

PILOTAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

Notes of Working Group Meeting

Date : 15 April 2014 (Tuesday)
Place : Conference Room B, 22/F, Harbour Building
Time : 2:30 p.m.

Present

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| Chairman: | Mr. WONG Wing-hung | GM/VTS(Ag), Marine Department (MD) |
| Member: | Mr. FONG Yuk-choi, Phileas | Tug Operators |
| | Mr. LAM Wing-chiu | Container Terminal Operators |
| | (on behalf of Mr. LEE Kwok-tung) | |
| | Mr. ZHANG Zhi-liang | Dockyard Industry |
| | Mr. John WILSON | Master Mariner |
| | Mr. NG Kin-man | Master Mariner |
| | Mr. CHAN Ming-shun | HK Pilots Association (HKPA) |
| | Capt. YU Chi-leung | HK Pilots Association |
| | (on behalf of Mr. YEUNG Wai-tin, Danny) | |
| Secretary: | Ms. Alison WONG | EO(C&G), MD |

In Attendance

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| Mr. George TANG | MO/Pilotage, MD |
| Mr. Jackson LAU | HK Pilots Association |
| Ms. Yvette CHAN | HK Pilots Association |

Absent with apologies

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| Mr. CHAN Wo-shing | HK Liner Shipping Association |
| Mr. David DENG | Break Bulk Cargo Operators |
| Capt. ZHOU Wei | HK Shipowners Association |

OPENING REMARKS

1. The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting. He enunciated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss, among other issues, two papers on the proposed amendments to the Berthing Guidelines and the appropriate experience of apprentice pilots under the Pilotage Order respectively. The papers would be presented to the PAC meeting to be held on 29.4.2014 for endorsement. He also introduced to members Mr. George TANG, the incumbent MO/Pilotage, who joined the meeting for the first time.

DISCUSSION ITEM

PACWG Paper No. 1/2014 – “Proposed Amendments to the Berthing Guidelines”

2. Mr. George TANG presented the paper and explained the updating of tug information and berthing information in detail. Members were invited to give their views and comments on the proposed amendments to the Berthing Guidelines.
3. The salient points of the discussion were concluded as follows –
 - I. Tug Information
 - (a) Members considered that the twin-screw (600HP each) of a new tug “Tsing Yuk” could produce 18.7 tonnes bollard pull which was in par with a grade II tug. They agreed that it was adequate to be listed as a grade II tug for the purpose of handling piloted vessels.
 - (b) HKPA proposed to amend chapter 3 of the Guidelines to include the

requirement of at least one 5000HP tug to be used for berthing and unberthing of large container vessels with LOA>350m at Kwai Chung (KC) Terminals. Capt. YU Chi-leung explained that nowadays more ultra large ships were calling to Hong Kong with very powerful bow thruster. It would be more ideal to incorporate one 5000HP grade I tug to facilitate the ship handling operations. Moreover, for some of the KC berths, certain types of vessels with a draft of 14m or more would be required to use 5 tugs (if not fitted with bow/stern thruster) to assist the berthing and unberthing. If a 5000HP tug was included, this restriction could be lifted so that there would not be too many tugs moving around at the same time in the basin. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun clarified that the proposed amendments did not imply that one 5000HP could replace two 4000HP tugs in all situations.

- (d) In response to Mr. John WILSON's enquiry on whether there were sufficient 5000HP tugs available in Hong Kong, Mr. Phileas FONG remarked that there were at present 7 nos. of 5000HP tugs provided by the tug suppliers. It was believed that there won't be many ultra large ships moving in the KC terminal at the same time and he considered that the provision of 5000HP tugs should be sufficient. Having said that, he highlighted that as there was a tendency of increasing in demand of greater HP tugs, the industry was actually building more 5000HP tugs to cater for the market needs.
- (c) The Chairman responded that the main concern should be on whether the existing tug arrangement was sufficient for handling the vessels calling Hong Kong. He stressed that the Berthing Guidelines laid down the minimum requirements that were safe enough for the ship handling and escort tasks. The requirements therein should not be excessive. Mr. George TANG also expressed reservation on the above proposal. He observed that Chapter 3 of the Berthing Guidelines was an adoption of a PAC paper dated back in 1986 and it might not be appropriate to merely

propose piecemeal amendments to the paper at this moment. He echoed the Chairman by saying that a more comprehensive review on the tug capability, definition and overall requirements should be put in train.

