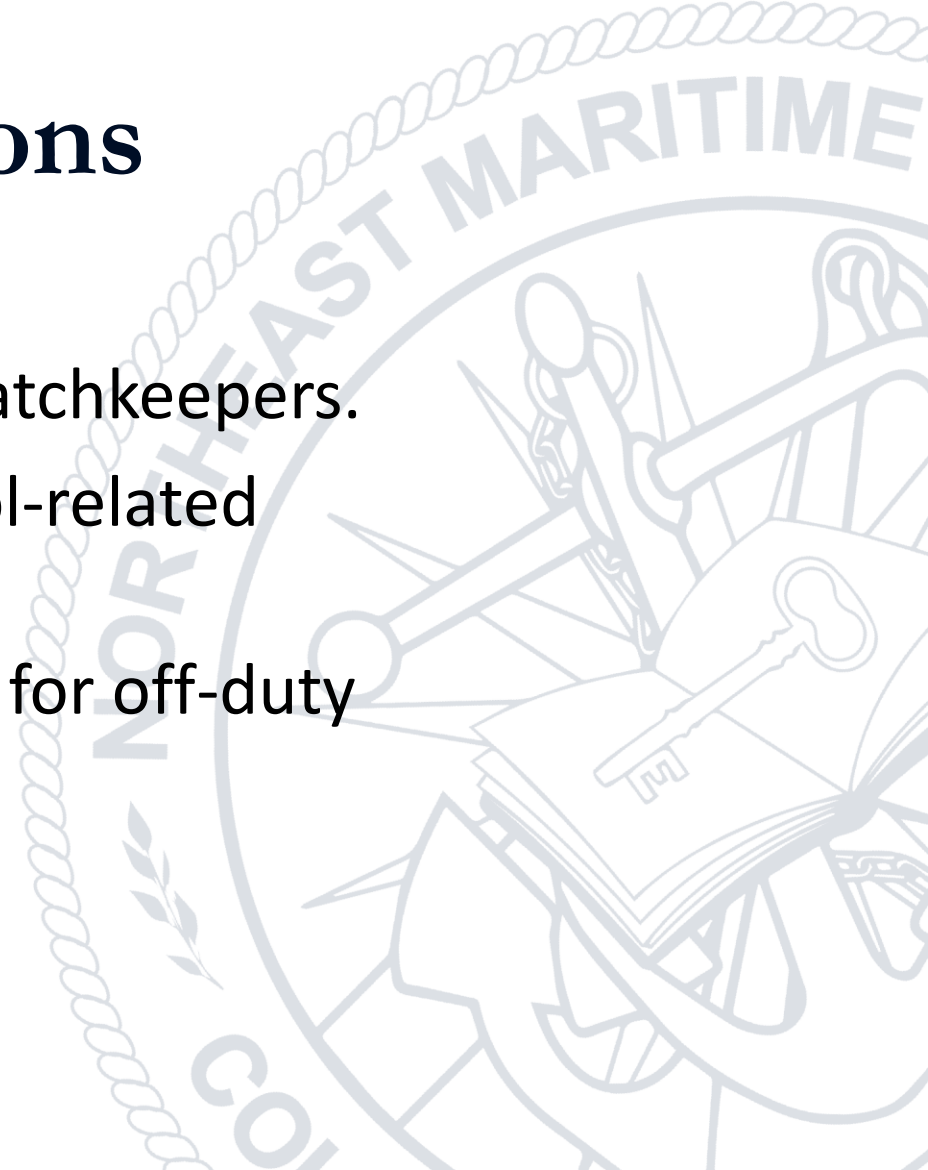


Impact on Psychological Safety, Bullying, and SASH

- **Psychological Safety:** Impaired decision-making leads to anxiety and mistrust.
- **Bullying:** Aggressive behavior may increase with alcohol misuse.
- **SASH:** Alcohol contributes to increased risks of sexual harassment and assault.

