

PILOTAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Notes of Working Group Meeting

Date : 27 May 2022 (Friday)
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Conference Room A, 24/F Harbour Building

Present

Chairman:	HUANG Jihe	General Manager / Vessel Traffic Services,
Members:	CHAN Hung-tai	Hong Kong Liner Shipping Association
	Chan Kam-foo (Online)	Shipping Agencies
	LAM Wing-chiu	Container Terminal Operators
	CHANG Chi-wai, Robson	Dry Bulk Cargo Operators
	(Online)	
	LAU Yiu-ming	Oil Terminal Operators
	ZHONG Ying	Dockyard Industry
	Ms LEI Ho-yan, Angelina	Tug Operators
	Capt LI Yongzheng	Master Mariner
	Capt CHAN Kam-wing	Master Mariner
	Capt LAW Kwun-pan	Licensed Pilot
Secretary:	Miss Athena LIU	Executive Officer (General & Committee), MD

In attendance

Capt CHAN Tak-kei	Hong Kong Pilots Association (“HKPA”)
Jackson LAU	HKPA
Marco LAM	HKPA
George TANG	Marine Manager (“MM”) / Pilotage, MD

Absent with apologies

Members:	ZHANG Hongwen	Hong Kong Shipowners Association
	LI Yubin	Break Bulk Cargo Operators
	Capt TSANG Cheuk-yin, Joe	Master Mariner
	Capt WANG Chi-cheong	Licensed Pilot
	HU Guizhong	Surveyor of Ships (Engineer) / Seafarers and Examination (2)

I. Opening Remarks

The Chairman extended his welcome to all members. He introduced new members, including CHAN Hung-tai, LAM Wing-chiu, LAU Yiu-ming, Ms LEI Ho-yan, Angelina and Capt LI Yongzheng to have joined the working group meeting.

II. Confirmation of notes of the last meeting

2. The notes of the last meeting held on 6 September 2019 were confirmed without amendment.

[**Post-meeting note:** The meeting notes were uploaded to the website of Marine Department on 13 July 2022.]

III. Discussion items

(a) *PACWG Paper No. 1/2022 – Proposed Amendments to the Berthing Guidelines*

3. Marco LAM, HKPA presented the paper with presentation slides. First, the amendment is proposed to update information with respect to the “depth at berth” and “Max. Sailing or Arrival Draft at KC Basin” for Kwai Chung Berths shown in Annex I of the paper. Second, to add a requirement for tugs with different HP to be responsible for vessels with LOA>370m & Draft>14.0m; and vessels with LOA>350m shown in Annex II. Third, to extend the Maximum LOA of Chevron T/Y main berth (CVX) and to increase draft with tidal windows with number and power of tugs to be adjusted as shown in Annex III.
4. CHAN Hung-tai, HKLSA enquired about the procedures to acquire the tidal information upon the amendments proposed. Marco LAM, HKPA replied that for vessels with Draft>14.0m, apart from shipping agencies to calculate the tidal condition themselves, agencies can also fax to HKPA to acquire information regarding suitable window time for berthing as usual. Capt LAW Kwun-pan, Licensed Pilot added that the requirement for berthing remains more or less the same, and the berthing time would not be tightened due to the proposed

amendment. Should the industry have any enquiry, HKPA are here to help.

