

## PILOTAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ref. : HQ/COM 928/29 (20)

### Minutes of the Pilotage Advisory Committee Meeting

Date : 14 October 2011 (Friday)  
Place : Conference Room A, 24/F, Harbour Building  
Time : 10:00 a.m.

#### Present

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Chairman: Mr. Francis LIU                                     | Deputy Director of Marine     |
| Member: Capt. CHAN Lok-ching                                  | HK Shipowners Association     |
| Mr. CHAN Wo-shing   | HK Liner Shipping Association |
| Ms. Gloria CHOY   | Containers Terminal Operators |
| Ms. Catherine CHOW<br>(on behalf of Mr. LIU Yun-shu)          | Break Bulk Cargo Operators    |
| Mr. CHENG Siu-lun<br>(on behalf of Ms. LOW Oi-lin, Christine) | Oil Terminal Operators        |
| Mr. FONG Yuk-choi, Phileas                                    | Dockyard Industry             |
| Capt. WU Ka-shun  | Tug Operators                 |
| Mr. John WILSON   | Master Mariner                |
| Mr. CHAN Ming-shun  | HK Pilots Association         |
| Mr. SIU Wai-lim   | HK Pilots Association         |
| Mr. Raymond CHUNG   | AD/PC, MD                     |
| Secretary: Ms. Ivy CHAN                                       | EO(C&G), MD                   |

#### In Attendance

|                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mr. Roger TUPPER, JP | Director of Marine (DM), MD    |
| Mr. LAI Chi-tung     | SMO/VTC (GM/VTS, Ag.), MD      |
| Mr. Andrew NG        | MO/Pilotage, MD                |
| Mr. LAW Lap-keung    | MO/VTC(3), MD                  |
| Mr. HUANG Ji-he      | MO/VTC(5), MD                  |
| Ms. Yvette CHAN      | HK Pilots Association          |
| Mr. HO Wai-man       | HK Pilots Association          |
| Mr. LI Pok-yan       | Yiu Lian Dockyards Limited     |
| Mr. Dickson CHIN     | Wallem Shipping (H.K.) Limited |

## **Absent with apologies**

|                     |                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Mr. CHEN Tao, Roger | Dry Bulk Cargo Operators |
| Capt. LO Ting-ho    | Master Mariner           |
| Mr. NG Kin-man      | Master Mariner           |
| Mr. FUNG Kwok-ming  | GM/VTS, MD               |
| Mr. CHAN Tim        | S(N)EX(1), MD            |

## **OPENING REMARKS**

1. The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting. He said that Mr. Roger TUPPER, DM would retire soon and would like to take the opportunity to express his thanks to members. Mr. TUPPER expressed his sincere thanks and gratitude to all members for their efforts and contributions to this Committee. He said that members' experience, understanding in the industry and professional skills were absolutely essential to the way in which the pilotage services in Hong Kong worked. This Committee was very important to the MD as it provided the department with a direct input not only on the technical side but also the service and professional sides. Hong Kong was a competitive port and hence MD valued very much members' advice. He believed that the Committee would continue to rely on members' valuable advice in the years to come.

*[Mr. Roger TUPPER, DM left the meeting at this juncture.]*

2. The Chairman then extended welcome to the following attendees:
  - (a) Mr. FONG Yuk-choi, Phileas who was newly appointed PAC member representing dockyard industry vice Mr. LEE Kwok-wai, Patrick;
  - (b) Ms. Catherine CHOW who was attending the meeting on behalf of Mr. LIU Yun-shu representing the break bulk cargo operators;
  - (c) Mr. CHENG Siu-lun who was attending the meeting on behalf of Ms. LOW Oi-lin, Christine representing the oil terminal operators; and

- (d) Ms. Alison WONG who would soon take up the duties of PAC Secretary and attending the meeting for the first time.
3. The Chairman told the meeting that Capt. LO Ting-ho, Mr. NG Kin-man, Mr. Roger CHEN, Mr. FUNG Kwok-ming and Mr. CHAN Tim were not able to attend the meeting and had sent apologies for absence.
  4. The Chairman informed members that in support of the Government's initiative on paper saving and environmental protection, paperless meeting would be implemented at the next PAC meeting. The meeting today was a trial for members to test viewing meeting documents by using iPad. Papers and minutes would be sent to members electronically in future. Briefing on how to use iPad to view the documents would be given at the next PAC meeting.

