

## PILOTAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ref. : HQ/COM 928/29 (21)

### Minutes of the Pilotage Advisory Committee Meeting

Date : 18 January 2013 (Friday)  
Place : Conference Room A, 24/F, Harbour Building  
Time : 10:30 a.m.

#### Present

Chairman: Mr. H. M. TUNG	Deputy Director of Marine
Member: Capt. ZHOU Wei	HK Shipowners Association
Mr. CHAN Wo-shing	HK Liner Shipping Association
Mr. LEE Kwok-tung	Containers Terminal Operators
Mr. Eric CHEUNG	Dry Bulk Cargo Operators
(on behalf of Mr. YANG Xiao-guang)	
Mr. David DENG	Break Bulk Cargo Operators
Mr. ZHANG Zhi-liang	Dockyard Industry
Mr. FONG Yuk-choi, Phileas	Tug Operators
Mr. NG Kin-man	Master Mariner
Mr. YEUNG Wai-tin, Danny	HK Pilots Association
Mr. CHAN Ming-shun	HK Pilots Association
Mr. Raymond CHUNG	AD/PC, MD
Mr. LAI Chi-tung	GM/VTS, MD
Mr. CHAN Tim	S(N)EX(1), MD
Secretary: Ms. Alison WONG	EO(C&G), MD

#### In Attendance

Mr. WONG Wing-hung	SMO/VTC, MD
Mr. K. W. CHAN	MO/Pilotage, MD
Mr. NI Zhao	S/PSC(1), MD
Mr. Y. Q. XU	S/PSC(5), MD
Ms. Yvette CHAN	HK Pilots Association
Mr. YU Chi-leung	HK Pilots Association
Mr. CHIU Po-ming	HK Pilots Association
Capt. Steven LAM	HK Pilots Association
Ms. Catherine CHOW	Break Bulk Cargo Operators

Mr. K. F. CHAN

Wallem Shipping (H.K.) Limited

**Absent**

Mr. LEUNG Kwan-hang

Oil Terminal Operators

Capt. LO Ting-ho

Master Mariner

Mr. John WILSON

Master Mariner

**OPENING REMARKS**

1. The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting. He extended his welcome particularly to the following persons –
  - (a) Mr. LEE Kwok-tung, Mr. ZHANG Zhi-liang, Mr. YEUNG Wai-tin, Danny, Capt. ZHOU Wei and Mr. David DENG, who were newly appointed PAC members;
  - (b) Mr. Eric CHEUNG, who was attending the meeting on behalf of Mr. YANG Xiao-guang representing the dry bulk cargo operators; and
  - (c) Ms. Catherine CHOW representing the break bulk cargo operators and Capt. Steven LAM of the Hong Kong Pilots Association (HKPA), who were attending the meeting as observers.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

**I. Interview of Apprentice Pilot**

2. The Chairman informed the meeting that the applicant, Mr. SIU Lok-kan who had already passed the necessary medical examination would be interviewed.
3. The applicant was asked to brief members on his own background and to respond to some questions about his ship handling experience, reasons for joining maritime industry and applying to join this profession, knowledge of pilotage services, the major challenges to be a pilot in Hong Kong, and whether he could adapt to the shift pattern of pilot's work, etc.

4. 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. SIU registered as an apprentice pilot on 18.1.2013.]*

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

5. The minutes were sent to members for comments on 13.6.2012. Some proposed amendments had been received and the revised minutes were sent to members for further comments on 24.7.2012. No further amendments were proposed at the meeting and the minutes were confirmed without further amendments.

