

**PILOTAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING**

Date : 28 December 2023 (Thursday)
Format : Conference Room A, 24/F Harbour Building
Time : 9:30 a.m.

Present

Chairman:	WONG Sai-fat	Deputy Director (1), Marine Department (“MD”)
Members:	Mr CHAN Hung-tai	Hong Kong Liner Shipping Association
	Mr CHAN Kam-foo	Shipping Agencies
	Mr LAM Wing-chiu	Container Terminal Operators
	Mr CHANG Chi-wai, Robson	Dry Bulk Cargo Terminal Operators
	Capt LI Yongzheng	Master Mariner
	Capt ZHOU Jianfeng	Master Mariner
	Capt JIAO Jie	Master Mariner
	Capt CHAN Tak-kei	Licensed Pilot
	Capt TAO Ming, Rockman	Licensed Pilot
	Mr LAI Chi-tung	Assistant Director / Port Control
	Mr HUANG Jihe	General Manager / Vessel Traffic Services
Secretary:	Ms Athena LIU	Executive Officer (General & Committee), MD

In Attendance

Miss Iris YIU	Sr Marine Offr/Vessel Traffic Centre
George TANG	Marine Mgr/Pilotage
Mr LUI Man Hon, Frank	Senior Manager (Tourism) of Tourism Commission
Capt Joseph C.Y. Tsang	Consultancy Team Leader

Prof Dong YANG	Associate Professor & Research Director, Department of Logistics and Maritime Studies, PolyU
Ms Helen Underwood	Project Coordinator

Absent with apologies

Mr PI Xianzhong	Surveyor of Ships (Nautical) / Seafarers and Examination (2)
Mr ZHANG Hongwen	Hong Kong Shipowners Association
Mr LI Yubin	Break Bulk Cargo Operators
Mr LAU Yiu-ming	Oil Terminal Operators
Mr ZHONG Ying	Dockyard Industry
Ms LEI Ho-yan, Angelina	Tug Operators

I. Opening Remarks

1. The Chairman extended his welcome to all members and introduced PAC new member Captain ZHOU Jianfeng serving in the capacity as Master Mariner from 6 October 2023 to 31 December 2024. He also advised members of the house rules.

II. Interview of pilot apprentice-to-be

2. The Chairman said that PAC would interview one candidate to test the suitability for being apprentice pilot.
3. All the Members (including the Chairman) of PAC declared no actual/ perceived/ potential conflict of interest.
4. Candidate was asked to brief PAC on his background, work experiences and maritime study. He was also asked about challenges to be a pilot.
5. PAC considered that the interview performance of the candidate was satisfactory and recommended him ought to be registered as apprentice pilot.

III. Confirmation of minutes of the last two meetings held on 2 December 2022 and 17 May 2023

6. The minutes of the last two PAC meetings held on 2 December 2022 and 17 May 2023 were confirmed without amendment.

(Post-meeting note: The meeting minutes were uploaded to the MD website on 4 January 2024.)

IV. PAC Paper No. 6/2023 - Promoting More Frequent and Flexible Use of the Central Fairway by International Cruise Ships

7. LUI Man Hon, Frank, Senior Manager (Tourism) of Tourism Commission gave an introductory remark; and Ms Helen Underwood gave a presentation with powerpoint slides.
8. Considering that voyage schedules of most of the international cruise lines were already fixed, Mr CHAN Kam-foo asked if the trial period could be extended from 24 to 36 months to benefit more international cruise ships to use the Central Fairway. Moreover, he suggested the meeting to consider extending the scope to cruise ships sailing from Shekou to Kai Tak Cruise Terminal, and also to any transit ships to Hong Kong.
9. Mr LUI Man Hon, Frank responded that the trial scheme was set for 24 months considering that the cruise ships business would have been recovered from the pandemic in coming two years. The regularisation or extension of the trial scheme would be duly considered. Moreover, the scheme was proposed from the tourism point of view such that tourists coming to Hong Kong could appreciate the scenery of Victoria Harbour and the Symphony of Lights show between 19:00 to 22:00. Capt Joseph C.Y. Tsang added that the study focused on cruise ships using Kai Tak Cruise Terminal. In this regard, ships merely transiting through Victoria Harbour without using Kai Tak Cruise Terminal are not included in the study thus the relevant impact of transit ships on the marine traffic has not been assessed. It was therefore suggested to keep the scheme to the use of international cruise ships berthing at Kai Tak Cruise Terminal. GM/VTS added that there would be operational difficulty to extend the scheme to transit ships considering that the terminal operator of Kai Tak Cruise Terminal might not have information on the route and schedule of any transit ships visiting Hong Kong. As for those ships

from Shekou, this might have implication on their actual purpose to visit Hong Kong which would then have different requirements on port formalities. Mr LUI Man Hon, Frank concurred the view of GM/VTS that the terminal operator of Kai Tak Cruise Terminal might not able to share relevant information to other harbor users given routes and schedules of transit ships to Hong Kong are unknown to them.