- (e) Mr. CHAN Mun-shun pointed out that the proposal was put up with a view to upgrade and enhance the efficiency of the ship escort services and to shorten the moving time of large ships in the KC basin. Mr. George TANG reiterated that the PAC had the responsibility to ensure that stakeholders, including the shipping companies, would not be compelled by the Guidelines to purchase more services than required. While agreeing that the tug operators should bid for more tugs to cater for the market needs, he reckoned that an overall review on the tug requirement would be beneficial to all parties concerned.
- (f) After deliberations, the Chairman concluded and members agreed that a review on tug capability and requirements for use in ship handling and escort tasks together with the definition of grades of tug should be conducted taken into account the technological improvement in tug design and the actual operational requirements. In this regard, the above proposal should be further studied during the review. Mr. John WILSON proposed that ship simulators could be used to assess the effectiveness and advantages of adopting greater HP tugs to carry out the ship handling operations so that more data and information in this aspect could be gathered.
- (g) On the other hand, members accepted the proposal from HKPA that a vessel equipped with azipods (azimuthing propulsion) might be accepted to substitute one tug.
- (h) The Chairman drew members' attention to the remarks for some berths (mainly oil terminals and other berths in Tsing Yi Island) in the Guidelines that bow thruster would not be considered to be used to substitute a tug.

After discussion, members agreed that there should be scientific and accountable justifications for whether to substitute a tug with bow thruster in these berths so as to avoid possible disputes and queries. The subject should be covered in the tug capability and requirement review. Mr. John WILSON suggested that simulators could be used to gather information on the bow thruster being used in the berths concerned under different tidal and weather conditions.

- (i) The meeting endorsed other proposed amendments in relation to the tug information.

II. Berth/Wharf/Terminal Information and Guidelines

- (a) Mr. LAM Wing-chiu remarked that the contact no. of KC 15 and 16 as shown in Chapter 8 had to be amended. He also pointed out the following inconsistencies between the on-line version of the Berthing Guidelines and the information contained in Chapter 8 of this paper:

- The LOA of some berth, for example, KC 13 to 16, did not tally; and
- The draft of KC 5 should be 15m.

Mr. LAM would provide the updated information to MD for incorporation in the PAC paper. Mr. George TANG reminded members that any updated information in regard to the Berthing Guidelines should be forwarded to him direct so that he could get hold of first-hand information and amend the Guidelines promptly.

- (b) A brief discussion was made on the designed draft at Kai Tak Cruise Terminal Berth 1 (KTCT-1). The Chairman narrated that the reason for setting the maximum draft allowed for berthing as 11m previously was because of the existing dredged depth of up to 12m of the turning basin. However, latest information revealed that the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) would only maintain the water depth at around 11.5m. Moreover, it was also understood that the original design

of the berth was to cater for cruise vessels with the deepest draft of 10m. It was then proposed to amend the maximum draft of the berth to 10m.

- (c) The Chairman supplemented that CEDD would not start the maintenance dredging until the agreed threshold limit had been reached, but then it would still take about half a year before they could schedule to conduct the work. Mr. John WILSON suggested the frequency of soundings be increased to better maintain the water depth of the berth.

- (c) Capt. YU Chi-leung pointed out that as there were at present some cruise ships with a draft slightly deeper than 10m visiting Hong Kong and berthing at KTCT, the proposed amendment would have influence on the berthing arrangement of these ships. He enquired about whether these cruise ships should be allowed to berth at KTCT-1 in future. Mr. John WILSON also commented that it would be more appropriate to try to attract larger vessels to berth at the terminal by allowing more water depth to the ships as far as practicable.

