

## PILOTAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ref. : HQ/COM 928/19 (6)

### Notes of Working Group Meeting

Date : 26 June 2012 (Tuesday)  
Place : Conference Room B, 22/F, Harbour Building  
Time : 10:00 a.m.

#### Present

Chairman:	Mr. LAI Chi-tung	GM/VTS, Marine Department (MD)
Member:	Mr. CHAN Wo-shing	HK Liner Shipping Association
	Mr. FONG Yuk-choi, Phileas	Dockyard Industry
	Capt. WU Ka-shun	Tug Operators
	Mr. NG Kin-man	Master Mariner
	Mr. CHAN Ming-shun	HK Pilots Association (HKPA)
	Mr. SIU Wai-lim	HK Pilots Association
Secretary:	Ms. Alison WONG	EO(C&G), MD

#### In Attendance

Mr. WONG Wing-hung	SMO/VTC, MD
Mr. Andrew NG	MO/VTC(1), MD
Mr. K. W. CHAN	MO/Pilotage, MD
Ms. Yvette CHAN	HK Pilots Association
Capt. Steven LAM	HK Pilots Association

#### Absent with apologies

Ms. Gloria CHOY	Containers Terminal Operators
Mr. David DENG	Break Bulk Cargo Operators
Mr. John WILSON	Master Mariner

## **OPENING REMARKS**

1. The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting. He recounted that at the Pilotage Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting held on 18 May 2012, members agreed to convene a Working Group meeting to discuss and set out the details of the training, practical assessment and experience required for the revised pilot classes.

## **DISCUSSION ITEM**

### *PACWG Paper No. 2/2012 – “Examination and Training of Pilots”*

2. The Chairman narrated the background of adding two more Class II grades and the reason why there was a need to conduct a comprehensive review on the examination and training received by all pilotage classes. He then asked Mr. K. W. CHAN to present the paper in detail. Members were invited to give their views and comments on the proposed experience requirement and training/assessment arrangement for the revised classes of pilotage.
3. The salient points of the discussion were concluded as follows –
  - I. Demarcation of pilot classes and the maximum length of vessels to be handled by each pilot class
    - (a) Mr. NG Kin-man enquired about the reason why the proposed new pilot grades could not be added to Class I level. The Chairman and Mr. CHAN Ming-shun explained that since 1978, all changes of pilot classes had taken place at Class II level according to the size of vessels handled by the pilots at the time. Under the current legislation, the maximum length of vessels that could be handled by Class II pilots was 260m, while there was no length limit set for Class I pilots. In view that ultra large container ships calling at Hong Kong could be as large as about 400m, it

would be more appropriate to add two new grades at Class II level and to enhance and adjust the length of vessels that could be handled by each pilot grade so as to bridge the gap.

(b) Capt. WU Ka-shun and Mr. Phileas FONG were of the view that the proposed demarcation of pilot classes and the vessel lengths were agreeable as the proposal could not only address the operational needs brought about by the fast growing number and size of vessels calling at Hong Kong, but also avoid complicated and time-consuming legislative amendments consequent to any alterations at Class I level. They were also satisfied that corresponding training and practical assessments would be imposed to different pilot classes according to the enhanced vessel lengths of each class.

(c) In response to Mr. Phileas FONG's enquiry on the transitional arrangement in regard the upgrading of the existing licensed pilots when the revised legislation had come into operation, Mr. CHAN Ming-shun responded that the previous advancement ladder would still be applicable to pilots with a license issued before the legislative amendment was enacted. Mr. Andrew NG supplemented that a transitional provision would be included in the legislation to govern the related arrangements between the enactment and commencement of the amended order.

(d) After deliberation, members agreed to the proposed classes of pilotage as well as the maximum length of vessels to be handled by each pilot class.

## II. Experience required for the classes of pilotage and for upgrading to the next higher class

(a) Mr. NG Kin-man questioned why there was a need for a Class II pilot to stay in the same class for a continuous 12 months before he could be advancing to the next higher class even if he had already completed the

number of occasions in berthing/unberthing and pilotage of ships.