10. Capt Tao Ming advised that some of the cruise ships would have times to berth at Kwai Chung Container Terminal when the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal was full. He hence asked if the scheme would include Kwai Chung Container Terminal. Capt CHAN Tak-kei added that the scheme would have benefited more international cruise ships to come to Hong Kong if it could extend to other terminals in Hong Kong. Mr LUI Man Hon, Frank responded that the use of international cruise ships at Kwai Chung Container Terminal was far less after the commissioning of the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal in 2013. As for 2024-2025, the month of March would be the peak season of the year and as of now, there were still plenty of berthing slots at Kai Tak Cruise Terminal for the remaining months. In this regard, he did not see the imminent needs to include other terminals in this trial scheme for the time being.
11. AD/PC asked if terminal operator of Kai Tak Cruise Terminal would, apart from publishing the schedule in their webpage, proactively inform other major harbour users such as cross harbour ferry operators and yacht clubs. Mr LUI Man Hon, Frank responded that given the schedule to use Central Fairway would have been available two years ago, it was therefore not necessary for harbour users or general public to check the schedule daily. However, they would proactively inform other major stakeholders as suggested.
12. The Chairman asked if the study has included users of Ocean Terminal. Capt Joseph C.Y. Tsang confirmed that their study had included both the Ocean Terminal and Kai Tak Cruise Terminal. Mr LUI Man Hon, Frank confirmed that the trial scheme would only cover vessels calling at Kai Tak Cruise Terminal to conduct the Central Fairway Transit (both departure and arrival).
13. Capt Tao Ming asked if the proposed scheme included those vessels from Shekou calling at Kai Tak Cruise Terminal and passing Ngan Chau in East Lamma Channel and Lam Kok Tsui (Black Point) in Urmston Road pilot boarding stations. Capt Joseph C.Y. Tsang confirmed and added that the scheme would include any cruise

ships that would call at Kai Tak Cruise Terminal.

14. Referring to para. 9(b) of PAC Paper No. 6/2023 on no head-on/overtaking actions are allowed by cruise ships when conducting Central Harbour Transit, Capt Tao Ming asked whether this would only apply to two cruise ships or cruise ships with any other type of ships. Capt Joseph C.Y. Tsang advised that they suggested this condition applied to two cruise ships given the size. On this, AD/PC viewed that for the sake of marine safety, he suggested that the condition should apply to all ships in Central Fairway given the Central Fairway is rather narrow. Capt Joseph C.Y. Tsang agreed and clarified that they would specify the locations where head-on/overtaking actions are not allowed at para. 9(b). Capt Tao agreed too. Tourism Commission would supplement information on this after the meeting and the Secretariat would circulate it to members.
15. Referring to General Remarks 5 of the proposed Berthing Guidelines at Annex IV to PAC Paper No. 6/2023, Capt Tao Ming remarked that the guard boat does not have the authority for regulating the traffic. Capt Joseph C.Y. Tsang agreed and responded that the provision of guard boat aimed to provide more resources to pilot as well as giving advance information to pilots of obstacles ahead. Capt Tao Ming agreed with AD/PC's view that the guard boat does serve the purpose of clearing the passage such that some vessels which are crossing would be reduced.
16. Referring to General Remarks 3 of the proposed Berthing Guidelines at Annex IV to PAC Paper No. 6/2023, Capt Tao Ming asked if the mile refers to nautical mile. GM/VTS confirmed and AD/PC suggested to add general remark in the berthing guidelines that the word of "mile" used would refer to nautical mile.
17. Referring to General Remarks 4 of the proposed Berthing Guidelines at Annex IV to PAC Paper No. 6/2023, Capt Tao Ming asked when the escort tug should be dismissed if the vessel (for LOA < 230m) is calling to Lam Kok Tsui (Black Point) in Urmston Road pilot station. Capt Tao Ming suggested and Capt Joseph C.Y. Tsang agreed to dismiss the tug at Tsing Ma Bridge so as to follow suit with the berthing guidelines for Ma Wan transit. Tourism Commission would supplement information on this after the meeting and the Secretariat would circulate it to members.
18. Mr CHAN Kam-foo asked if escort tug boat can replace the guard boat. Capt Joseph C.Y. Tsang advised that there is functional difference between two such as

tug boat would provide navigational assistance e.g. push or pull; while guard boat would provide prior information to the pilot for clearing the passage. Capt Tao Ming concurred with Capt Tsang's view.

19. Referring to Para. 4 of the PAC Paper No. 6/2023, DD(1) remarked that there is reservation to use the word of "approval" from Vessel Traffic Centre (VTC) of MD because there is no such thing as approval letter. He also supplemented that all ships that require to move at the HK port should also inform VTC according to prevailing practice. Considering the marine traffic during that time such as racing or functions, VTC would still have the right to make the decision.
20. Mr LUI Man Hon, Frank remarked that the effective date for the trial scheme would be tentatively within January 2024.
21. After discussion, the meeting endorsed the PAC Paper No. 6/2023.

V. Any Other Business

22. After the interview of pilot apprentice-to-be, AD/PC suggested the Hong Kong Pilot Association to arrange simulation earlier for experiences that the apprentice pilot cannot gain given no available ships in foreseeable future. This measure would assist the apprentice pilot to complete the apprenticeship within 6 to 12 months as required under the law. Capt Tao Ming agreed and would look into the matter.

VI. Date of next meeting

23. The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m. The date of the next meeting would be announced in due course.

Distribution list

Chairman, PAC

Members, PAC

SMO/VTC

MM/Pilotage