Federal Regulations

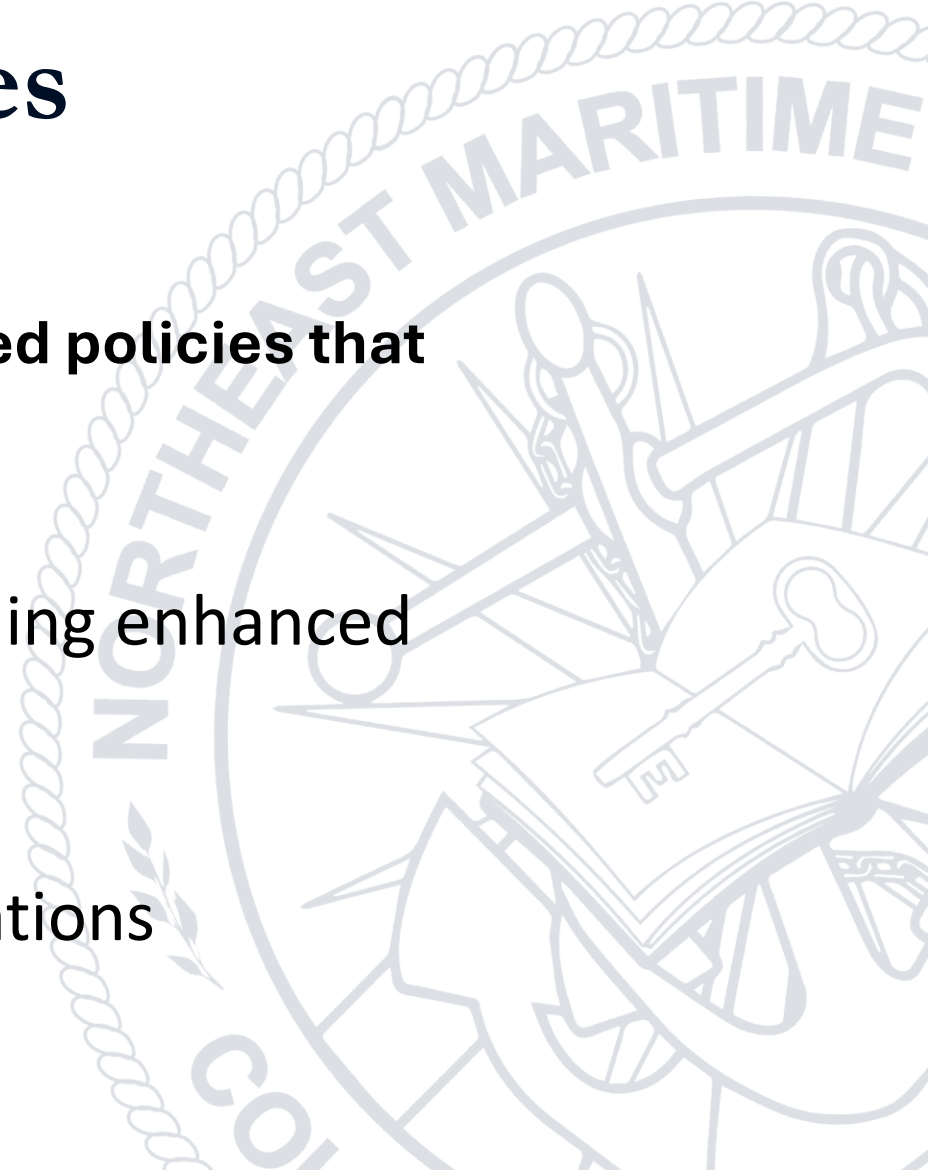
- **IMO:** STCW limits BAC to 0.04% for watchkeepers.
- **U.S. Coast Guard:** Penalties for alcohol-related offenses.
- Gaps in detection remain, particularly for off-duty consumption.