5. The Chairman asked about the statistics regarding vessels visiting Hong Kong, including number of vessels berthed. Marco LAM, HKPA replied that for vessels with LOA>350m & Draft>14.0m, the number of voyages has increased from 56 in 2016 to 78 in 2020. On average, there was one vessel with the above size berthed every 5-6 days. TANG Ying-kit, George, MM/Pilotage added that for clarification and guidance purposes, HKPA considered that the berthing guidelines requires update so as to remind pilots about the potential berthing restrictions and to ensure the pilot's and vessel's safety. Capt LAW Kwun-pan, Licensed Pilot supplemented that whether berthing is possible or not depends on the tidal current. Thus, a case-by-case approach would be adopted when assessing measures for vessels to berth. The focus of the amendment is to facilitate smooth berthing so that more vessels are encouraged to come to Hong Kong.
6. The Chairman asked whether the number of available tugs with 6000HP would be enough for the proposed amendments. Mr. LAM Wing-chiu, Container Terminal Operators, responded that the number of vessels with Draft>14.0m was observed not that significant. Ms LEI Ho-yan, Angelina, Tug operators, asked about the effective date of the amendment and whether there will be any substitution plan when there is no sufficient attending tug with 6000HP. Capt LAW Kwun-pun, Licensed Pilot, agreed that there would be a trial period. He considered that the current 4 tugs with 6000HP would be suffice for coming two years, as data has shown that vessels with LOA>350m & Draft>14.0m and vessels with LOA>370m & Draft>14.0m only visited Hong Kong every 5-6 days and every 12-13 days respectively. Ms LEI Ho-yan, Angelina, Tug operators added that there would be another tug with 6000HP by year end and tug operators generally welcomed the amendment. She suggested that the total HP should be used when there is no sufficient attending tug for different vessels with different LOA & Draft.
7. CHAN Hung-tai, HKLSA said that from the shipowner's perspective, they acknowledged there ought to be amendments for safety consideration. He also advised to strike a balance

between the supply and demand for tugs during the peak time of the Kwai Chung berths. The Chairman said that flexibility should be allowed for the requirement of tugs, for example allowing berthing as long as the total HP meets the requirement. Jackson LAU, HKPA, advised that HKPA would handle it case-by-case. He further commented that the amendments are proposed because the vessel's design has changed over the years. For vessels with LOA nearest 300m, they were used to have 75,000 GT, but now they would reach 90,000 GT or more. If the berthing guidelines stay unchanged and neglected the vessel's GT, the berthing operations would be affected in view of the previous experiences. Marco LAM, HKPA, later mentioned the example of Yantian Terminals which is similar to Kwai Chung berths, showing that a fleet of 2-3 tugs with 6000HP is acceptable in their operations given at least one 6000HP is required for vessels with LOA>360m. Therefore, he considered that the number of tugs available should be able to meet the demand in Hong Kong.

8. CHAN Kam-foo, Shipping Agencies enquired about the number of tidal windows suitable for berthing in a day. Marco LAM, HKPA replied that in both high and low water, there would be periods for berthing. Impacts on users would be minimal if the interval between high and low water is short. Jackson LAU, HKPA added that there are in general four tidal windows per day. Under the premise of not compromising the safety level, a case-by-case approach would be adopted.
9. TANG Ying-kit, George raised issues about whether the amendment for requirement of tug's HP would reduce the competitiveness of certain companies or eliminate tugs with lower HP from providing services. The impacts on different stakeholders should be reflected and the amount of time for the industry to prepare for the amendments should also be taken into consideration. Ms LEI Ho-yan, Angelina replied that as Hong Kong is an intra-Asia hub, most vessels visiting are intra-Asia vessels with LOA<300m and they use tugs with 3000-4000HP. There should not be concerns regarding ruling out certain tug operators.
10. The Chairman enquired about the reason for choosing GT>90,000 or GT>130,000 as the standard for segregating vessel's tiers and asked if other vessels would be affected.

Capt LAW Kwun-pan replied that these two numbers are taken because they are the average GT of vessels with LOA>300m and LOA>360m respectively. CHAN Hung-tai, HKLSA considered that only small percent of vessels with LOA, draft and average GT falling under the amended guidelines would be affected.

11. LAM Wing-chiu, Container Terminal Operators and CHAN Hung-tai, Hong Kong Liner Shipping Association both welcomed the proposed amendment.
12. The Chairman asked the members whether they have any opinions regarding the extension of CVX's Maximum LOA. Jackson LAU, HKPA elaborated that two trials were arranged recently and they were found satisfactory.
13. After deliberation, the meeting endorsed the PACWG Paper No.1/2022 and recommended to put forth the issue to PAC for endorsement so as to be effective as early as possible.

IV. Any Other Business

14. There was no other business.

V. Adjournment of meeting

15. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

VI. Date of next meeting

16. The date of next meeting would be announced in due course.

Distribution list

Chairman, PAC Working Group
Members, PAC Working Group
MM/Pilotage, MD

Committee Unit
Marine Department
Ref.: L/M (3) in MD-COM-F01-000-02A-001