

PILOTAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

Notes of Working Group Meeting

Date : 26 November 2014 (Wednesday)
Place : Conference Room B, 22/F, Harbour Building
Time : 2:30 p.m.

Present

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

In Attendance

Mr. George TANG	MO/Pilotage, MD
Capt. WU Ka-shun	Tug Operators
Mr. Terry Y C Kwok	Container Terminal Operators
Mr. Jackson LAU	HK Pilots Association
Ms. Yvette CHAN	HK Pilots Association

Absent with apologies

Mr. CHAN Wo-shing	HK Liner Shipping Association
Mr. David DENG	Break Bulk Cargo Operators

OPENING REMARKS

1. The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting. He enunciated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposed amendments to the Berthing Guidelines and to report the progress of the review on tug requirements. The rearrangement of principal fairways and anchorages in the western harbor would also be discussed under the AOB. The papers on the Berthing Guidelines and the principal fairways would be presented to the PAC meeting to be held on 16.12.2014 for endorsement.

DISCUSSION ITEM

PACWG Paper No. 3/2014 – “Proposed Amendments to the Berthing Guidelines”

2. Mr. George TANG presented the paper 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 –
 - (a) Mr. LAM Wing-chiu suggested that all “LOA 367m” as shown in point (1) of Chapter 4 should be amended as “LOA 370m” to tally with the information in the subsequent pages of the Guidelines. He also proposed to even out the length of KC 17-19 as 300m each (i.e. total 900m for 3 berths) in Chapter 8 to straighten up the presentation of berth information.
 - (b) In relation to the proposed reduction of the maximum LOA from 410m to 370m at KC 1&2, Mr. LAM Wing-chiu highlighted that the upgrading work of the equipment of the two berths was underway and was expected

to be completed by 2016. The Chairman responded that to ensure safety, consideration should be given to all aspects before deciding whether a berth could entertain ultra large vessels, including the strength of the berth and the maneuvering conditions for the pilots to bring the vessels around that area. He suggested that the concerned LOA limit could be reviewed upon the completion of the upgrading work.

- (c) Mr. John WILSON enquired on the basis of the tug requirements of the berths. Mr. George TANG explained that the requirements were based on the experience cumulated by the working pilots when conducting the berthing / unberthing operations in the harbor. Whenever there were changes in the prevailing working environment or ship types that would bring forth new experience or limitations to their job, they would discuss with the stakeholders, including the terminal operators, liners and tug operators, etc., in order to reach a consensus on the proposed amendments to the tug requirements. Capt. YU Chi-leung supplemented that simulations would also be conducted to obtain information before adjusting the working parameters if deemed necessary. The proposed amendments would then be put up to the PAC WG for further discussion and subsequently to the PAC meeting for final endorsement.
- (d) In response to the enquiry of Mr. John WILSON, Capt. YU Chi-leung replied that the duty pilot would berth the ship on port side or starboard side as requested by the terminal or the liner if the requirement was not specified in the Berthing Guidelines. However, if the weather or the current condition rendered it not safe to follow the instruction of the terminal or the ship company, the pilot should discuss with the master of the ship before coming up with a decision. The Chairman remarked that the above situation would be taken into consideration when reviewing the general remarks in Chapter 2 to 4 of the Guidelines.
- (e) Members had a detailed discussion on a new safety measure to be

implemented at KC 5. As KC 1 was perpendicular to KC 5, it was agreed that for vessels with maximum LOA of 400m to berth at KC 5, all quay cranes at KC 1 with distance less than 150m from KC 5 quayside had to be boomed up. The new measure would be reviewed after a trial period to assess the effectiveness. Mr. John WILSON also suggested that the reference to cranes could also be extended to cover other berths as there might also be similar safety issues for straight berths. His suggestion was noted by the meeting.