Operator Policies

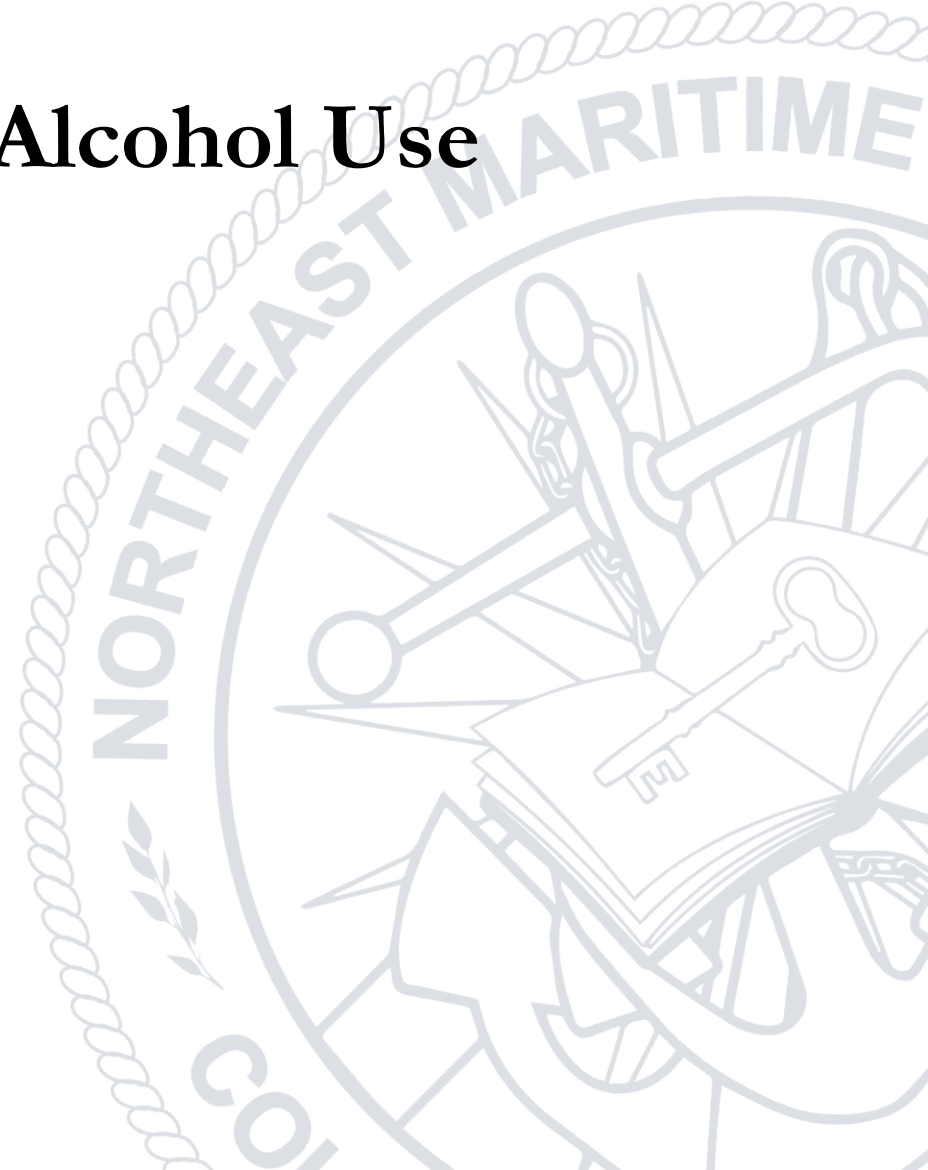
Leading maritime operators have instituted policies that exceed regulatory minimums:

- Zero-tolerance onboard
- Random and scheduled testing, including enhanced testing methodologies
- Alcohol-free zones and times
- Immediate disciplinary action for violations