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

### ***Government Mooring Buoy (GMB) Mooring Arrangement***

6. Mr. K. W. CHAN reported that both the Marine Industrial Safety Section (MISS) of MD and the HKPA considered that the video was shot under calm weather which could not amply reflect the safety issues of mooring/unmooring operations. Instead of producing a new video, MISS would liaise with HKPA to arrange for interviews with their mooring gangs to facilitate a risk assessment on the mooring operations. MISS had also contacted one of the buoy manufacturers to study the possibility of improving the design of the buoys to enhance safety. He said that MD would continue to follow up with parties concerned on the safety of the mooring operations and suggested this item could be removed from the agenda for the time being.
7. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun recapitulated that the review of the mooring procedures

was consequent upon the recommendations of the coroner's report of the fatal accident in 2007. He pointed out that more passenger ships were arranging their own mooring gang to carry out the mooring/unmooring operations nowadays and the requirement of the service was actually dying out over the past few years. As the mooring gang crews had gained adequate technique and practical experience in the operations and HKPA had provided sufficient safety training to their crew members to prevent a recurrence, he opined that there was already no major safety concern on this issue and agreed that the item could be removed from the agenda. The Chairman suggested HKPA continue to keep in view the issue with MISS and report to this meeting again should there be any new development. Members agreed that this item could be removed for the time being.

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

8. Mr. K. W. CHAN reported that the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) would send the proposed amendments of the Pilotage Ordinance to the Policy Committee for scrutiny on 31.1.2013 and then submit to the Executive Council for consideration. The proposed amendments would be introduced into the Legislative Council (LegCo) by the end of March 2013.

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

9. Mr. K. W. CHAN reported that MD had visited the main ocean tug operators in Shenzhen on 26.6.2012 to promote and discuss with them the recommended route and related measures so as to improve marine traffic safety in the area concerned.

#### IV. New Discussion Item

##### *PAC Paper No. 1/2013 – “Proposed Amendments to the Examination and Training of Pilots”*

10. Mr. Raymond CHUNG recounted the background of conducting a comprehensive review on the demarcation of the classes of pilotage and the relevant examination and training received by the revised pilot classes. As agreed at the last PAC meeting held on 18.5.2012, a Working Group meeting was convened on 26.6.2012 to discuss and set out the details of the above review. Mr. LAI Chi-tung then presented the paper which covered the salient points of the discussion at the Working Group meeting. He invited members to refer to the existing and proposed experience requirement, training, assessment and examination arrangement which were tabulated at the Annexes of the paper for easy comparison.
11. Mr. Raymond CHUNG added that apart from meeting the statutory requirements and the assessments arranged by PAC, HKPA was making extra efforts in providing additional in-house trainings and internal assessments to each class of pilotage to ensure the pilots were conversant with their job. For example, simulation training would be arranged for each pilot class before recommending them to PAC for advancing to the next higher level. He remarked that this review could serve as a suitable platform to formalize some of the existing trainings so that the industry and the public could have a better understanding and overall picture of the mechanism of the upgrading of Hong Kong’s pilots.
12. Capt. Steven LAM opined that some wordings in the paper might conjured up an impression that the existing training and assessments offered by HKPA were inadequate and could not help maintain the proficiency of their pilots, and thus the present review. He stressed that HKPA had spared no pain to review internally the training and assessments provided to their pilots in addition to the

statutory requirements in order to cater for the prevailing job needs given rise by the latest development of the maritime industry. He pointed out that Annex III had missed out 2 practical vessel-training and 1 practical assessment which were provided to Class IIA pilots under the current schedule arranged by HKPA. The same should also be adopted in the table at Annex IV.

13. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun supplemented that the present review aimed at reinforcing the existing mechanism of upgrading of licensed pilots by including some of the internal training and assessment into the system. He assured members that HKPA would keep up with the practice to enforce house rules and provide additional training to the pilots after the revised legislation had come into operation in order to maintain their professionalism and protect harbour safety. For examples, house rules were set to assign Class I pilots with adequate experience to handle ultra large ships or certain special types of vessels.
14. Mr. Raymond CHUNG appreciated the zealous efforts made by the HKPA to keep up the service standard of the harbour pilots and responded that the focal point of the review was, inter alia, to renew the demarcation of pilot classes and the maximum length of vessels to be handled by each class, and to bring in the effective in-house training currently provided by HKPA with a view to strengthen the existing framework of the upgrading of the pilots. He believed that with 2 more grades added to the Class II level the pilots would be more experienced when they attained their Class I license. He remarked that MD would further study the details of the simulation training with HKPA and invited PAC members to attend the training and practical assessments as observers.
15. In response to Mr. K. F. CHAN's enquiry on whether there was a need to demarcate the vessel types besides adjusting the length of vessels that could be handled by each pilot grade, Mr. CHAN Ming-shun explained that further subdivision of vessel types would considerably complicate the legislative