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **I. Interview of Apprentice Pilot**

5. The Chairman informed the meeting that the applicant, Mr. YU Kwok-tai who had already passed the necessary medical examination would be interviewed.
6. The applicant was asked to brief members of his own background and to respond to some questions about his ship handling experience, reasons for applying as an apprentice pilot and whether he could adapt to the work pattern of pilots which required shift work.
7. After discussions, members were satisfied with the candidate's qualifications and experience, and agreed to recommend him to the Pilotage Authority for registration as an apprentice pilot.

*[Post-meeting note: With the approval from the Pilotage Authority, Mr. YU registered as an apprentice pilot on 17.10.2011.]*

## **II. Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting**

8. The minutes were sent to members for comments on 16.6.2011. No proposed amendments had been received. The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed without any amendments.

## **III. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes of Meeting**

### ***Government Mooring Buoy Mooring Arrangement***

9. Mr. Andrew NG reported that HKPA advised on 26.7.2011 that the video tape taken by the Marine Industrial Safety Section (MISS) of MD on 12.3.2010 could be used for study by MISS and the video tape was then submitted to MISS. According to MISS, the video tape was being studied and they would advise the outcome once the study was completed.

### ***PAC Paper No. 7/2010 – “Retaining the Same Class of Licence for Pilots to Work beyond the Age of 65 Years”***

10. Mr. Andrew NG reported that the proposed amendments to the Pilotage Ordinance were being pursued by the Transport and Housing Bureau on a high priority basis. It was expected that the proposed amendments would be submitted to the Legislative Council in 2012.

### ***Ocean-going tugs transiting north of Lantau***

11. Mr. Andrew NG reported that the proposed layout of the north Lantau buoyed channel had been finalized. The simulations were conducted by HKPA on 2.6.2011 at the Marine Department Training Centre and the result was satisfactory. The proposed realignment of the north Lantau buoyed channel was agreeable to both MD and HKPA as it would enhance navigational safety of vessels in the concerned area. MD would consult the industry once the “Yao

Hai-Neftegaz 67” court case was concluded. Concerning the recommended route between Shekou and Ngan Chau for ocean-going tugs, some of the ocean-going tug companies in Shenzhen considered that ocean-going tugs should not be forced to follow the recommended route and hence VTC would hold a discussion with tug masters in Shekou to seek their view and support.

12. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun said that HKPA had worked closely with the Vessel Traffic Centre concerning the ocean-going tugs transiting north of Lantau. Occasionally, pilots were able to contact the masters of ocean-going tugs to facilitate safe passing.
13. In response to Mr. John WILSON’s enquiry on when the “Yao Hai-Neftegaz 67” case might be completed, Mr. Raymond CHUNG responded that the appeal hearing had been heard in May 2011 and the Judge was preparing the verdict. The verdict might be available soon but MD could not advise the exact timing. The Chairman added that in the meantime, MD would continue to work with HKPA on various possible measures to improve the traffic safety in the concerned area. Whether there would be further appeal would depend on the outcome of the case. In case there was further appeal to be heard, the follow-up actions on the case had to be deferred until the case was concluded.
14. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun said that they had looked into this matter closely at the working meetings between VTC and HKPA. At the last meeting, the industry also expressed its concerns over the proposed alignment of the north Lantau buoyed channel and the traffic control of this area and hence they also longed for the verdict of “Yao Hai-Neftegaz 67” case.

#### ***Air-draft limitation at Tsing Ma Bridge***

15. Mr. Andrew NG reported that 14 trials on six vessels exceeding 53m air-draft had been conducted so far by utilizing the tidal windows. The result of the trials was satisfactory. A meeting amongst MD, HKPA and HK Liner Shipping Association was held on 10.10.2011 to discuss this matter. Liners

with ultra large container vessels had been invited to attend the meeting and briefed on the procedures for participating the trials. For each participating vessel, considerable information had to be carefully evaluated and verified (e.g. arrival time, draft, air-draft, height of mast, tidal allowance, etc). As there were now only six vessels which had participated in the trial and the tidal level would vary for different seasons, it was suggested that the trial should be continued so as to obtain more vessel data and the differences between the predicted and actual tidal levels in all seasons.

16. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun said that HKPA had worked closely with VTC, liners and other parties concerned on the trial arrangements. A good mechanism was now in place and all the involved parties were generally familiar with the requirements of the trial. HKPA had also reminded related operators in Shenzhen and Shekou to carefully control the transiting times at the Tsing Ma Bridge as the tidal range would change from time to time. The trial arrangements so far were satisfactory and HKPA agreed to continue the trial for a certain period until all the problems concerned had been fully identified and resolved through the trials.
17. The Chairman asked that as the trials were quite successful so far, whether it was possible to work out the maximum tidal allowance that could be made available based on the tidal range. Mr. LAI Chi-tung responded that it would depend on the time of transit as tidal range varies from time to time. The tidal allowance would also depend on the estimated time of arrival of vessels. All the trials conducted so far were well planned as all the parties concerned such as masters and agents had been requested to provide the requisite information. So far, no irregularity had been spotted during the trials. Mr. Raymond CHUNG added that the trial had to be continued for some time so as to assess if the trial arrangements had any impact on the overall scheduling of vessels and if there were any other impacts perceived by other operators.

18. Mr. SIU Wai-lim enquired whether a trial vessel would be considered as a priority vessel and what would be the arrangements in case the trial vessel missed the arrival time and there was another southbound ship going to pass the Tsing Ma Bridge. Mr. Raymond CHUNG responded that this scenario was also one of the scenarios that MD would like to examine through the trial. This explained why there was a need to continue the trial for a longer time so as to experience all kinds of operational difficulties in the trial.
19. The Chairman concluded that the trial would be continued for another while. MD would continue to work closely with HKPA and the HK Liner Shipping Association to fine-tune the transit mechanism.

***Length of vessels in Schedules 2 and 3 to the Pilotage Order (Cap. 84C)***

20. Mr. Andrew NG reported that after discussing with HKPA, it was proposed to add two new pilot grades. A table outlining the existing and proposed pilot classes (Class I & Class II A to F) together with the training and assessment required for each Class was tabled at the meeting (at Annex I). It was suggested that all Class II A to F pilots had to attend simulations on ship handling and crisis management at the Marine Department Training Centre. Members were invited to give their preliminary comments on the proposal.
21. The Chairman said that HKPA actually had its own internal arrangements to ensure that pilots were properly trained for handling larger ships. The proposal of adding two new pilot grades was a system to formalize the current arrangements with a view to ensuring the safety of navigation. The proposal would certainly further enhance the work of HKPA and improve traffic safety.
22. In response to Mr. CHAN Wo-shing's enquiry on the background and reasons of adding two more pilot grades, Mr. Andrew NG replied that if simply extending the length of vessels handled by each pilot class, the gap of length in between each class would be very large. The current proposal on the pilot

classes and the revised training requirements would be beneficial to harbour safety as pilots had to gain more experience for upgrading to the next higher class. Mr. Raymond CHUNG further elaborated the relevant background on why there was a need to conduct a comprehensive review of the pilot classes which had been discussed at previous PAC meetings. He invited members' comments on this initial proposal. Further comments after the meeting (if any) were also welcome.

23. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun said that HKPA welcomed comments and suggestions on the proposal. Members might also send the enquiries to HKPA (if any) and HKPA would provide the relevant details.
24. Mr. John WILSON said that he was pleased to see that the proposed training requirements for upgrading had included simulation at MD Training Centre. However, he was concerned about the continued professional training for the existing pilots and would like to know whether HKPA had requested them to attend the simulation training regularly and what were the detailed requirements. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun responded that there was a Continued Proficiency Development Programme for Class I pilots and they were required to attend the simulation training once in every five years. HKPA welcomed suggestions on how to enhance the Programme. Mr. John WILSON commented that such frequency of attending the simulators was insufficient. As the port in Hong Kong was getting busier, pilots had to enhance their ship handling skills as well as their ability of handling emergency and crisis situations.
25. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun said that HKPA agreed with the need of enhancing the training for pilots and hence they were sending pilots to Singapore to attend on-the-job training so as to acquire more knowledge. Mr. SIU Wai-lim added that six Class I pilots had attended a four-day Bridge Resource Management course in Singapore PSA Institute last year which covered the subjects such as management and relationship with Captains and also included ten runs of



simulations. In September 2011, HKPA also sent six Class I pilots to attend a three-day course in Singapore which focused on crisis management and emergency ship handling with 12 different scenarios covered during the training.

