

WORKING GROUP ON COMPULSORY PILOTAGE & PILOT TRAINING

Notes of the PAC Working Group Meeting
held in Conference Room B, 22/F of Harbour Building on 23.1.2001 at 11:00 am

Present

Chairman : Mr. S M CHUNG
Members : Capt. Alan Loynd
Mr. LEE Tai-kuen
Capt. WU Ka-shun
Mr. Duncan Telfer

Secretary : Mr. Victor NG

In attendance : Mr. SO Ying-kit representing HK Pilots Association (HKPA)
Mr. Y P SHUM -- ditto --
Mr. C N CHUNG Marine Department

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I. Introduction

The Chairman thanked members for attending this urgent meeting which was held on the Lunar New Year Eve.

II Discussion

2. The Chairman said that the purpose of this meeting was to seek members' views on whether "Sunrise Lily" should be granted a total tuggage exemption when berthing/unberthing at Sha Chau Oil Terminal. The Chairman then gave a brief account of the case which included:-
 - i. Two Grade I tugs were normally required.
 - ii. The owner requested for total tuggage exemption in late 1999.
 - iii. Berthing/unberthing trials were then conducted.
 - iv. It was decided in the PAC meeting held on 16.3.2000 that a minimum of one Grade II tug should be required. Request for further trials without any tugs would only be considered later.
3. The Chairman then invited members of HKPA to give comments. Mr. SO Ying-kit and Mr. Y P SHUM said that the schilling rudder of "Sunrise Lily" was effective only when the vessel moved forward. Overall speaking, it was not as effective as it was claimed to be.

4. The Chairman mentioned that the Sha Chau Oil Terminal was located inside a marine park and members should bear this factor in mind when considering this case. Mr. Duncan Telfer asked how frequently did "Sunrise Lily" visit Sha Chau and whether the Grade II tug was required to provide active assistance during berthing and unberthing. Mr. SO Ying-kit and Mr. Y P SHUM confirmed that the vessel visited Sha Chau about three times a week. In nearly all cases the Grade II tug had to provide active assistance and so it did not just merely stand by.
5. Mr. Alan Loynd declared that he had no conflict of interest in this case as his company had no Grade II tug. He pointed out that the fuel supply to the airport would be blocked if any accidents occurred at Sha Chau Oil Terminal. In view of the severity of the consequence of any accidents, he had reservation on the ship owner's request for total tuggage exemption.
6. Mr. LEE Tai-kuen enquired about the construction of the berth. In response, the Chairman said that the berth was made up of a concrete platform built on piles. Mr. SO Ying-kit and Mr. Y P. SHUM supplemented that the not all parts of the berth were lined with fenders.
7. Mr. WU Ka-shun mentioned that members should also consider what precautionary measures were required and the question of responsibility in case any accidents occurred after PAC granted total tuggage exemption to "Sunrise Lily". In response, the Chairman said that the blame would no doubt go to PAC if it was found that the accident could have been avoided if a tug was available at the material time.
8. The Chairman drew members' attention to the difference between the two vessels which had been granted total tuggage exemption and "Sunrise Lily", namely the two exempted vessels had twin propellers, twin rudders and a bow thruster.
9. Mr. Y P SHUM reminded members of one point which had been raised by Capt. WU Ka-shun before: Sha Chau was a remote location and it would take a long time before a tug could arrive for assistance if it was not on the spot.

III Conclusion

10. After an in-depth discussion, members came to the conclusion unanimously that one Grade II tug should be the minimum requirement for "Sunrise Lily" in view of the following factors:-
 - a) The vessel had one main engine only.
 - b) The Sha Chau Oil Terminal was located inside a marine park.
 - c) The location of the Oil Terminal was exposed.
 - d) Sha Chau was a remote location and tugs were not readily available when required urgently.
11. The meeting further agreed that there was no need to conduct berthing/unberthing trials without any tugs.
12. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11:40 am.