- (b) The Chairman explained that particular techniques would be required for maneuvering vessels of different lengths. To stay in one class for a minimum of 12 months could render a pilot adequate experience to handle different types of vessels of particular sizes in compliance with the respective statutory requirements. Mr. WONG Wing-hung pointed out that the timeframe was reasonable as it would allow the pilots to take into account the variables of weather and sea conditions in different seasons to learn the skills of coping with environmental changes. They could also have ample time to polish their skills of crisis management, emergency ship handling and marine traffic interpretation under different scenarios over the year. Mr. Phileas FONG and Capt. WU Ka-shun also agreed that the yardstick of 12 months could serve as a benchmark for the consideration of upgrading as it was drawn from the experiences of the incumbent harbour pilots.
- (c) After active discussion, members agreed to the proposed experience required for the revised pilot classes and for upgrading to the next higher class.

### III. Training and assessment arrangement for upgrading to a higher class of pilotage

#### *Apprentice pilots*

- (a) Capt. Steven LAM clarified that simulation practice was only a part of the pilotage training and should not be considered as an assessment of the ship handling skills of the pilot concerned as the ship models could only simulate certain scenarios but not completely replicate a real life situation. Having said that, he opined that a ship simulator could serve as a good training tool as it helped test the logical thinking of pilots and whether

they could arrive at a sensible decision under various environmental and emergency situations. It also helped assess whether and what additional training should be imposed to the pilot concerned to strengthen his ship handling skills.

- (b) As simulation should not be treated as an assessment of the pilots' performance, Capt. Steven LAM had reservation on the remark made against the simulation practice at the table of proposed training and assessment of the pilot classes, which stated that it would be "assessed" by HKPA and MD. On the other hand, Mr. CHAN Ming-shun also expressed concern about the availability of MD's officers to join all four occasions of practical assessment before the upgrading of the apprentice pilots within a tight schedule.
- (c) Subsequent to an active and lengthy discussion, members agreed that –
- "Simulation practice" should read as "Simulation training", and the note for this item should read as "Conducted by HKPA and MD";
  - among the four practical assessments, MD would be required to take part in one occasion only to assess the apprentice pilot; and
  - for both the simulation training and the practical assessments, PAC members would be invited to attend as observers.

*Class IIF to IIA pilots*

- (d) Members agreed that the same wording for the item of simulation training should be adopted for Class IIF to IIA pilots. Capt. Steven LAM supplemented that ship models of different vessel types and lengths of next higher pilot class would be used for the simulation training of Class II pilots. Moreover, reference would also be drawn from past incidents in designing the scenarios for training. As for Class I pilots, as they were considered to be experienced in ship handling, the training would mainly focus on enhancing their alertness to crisis and emergency situations.

- (e) Members expressed different views on the actual arrangement of the proposed joint practical assessments for Class IIF to IIB pilots. After contemplation, they finally concluded that –
- for administrative convenience, MD would only join the HKPA to conduct the practical assessment at Class IID level when the pilot applied for upgrading to Class IIC;
  - for Class IIA, the arrangement would remain status quo that MD would join the HKPA to conduct all the three practical assessments when the pilot applied for upgrading to Class I; and
  - for Classes IIF, IIE, IIC and IIB, the practical assessment would be conducted by a list of senior pilots nominated by HKPA and approved by PAC.
- (f) As HKPA would arrange to use ships of the next higher class to conduct the practical vessel-training for Class IIF to IIB pilots, the Chairman and members agreed that the item “2 practical vessel-training” in the table of training and assessment should be revised as “2 practical vessel-training of the next higher class” to better reflect the established practice.
- (g) It was agreed that PAC members would be invited to attend the simulation practice and practical assessments for Class II pilots as observers.

#### Class I pilots

- (h) The training for Class I pilots would remain status quo that MD would not join any practical assessment (as there is no practical assessment for Class I pilot) or the Continued Proficiency Development Programme (including Simulation Training in a 5-year cycle since 2007).
4. The Chairman concluded that the paper on examination and training of pilots would be revised based on the aforementioned resolutions and circulated to PAC members for endorsement before submitting to the policy bureau for

legislative amendments.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

5. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:05 p.m. The date of the next meeting would be announced in due course.