procedure as well as the examination mechanism. Having said that, HKPA would continue to apply house-rules to regulate the pilot services offered to different sizes and types of vessels. As the actual circumstances and condition of the harbour changes every now and then, amendment of house-rules could serve as a more flexible and viable means in response to the prevailing requirements of pilot services.

16. Mr. CHAN Wo-shing asked about the rationale behind the oral examination for Class IIA pilots when they applied for a Class I licence. Mr. Raymond CHUNG explained that Class IIA pilots had gained adequate ship handling experiences at Class II level and their navigational skills could be assessed by simulation training or other practical assessments. However, the oral examination could help assess their knowledge in other aspects such as crisis management, decision making under emergency situation as well as their communication skills, etc. It would be more comprehensive to include an oral examination to assess the suitability for a Class IIA pilot to upgrade to Class I.
17. Mr. LEE Kwok-tung enquired about the transitional arrangement in regard the upgrading of the existing licensed pilots when the revised legislation had come into operation. Mr. Raymond CHUNG responded that the previous advancement ladder would still be applicable to pilots with licences issued before the legislative amendment was enacted. Once the legislative amendment had been enacted, late comers would then follow the new advancement ladder. Mr. Eric CHEUNG also doubted whether there would be any confusion if both of the existing and the new systems were simultaneously in force after the legislative amendment had come into operation. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun foresaw no major difficulties or confusion to have two mechanisms in force for a transient period and HKPA would further work out the detailed arrangement of the transitional period with MD before submitting the proposal to THB and LegCo.
18. In response to Mr. NG Kin-man's enquiry, Mr. Raymond CHUNG clarified that

written examination for apprentice pilots was not attended by PAC members.

19. The Chairman concluded that the proposed training, assessment and examination arrangement as tabulated at Annex IV of the paper would be refined based on members' comments and would be appended to the notes of meeting for members' reference.

***PAC Paper No. 2/2013 – “Review on Utilizing Tidal Windows for Slightly Over-height Vessels”***

20. Mr. WONG Wing-hung presented the paper in detail, which covered the findings of the review conducted in 2012 for vessels slightly over the 53m air-draught limitation to transit through the Ma Wan Channel by utilizing tidal windows during low-tide, as well as the proposed requirement and procedures for applying of tidal allowance. Members had no further comments on the paper and the paper was endorsed.

***Concentrated Inspection on Pilot Transfer Arrangements of Foreign Going Ships Carried out in Hong Kong in 2012***

21. Mr. Y. Q. XU reported that there were a total of 22 incidents relating to pilot transfer arrangements happened in Hong Kong waters in 2011 and the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2012, including 1 serious accident in March 2012 that a working pilot fell overboard to sea when he was disembarking a container ship by means of a pilot ladder. In view of the above, the Port State Control Section (PSCS) of MD had arranged the concentrated inspection on the pilot transfer arrangements of OGVs between June and August 2012 with a view to improve the unfavorable situation.
22. He then gave members a detailed account of the inspection, which covered the required boarding arrangements for pilot as stipulated by relevant legislation, International Maritime Organization and the International Maritime Pilots'



Association, results of the inspection, typical examples of deficiencies and the rectifying actions taken by ship masters in order to comply with the requirements. As compared with the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2012, the number of related incidents in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2012 had slightly decreased.