- (d) In view of the demand of the industry, the Chairman said that MD would discuss with the operator and owner of the cruise terminal to see whether the original designed draught of the berth was still valid. MD would also contact CEDD to discuss their maintenance dredging point and calculate and revise the maximum draft on that basis. As it would take some time to gather sufficient information from CEDD and the cruise terminal, members agreed to maintain status quo of keeping the 11m draft in the berthing information of the paper for the time being. Mr. CHAN Ming-shun remarked that HKPA would inform the Vessel Traffic Centre should they receive order of cruise ships over 10m in draft so as to make confirmation on the berthing arrangements.

- (e) The meeting endorsed other proposed amendments in relation to the berth information and guidelines. It was also noted that the proposals on the

amendments to the Guidelines for KC 8, 9 and 16-19, which were related to the requirement of 5000HP tugs as discussed above, were withheld pending the review on tug requirements.

4. The Chairman concluded that the paper on the proposed amendments to the Berthing Guidelines would be revised based on the aforementioned resolutions and presented to PAC members for endorsement in its coming meeting.

PACWG Paper No. 2/2014 – “Proposed Amendments to the Pilotage Order, Cap. 84C (Appropriate Experience of Applicant)”

5. Due to the changing operational environment, HKPA had proposed some amendments to the training requirements for the apprentice pilots. Mr. George TANG presented the paper in detail and explained that the amended schedule would become more realistic which could keep in line with the current shipping environment. The requirements as a whole were sufficient to equip apprentice pilots with necessary experience to enable them to provide pilotage services at professional standard.
6. Members raised no comment and endorsed the paper. The Chairman said that the paper would be submitted to the PAC for endorsement in the coming meeting.

[Post meeting notes :-

The chairman directed to move the berthing requirement for the new berths (KTCT and ABS Biodiesel Terminal) i.e. item no. 4 and 5 under table 3 (as an observer) to table 1 (accompanying a licensed pilot) as item no. 11 and 12 which would better serve the gaining of experience.]

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Alternative arrangement for pilot examination when no PAC Master Mariner member is available

7. The Chairman briefed members that there was a problem in arranging a Class I examination a few months ago due to the difficulty in identifying an available PAC master mariner member to sit on the board. Having checked against the legislation, it was understood that the board of examiners should be consisted of PAC members as the Pilotage Authority might appoint, while the capacity of the membership was not specified. However, according to the established practice, the composition of the board included an examiner of MD, a licensed pilot who is a PAC member and a PAC master mariner member. For that particular case, Capt. ZHOU Wei, a PAC member with master mariner qualification, was engaged to conduct the examination. In this regard, the Chairman would like to seek views from members on whether this arrangement for pilot examination when no PAC master mariner member was available should be formalized as an alternative measure.
8. As related information, the Chairman clarified that the composition of the Board of Discipline included a PAC master mariner member as required by the legislation.
9. Mr. John WILSON disagreed with the proposal. He had reservation on whether the alternate master mariners who were representing other industries to sit on the PAC were actively involved in the daily operation of the harbor, and whether they possessed up-to-date knowledge and experience in operating ships, investigating navigation accidents, going on board ships or mastering new navigation equipment, etc. that could warrant them suitable to sit on pilot examinations. He would prefer the HKPA to offer their examination schedule earlier for everyone to plan ahead. His views were shared by Mr. NG Kin-man.

10. After deliberations, the meeting agreed that the problem could be avoided in future if HKPA could provide sufficient advanced notice for better planning and coordination.

Terms of office for PAC members

11. The Chairman informed the meeting that the term of current office of the PAC would end on 31.12.2014. Nominations would be called for in due course.

Requirement of carrying pilotage license

12. The Chairman reminded that it was a statutory requirement under the Pilotage Ordinance that a licensed pilot should keep his license in his possession at all times when he was acting as a pilot and produce it for inspection whenever he was required to do so.
13. Pilots opined that the existing license in booklet format was not convenient for carrying around because it was fragile and susceptible to weather damage. It would be preferred if the license book took the form of HKID card or a driving license. The Chairman agreed to look into the feasibility.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

14. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:00 p.m. The date of the next meeting would be announced in due course.