26. In response to Mr. John WILSON's enquiry on why attending the training in Singapore, Ms. Yvette CHAN said that the pilots attended the training in Singapore had offered their comments on the course and the training officer of HKPA were now looking into their comments to see how to modify the course and to examine the possibility of organizing such training in Hong Kong so that more pilots could attend the training locally.
27. The Chairman agreed that such trainings could improve the skills and ability of pilots which in turn would benefit the operations of the port.

***Pilotage dues revision proposed by HKPA***

28. Mr. Andrew NG reported that the proposed revision to pilotage dues might be discussed at the coming Legislative Council Economic Development Panel to be held on 24.10.2011. If all went well, the new pilotage dues would be effective on 1.1.2012.

*[Post-meeting note: As advised by the Transport and Housing Bureau on 17.10.2011, the Legislative Council Economic Development Panel will discuss the proposed revised pilotage dues on 28.11.2011 and subject to the support of the Panel, the new pilotage dues will take effect on 3.2.2012.]*

**IV. New Discussion Item**

***PAC Paper No. 3/2011 - "Pilotage Exemption for Vessels of 1,000 Gross Tonnage or over Proceeding to or from Kwai Chung Container Terminals"***

29. Mr. Andrew NG presented the paper in detail. As the legislative amendments

proposed in 2006 to exempt the compulsory pilotage requirement for vessels below 3,000 GT were still outstanding, in order to respond to the request from the trade, it was suggested to relax the current pilotage exemption conditions for river trade vessels (RTVs) before the relevant legislation could be amended.

30. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun said that HKPA agreed with the proposed pilotage exemption. However, he said that the number and pattern of RTVs calling at Kwai Chung Container Terminals (KCCT) was quite different as compared with that of 2006 and this had certain impacts on the ocean-going vessels berthing in KCCT. Besides, pilots sometimes found that at the end of Kwai Chung berth nos. 6, 7, 10 and 11, there were difficulties to control RTV movements when they were close to the berths. Hence HKPA suggested forming a liaison group with the parties concerned including Kwai Chung Control Station, Guangdong & Hong Kong Feeder Association and KCCT to formulate measures to regulate movements of RTVs to or from KCCT.
31. Capt. CHAN Lok-ching supported the proposal of forming a liaison group as it would enhance better communication among the parties concerned.
32. Mr. SIU Wai-lim asked for further information on the way of manning the proposed exempted vessels, the trade pattern of RTVs and the projected number of RTVs calling to Hong Kong using KCCT in the next few years. Mr. Andrew NG responded that according to the Guangdong Shipowners' Association, about 150 new RTVs were being built and most of them would be fitted with twin screws. As a certain number of RTVs being built was to replace existing RTVs, the number of RTVs would not increase significantly.
33. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun enquired about the traffic control arrangements of KCCT in future when the legislative amendments of exempting the compulsory pilotage requirement for vessels below 3,000 GT had been approved and RTVs were no longer required to apply for the exemption. Mr. Andrew NG responded that terminal operators had their own house rules to govern the traffic

of vessels at the terminals. Ms. Gloria CHOY expressed difficulties of terminal operators in traffic control arrangements and thus they relied heavily on MD to control the vessel traffic.

34. Mr. LAI Chi-tung said that RTVs larger than 1,000 GT would continue to participate in VTS and were required to report their movements to Kwai Chung Control Station. Besides traffic monitoring, there were dedicated patrol boats in the Kwai Chung area to regulate the traffic round-the-clock. Mr. Raymond CHUNG said that the number of RTVs would continue to increase having regard to the development of river trade. He agreed with the proposal of forming a liaison group as it would be a very good avenue for all the parties concerned to sit together to examine the issue and to work out the related measures so as to improve the operations.

35. The Chairman also agreed to form a liaison group as it could enhance the safety of operations in the areas. A liaison group involving the stakeholders concerned would be a good forum to discuss various concerns and to develop the related measures.

*[Post-meeting note: HKPA clarified through an email to MD on 19.10.2011 that HKPA had no objection to the proposed pilotage exemption set out in PAC Paper No. 3/2011, the formation of a liaison group among the parties concerned was only to formulate measures to better control the movements of RTVs in view of the safety concern. As members did not raise any objections to the proposed pilotage exemption, the proposed arrangements set out in the paper would take effect on 1.1.2012.]*

V. Any Other Business

36. There was no other business raised by members.

**VI. Date of Next Meeting**

37. The meeting ended at 11:30 a.m. The date of the next meeting would be announced in due course.