Best Practices for Regulating Alcohol Use

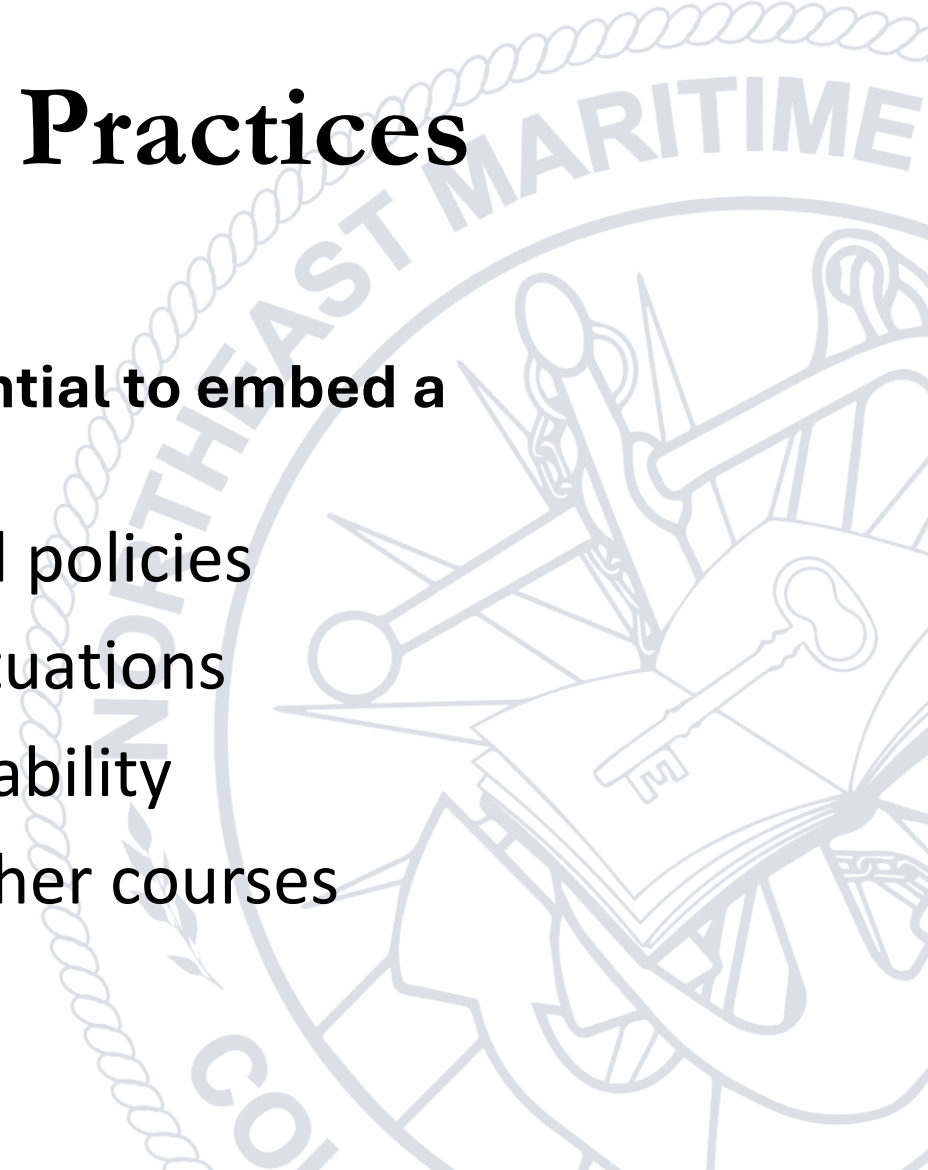
- Enhanced Testing Programs
- Peer Support Networks
- Leadership Engagement
- Integrated Health Programs



