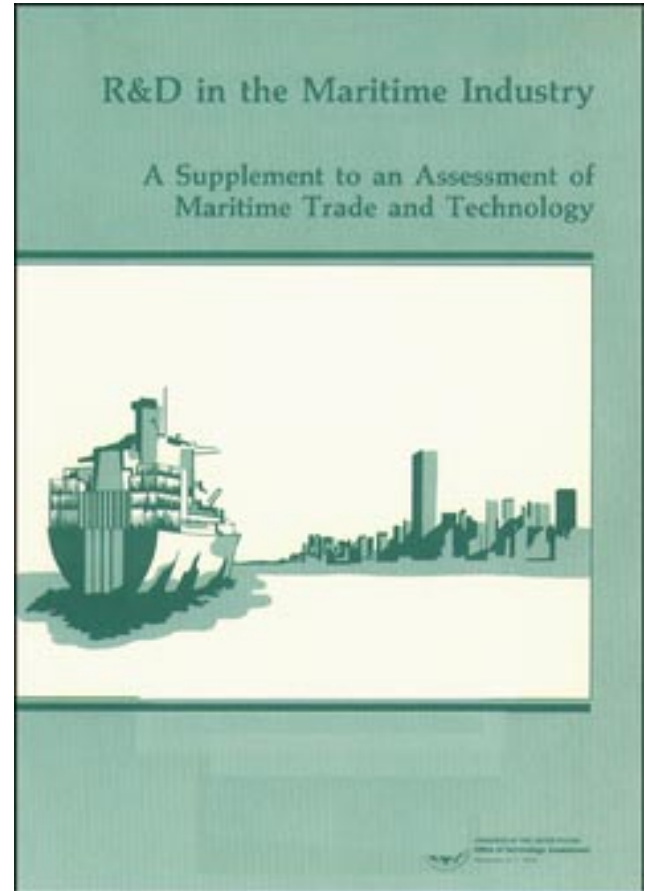


*R&D in the Maritime Industry: A
Supplement to an Assessment of Maritime
Trade and Technology*

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Foreword

Since the publication of “An Assessment of Maritime Trade and Technology” by OTA in October 1983, various proposals have been made to provide incentives for research and development (R&D) in an effort to enhance the industry’s competitive position. Consequently, the Senate and House Subcommittees on the Merchant Marine jointly requested OTA to analyze the Federal role and / or incentives for improved maritime R&D including new institutional arrangements, financing and priority setting. This supplement is in reply to that request.

In order to investigate the subject in more detail than our original assessment, OTA conducted an industry-wide survey, receiving replies from approximately 85 U.S. ship and barge operating and building firms. Respondents to the survey represented about one-half of the firms and work force in these two major sectors of the U.S. maritime industry. The results of that survey and other analyses are contained in this supplement.

The OTA survey provided some valuable basic data on R&D activities and views about problems and opportunities from a broad spectrum of the maritime industry. After preparing a draft report on the survey, OTA circulated it for comments and held a workshop to discuss survey results and proposals for possible changes in Federal institutions. OTA sincerely appreciates the assistance provided by the workshop participants and others who offered comments on the draft report. We especially appreciate the help of Dr. Leslie Kanuk who advised on the design of the survey itself and the evaluation of the responses.

It appears from our analysis that, while aspects of the Federal maritime R&D effort are useful and productive, a number of problems limit the benefits to industry and hinder the pursuit of such national goals as technological preeminence. Problems identified with existing Federal maritime R&D include: difficulty with government contracting procedures, limited dissemination of R&D results, restricted involvement of some sectors of the industry, and difficulty with initiating cooperative R&D in some sectors.

The major issue highlighted by the OTA survey and analyses is whether the Feder-

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