

## **US INLAND BARGE FLEET EXPANDED 2% DURING 2010**

The US inland barge fleet expanded 2% during 2010. The fleet expanded mainly for the covered hopper fleet that increased in count for the first time since 1998. There were 873 new barges added to the overall fleet as of the end of last year while 451 barges were retired, according to Informa Economics' just-released *Barge Fleet Profile*. Among the different barge types, the number of covered barges increased for the first time in 12 years, open barges fell for a second year, while the number of tank barges increased for the fourth consecutive year.

"This information is more vital today than ever given the enormous demands being placed on the industry and the inland waterway infrastructure," said Informa Economics President and Chief Operating Officer Tom Scott. He added that "Informa appreciates the value of the industry's contribution to the report's development," which is compiled through an annual survey of operators and information from the Army Corp of Engineers.

The *Barge Fleet Profile*, now in its 24th year, summarizes the size and average age of the fleet by barge operator for each barge type and identifies the line haul, commodity carrying fleet of inland barges operating on the Mississippi River system, its connecting waterways and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. The report also includes the covered barges that move grains and oilseeds, fertilizers, steel and other products, as well as open barges that haul coal, sand, gravel and similar product types. Details on tank barges that transport liquid products, such as crude oils and renewable fuels, also are incorporated into the report.

A sister publication, the *Barge Commodity Profile*, is in its seventh year of publication, also was just released by Informa, offering exclusive barge pressure indices. These indices provide a valuable tool in assessing the supply and demand for barges. The report also presents barometers of barge fleet size and movements by commodity type, commodity ton miles and average distance hauled on the Mississippi River system, its connecting waterways and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. According to the most recent Informa pressure indices, the report details that while the barge fleet expanded, estimated commodity volumes improved. The respective barge pressure indices all have firmed as a result of the higher volumes moved, despite a larger fleet.

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## BARGE FLEET EXPANDED 2%--P. 2

These reports are available from Informa, either through the Internet at [www.bargefleet.com](http://www.bargefleet.com) or by telephoning Pam Daniel at 901-766-4513. The *Barge Fleet Profile* is available for \$100 each while the *Barge Commodity Profile* is available for \$450 each. The reports can be purchased together for a special price of \$500. For more information about the report, contact Informa Senior Vice President Ken Eriksen at 901-766-4463 or Informa Senior Consultant Alan Barrett at 901-766-4497.

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