23. Mr. XU responded to the Chairman's enquiry by stating that PSCS would inspect the pilot ladder of the OGVs concerned during their routine inspection, or remind the ship masters to carry out regular maintenance of the boarding facilities. He also confirmed with Mr. K. F. CHAN that the safety net of accommodation ladder was also included in their inspection check-list. Mr. Raymond CHUNG added that cases reported by HKPA on the deficiency of boarding facilities would also be referred to PSCS for follow up action.
24. In response to Capt. ZHOU Wei's enquiry, the Chairman replied that MD would accord priority to inspect those OGVs with relatively veteran facilities, which account for about 15% of the OGVs calling at Hong Kong Port per year.
25. Mr. NG Kin-man asked whether the pilots would refuse to board the ships if the pilot transfer facilities were considered substandard. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun replied that there were sundry circumstances and the pilots would have to make professional judgment on the spot to assess the situation to ensure personal safety. As a related issue, he mentioned that some of the gangways of the vessels berthing at Kwai Chung Container Terminals were not up to the safety standard and requirements. He pointed out that HKPA would report such cases to the Vessel Traffic Centre for follow up actions, but would also like to call upon terminal operators, liner companies and shipowners to cooperate and make a concerted effort to remind ship masters to rectify the deficiency where appropriate to ensure users' safety. He appreciated PSCS's effort in improving the safety standard of the pilot transfer facilities and requested to have a copy of the presentation material for reference.

*[Post-meeting note: The presentation material was sent to members by email on*

8.2.2013.]

26. Mr. K. S. CHAN enquired whether the pilots were required to wear lifejacket before boarding the vessels. Mr. YEUNG Wai-tin, Danny pointed out that although there was no compulsory requirement for the pilots to put on lifejacket when discharging their duties, HKPA would advise their pilots to do so as a safety measure. Sufficient lifejackets had also been provided on board the pilot boats. On the other hand, he suggested that aluminum ladders be provided for the pilots to board the container ships from the terminals in case it was not viable to do so by the gangways or the pilot ladders.

**V. Any Other Business**

*New Berthing Guidelines on the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal*

27. Mr. WONG Wing-hung reported that a trial berthing to the new Kai Tak Cruise Terminal had been scheduled for mid-March 2013. In view of this, HKPA had assisted in preparing the draft Berthing Guidelines on the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal. He said that a paper on the new Guidelines would be prepared and circulated to PAC Working Group and then to PAC members for endorsement.

**VI. Date of Next Meeting**

28. The meeting ended at 12:30 p.m.. The date of the next meeting would be announced in due course.

**Proposed Training, Assessment and Examination Arrangement**

<b>Pilot Class</b>	<b>Maximum Length (Proposed)</b>	<b>Training &amp; Assessment for Upgrading to next higher class</b>
I	Any length	Continued Proficiency Development Programme (including simulation practice in a 5-year cycle since 2007)
II A	350m	Oral Examination (by PAC members) 2 practical vessel-training 1 practical assessment by HKPA 3 joint practical assessments by HKPA and MD Simulation training conducted by HKPA and MD
II B	300m	2 practical vessel-training 1 practical assessment by HKPA Simulation training conducted by HKPA and MD
II C	250m	2 practical vessel-training 1 practical assessment by HKPA Simulation training conducted by HKPA and MD
II D	210m	2 practical vessel-training 1 joint practical assessment by HKPA and MD Simulation training conducted by HKPA and MD
II E (new)	180m	2 practical vessel-training 1 practical assessment by HKPA Simulation training conducted by HKPA and MD
II F (new)	160m	2 practical vessel-training 1 practical assessment by HKPA Simulation training conducted by HKPA and MD
Apprentice	Training as per Cap. 84C Schedule 1	4 practical assessments, of which, 1 shall be jointly assessed by HKPA and MD Simulation training conducted by HKPA and MD Oral Examination (by PAC members) & Written Examination

Remarks: All practical vessel training and assessments are set for vessel of next higher class.

For both the simulation training and practical assessment, PAC members would be invited to attend as observers.