

Pilotage Advisory Committee

Ref. : HQ/COM 928/19 (4)

Minutes of Working Group meeting of the Pilotage Advisory Committee

Date : 9 March 2001

Place: Conference Room A, 24/F, Harbour Building

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Present

Chairman :	Mr. CHUNG Siu-man	General Manager/Vessel Traffic Services
Members :	Capt. CHEUNG Hon-yee	Representing HK Shipowners Association
	Mr. Peter CHEUNG	Wallem Shipping (HK) Ltd
	Mr. Steve CHOR Yee-on	Representing Master Mariner with experience in Shipping Industry in HK
	Mr. Francis LAI Moon-seung	Representing Container Terminal Operators
	Capt. LEE Tai-kuen	Representing HK Liner Shipping Association
	Mr. PANG Kim-wing	Representing HK Pilots Association
	Capt. WU Ka-shun	Representing Tug Operators
Secretary :	Mr. Victor NG	ADS/C&G

In attendance	Capt. CHAN Lok-ching	Orient Overseas Container Line Ltd
	Mr. WONG Wing-cheung	Yiu Lian Dockyards Ltd
	Mr. Phileas FONG	HK Salvage & Towage Co Ltd
	Mr. Tony LAI	South China Towing Co. Ltd
	Mr. Thomas LAU	Hapag Lloyd Container Lines Ltd
	Mr. CHAN Shui-hoi	HK Pilots Association Ltd
	Mr. SO Ying-kit	ditto
	Mr. SHUM Yum-pui	ditto
	Mr. YEUNG Chung-kwong	SMO/VTC
	Mr. CHUNG Chi-ning	MO/Pilotage

Absent with Apologies

Mr. SIU Wai-lim	HK Pilots Association Ltd
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I INTRODUCTION

1. The Chairman thanked all members for attending this meeting.

II Discussion of PAC Working Group Papers

2. *PAC WG Paper No. 2/2001 “Tug Rendezvous Position for Kwai Chung Bound Vessels”*

The Chairman gave a short account of the background of the Paper. Capt. LEE Tai-kuen enquired about the exact location of the present tug rendezvous position though his own experience was that it lay somewhere between the CRC Oil Terminal and Esso Oil Terminal. In response, Capt. WU Ka-shun said that the tug rendezvous position was east of the CRC Oil Terminal. Nevertheless, it was not uncommon that pilots would request for tug attendance further to the south and to the west. Usually the tug operators would try to accommodate pilots' requests as far as practicable. However, if the arrangement was meant to be mandatory, it would call for additional resources and so an increase in tug fee would be necessary. Mr. PANG Kim-wing commented that the tug rendezvous position was near to the CRC Oil Terminal before the construction of Container Terminal 7. Yet the position had shifted near the Esso Terminal in the last ten years. Regarding HKPA's recent proposal, Mr. PANG said that it had taken into consideration the present mode of operation and the increased number of working barges near the entrance of the Kwai Chung Basin.

3. The Chairman suggested to look at the issue from a different perspective as after all the present tug rendezvous position as claimed by the tug operators would be reclaimed. He proposed to use the Western Quarantine Buoy, which was located just within the harbour limit, as the new tug rendezvous position. After some discussion, this was agreed by all parties. The tug operators further agreed that no surcharge would be levied unless the tug rendezvous position was moved further away. The Chairman added that the tug rendezvous position might have to be revised again upon completion of Container Terminal 9.

PAC WG Paper No. 3/2001 “Special Traffic Management Scheme for Kwai Chung Basin during Foggy Weather”

4. Mr. YEUNG Chung-kwong of MD briefly introduced the Paper. As container vessels became larger and larger while the entrance of the Kwai Chung Basin got narrower, it was considered necessary to introduce a special traffic management scheme for Kwai Chung Basin during foggy weather in order to enhance navigation safety and minimize delay that might otherwise be caused. The proposed traffic management scheme was drawn up after

consulting the terminal operators and HKPA. It was essentially a staggered one-way-flow scheme and it would be triggered when the visibility fell below 0.5 NM. The principle was that the outbound container vessels would be given priority to leave the Kwai Chung Basin first before the inbound vessels were allowed to move in. The duration for each outbound and inbound period was half an hour and it was proposed that no more than 4 vessels would be allowed to depart or move in within each period.

5. Mr. Francis LAI commented that navigation safety should be of paramount importance and so the terminal operators generally supported the proposal. In order to ensure its smooth implementation, he opined that the Vessel Traffic Centre should notify the terminal operators as soon as possible so that they could pass on the information to the ship liners. The Chairman supplemented that the one-way-flow movement did not apply to small vessels. Mr. PANG Kim-wing commented that he believed the ship masters would be more confident and hence more willing to set sail if they knew that a special traffic management scheme was in place. In response to Capt. LEE Tai-kuen's enquiry, both the tug operators and HKPA replied that they would handle cases of urgent amendment of bookings etc caused by foggy weather flexibly.
6. As all members supported the proposal, it would be implemented in the coming foggy season and its effectiveness would be reviewed in June.

PAC WG Paper No. 4/2001 "Minimum Clearance between Vessels at Berth in Kwai Chung Container Port"

7. Mr. CHUNG Chi-ning of MD introduced the paper. As the existing berthing guidelines did not specify the minimum clearance between vessels at each and every berth, in practice the pilots sometimes had to exercise their discretion. Such practice led to varying standard and in several occasions had caused disputes between pilots and terminal operators. It was hoped that a consensus could be reached in this meeting so as to avoid similar disputes in the future.
8. Mr. PANG Kim-wing told members that the complexity of berthing/unberthing operation had increased in view of the ever increasing size of the container vessels. He opined that safety should be accorded top priority and in order to avoid future disputes between pilots and terminal operators, he supported that a standard yardstick should be adopted. Having

consulted members of HKPA, he tabled the following proposal for members' consideration:-

<u>Ship length</u>	<u>Minimum clearance at berth</u>
300 m	25 m
220 m and <300 m	20 m
220 m	15 m

9. While agreeing with the adoption of a sliding scale, Mr. Francis LAI considered that 25 m was a bit on the high side. This view was shared with Capt. CHEUNG Hon-ye. On the other hand, Mr. PANG Kim-wing explained that 25 m was not as long as it appeared to be if one took into account the length of the mooring cables as well. Mr. Francis LAI hoped that HKPA would not stick rigidly to the minimum clearance standard. For borderline cases, he suggested that perhaps the terminal operators could give more information including the current weather conditions to HKPA first so that HKPA could decide whether it would be possible to carry out the berthing operation. Mr. Phileas FONG and Capt. WU Ka-shun commented that the tug operators should be well informed beforehand if additional tugs were required.

10. For the avoidance of doubt, the Chairman pointed out that the minimum clearance being discussed applied to berths which did not have similar provisions in the corresponding berthing guidelines only. As the views of members were divided, he suggested that the Department would gather more information from other ports for members' consideration. It was decided that the issue would be discussed later when additional information was available.

III. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:45 pm. The next meeting would be held in late April.