Education and Training Practices

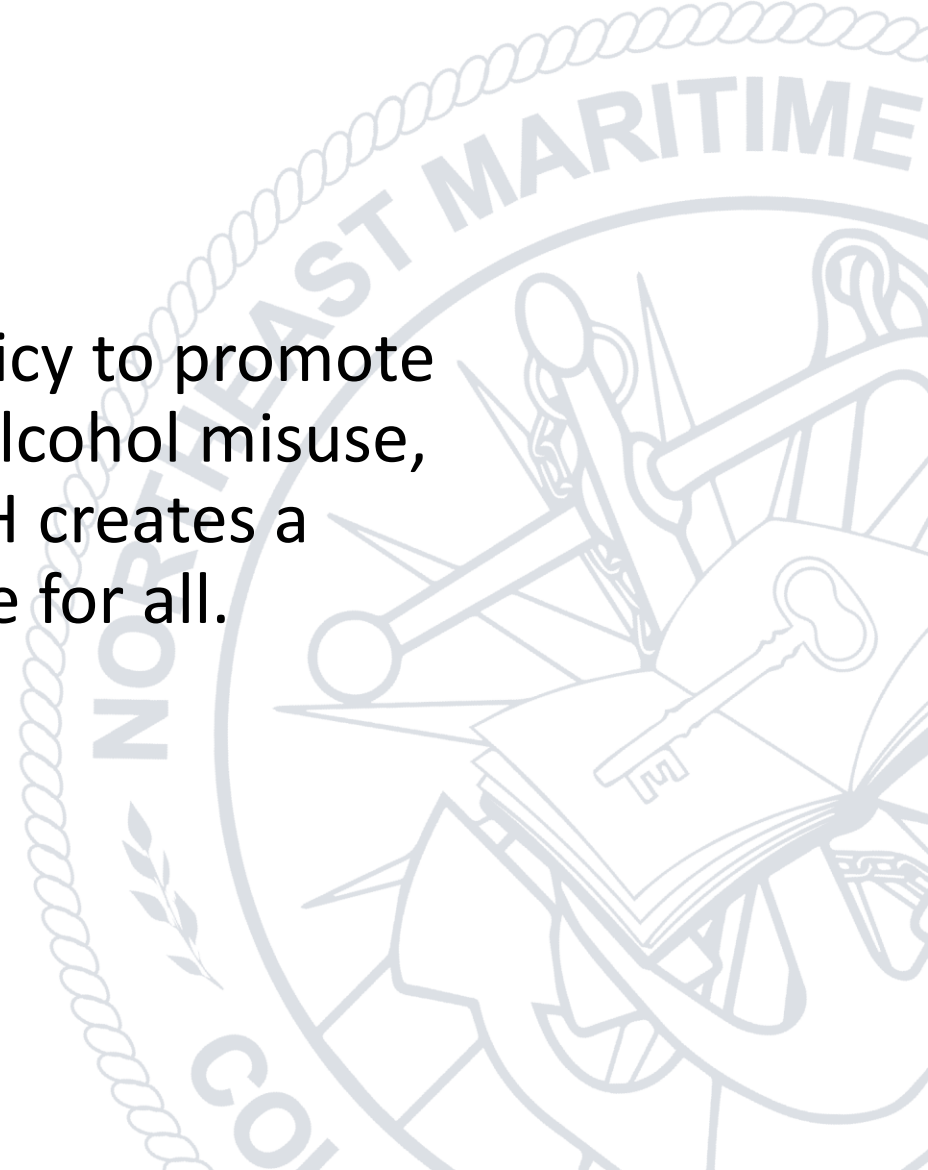
Effective education and training are essential to embed a zero-tolerance culture:

- Awareness and education on risks and policies
- Scenario-based training for real-life situations
- Leadership development and accountability
- Continuous reinforcement with refresher courses



Conclusion

NMI recommends a zero-tolerance policy to promote safety and accountability. Addressing alcohol misuse, psychological safety, bullying, and SASH creates a healthier and safer maritime workplace for all.



Thank You

