



## **The New York State Tour Boat Association**

The New York State Tour Boat Association (NYSTBA) was formed in 1984 to provide a unified voice for passenger vessel operators from all across New York State. The New York State Tour Boat Association ([www.cruisework.com](http://www.cruisework.com)) represents 36 companies operating passenger vessels throughout the state, plus seven associate companies.

Members range in size from single-vessel "Mom and Pop" operators to corporations with multi-vessel fleets. The membership includes brand-new operators to companies that have been in business for over 150 years.

NYSTBA also have a mix of "associate" members who provide support and services to the industry.

### **Promoting the Passenger Vessel Industry**

The Association has always been active in sales and marketing, promoting the vessels and services of its members to the traveling public, and "getting the word out" about the state's vast variety of waterways from Long Island to Niagara.

Successful projects include a statewide discount coupon program and a membership directory / brochure that was distributed at tourist information booths along the NYS Thruway.

The Association's newest marketing tool is its recently revamped website, [www.cruisework.com](http://www.cruisework.com). Visitors to the professional and user-friendly site can find the location, contact information, and web link for each NYSTBA member.

### **Participating in Public Policy Decisions**

Within the NYSTBA membership, there are companies that operate passenger vessels on federal waterways; these vessels are inspected by the U.S. Coast Guard. Other members operate vessels on non-federal waterways; these vessels come under the regulatory jurisdiction of New York State.

The NYSTBA promotes public policies that support safe vessel operations in New York State. Its highest priorities are the safety of its members' passengers, crew, and vessels. Thus, after the tragic capsizing of the state-inspected *Ethan Allen* tour boat (not a member of NYSTBA) on Lake George, the association endorsed and worked for passage of legislation to strengthen the state's vessel navigation laws; that legislation was eventually enacted.

Representatives of the U.S. Coast Guard and various agencies of the New York State government regularly attend NYSTBA meetings. These agencies include the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (responsible for regulation of state-inspected vessels) and the New York State Canal Corporation.

During occasional visits to Albany, the NYSTBA provides opportunities for its members to meet legislators and executive branch officials.

### **Sharing Information among Passenger Vessel Operators**

The New York State Tour Boat Association meets twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring, and is hosted at different locations across the state by a member company. Doing it this way ensures members the opportunity to feature their region operation and vessel. These meetings are designed to encourage the exchange of ideas and information among vessel operators; they provide a forum to discuss industry changes which may affect our individual operations. Topics at a meeting will range from insurance to motor fuel tax refunds, employee compensation, and the high cost of credit card processing. The NYSTBA sends email notices whenever there are events or proposed changes in regulation which would affect or be of interest to members.

The association is also an associate member of the Passenger Vessel Association and the New York State Hospitality & Tourism Association.