- (f) Mr. John WILSON further referred to the last sentence of the General Remarks point no. 3 of KC 10-14 and enquired on the meaning of “/” of “bow/stern thruster”. After deliberation, the meeting agreed to refine the presentation as “bow and/or stern” to explicitly show that if either one or both thrusters were fitted then 2 tugs would be required.
- (g) Members spent some time to confer on whether more factual information, including the channel widths and the general information of the quay cranes, should be provided in the Berthing Guidelines to enhance safety of the vessels operating in the port. While the Chairman remarked that the channel widths could be measured on the paper or electronic charts by the visiting masters, he also concluded that it might be worthwhile to include useful but not excessive information of the cranes in the guidelines to facilitate safe berthing. The issue would be further considered by all stakeholders.
- (h) Mr. George TANG brought up the proposal of making the trial versions of the Berthing Guidelines available on MD’s website so as to better inform users of the potential changes to the guidelines. Mr. John WILSON expressed great reservation on the proposal. He pointed out that publishing two sets of guidelines might give rise to disputes and even litigations when accidents happened. He opined that only the endorsed version should be issued as the visiting masters were eventually required

to follow the prevailing guidelines. For those arrangements that were endorsed but would be on trial pending reviews on the practices and requirements after a certain period, a header or definition should be added to the guidelines to avoid confusion. Members agreed that the initial proposal of issuing two separate versions on the website would be taken out from the paper when submitting to the PAC.

- (i) For cases falling outside the scope of the existing guidelines, including the operation of new berths or piloting new classes of ships, etc., a meeting among all players could be convened to discuss on the way forward and new guidelines could be drawn up accordingly. In case of special occasions where additional resources were required to berth or unberth the ships, it was agreed that the duty pilot and the master on board could have the overriding authority to make decision out of safety considerations. Members agreed that a general remark should be added in Chapter 2 to explicitly spell out the above arrangement and to broadly cover all working parameters. The details would be worked out in the next round of review.
- (j) The meeting in general endorsed other proposed amendments contained in the paper.

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.

Discussion on Tug Requirements

5. As part of the continuous improvement to the Berthing Guidelines, the PAC had endorsed a review on the tug requirements with a view to develop a scientific approach to the requirements of tug assistance for different berths in Hong Kong. Mr. George TANG briefed members on the details of the simulation on

tug requirements conducted on 18 and 19.11.2014. He reported that the data obtained from the simulation was being compiled by the MD Training Centre and would be forwarded to the HKPA for comments and analysis in due course. During the simulation, there were indications that high power tug might be required under adverse weather condition such as gale-forced wind or strong current.

6. Various aspects in relation to the general requirement of tugs, such as how to demarcate the types and sizes of vessels for grouping, how many grades of tug should be defined and the parameters that should be considered in the grading, etc., had been raised for discussion at the meeting.
7. Mr. John WILSON proposed that an external marine consultant could be engaged to obtain more information and experience from other ports and to conduct the review. The Chairman noted his suggestion, but opined that as the scope of the current review would mainly confined to rationalizing the grading of the tugs and applying a more reasonable approach in drawing up the tug requirements, the idea of engaging marine consultants at this stage was considered a bit premature. He called for the continuing assistance and support from members in offering professional advice and information in order to make the review fruitful.
8. Members were in general agreement on the direction of the review. Further Working Group meetings would be convened after the simulation results had been finalized.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Proposal on Rearrangement of Principal Fairways and Anchorage in the Western Harbour

9. The Chairman briefed members on the proposal on the rearrangement of

principal fairways and anchorages in the western harbour. The proposal included the realignment and widening of the Northern Fairway, Southern Fairway and the North Green Island Fairway. Consequentially, rearrangement of anchorages and mooring buoys as well as relocation of 5 navigation aids were also required. The details of the proposal were also tabled for members' reference. Members in general supported the proposed rearrangement as it would better meet the needs of the port.

10. Mr. YEUNG Wai-tin, Danny asked whether there would be dredging to increase the depth of the Southern Fairway. The Chairman replied that no dredging work would be carried out as it would bring about environmental problems to the area. Having considered that the major users of the shallower water part of the fairway were small vessels with draught less than 5m, the current proposal of widening of the Southern Fairway would be sufficient to cater for the demand of port users.
11. In response to Mr. LAM Wing-chiu's enquiry, the Chairman clarified that the river trade vessel and barges would normally anchor at KA1 and KA3 which were nearer to their operation bases. After the rearrangement, the total mooring area of the anchorages in Kellet Bank would largely remain the same as before and the operation of the barges would not be affected.
12. Mr. NG Kin-man asked about the time-table for implementing the above proposal. The Chairman replied that the proposal would be put up to the PAC, the Local Vessels Advisory Committee, the High Speed Craft Consultative Committee and the Port Operations Committee for consultation by early 2015. MD would then prepare the Draft Drafting Instructions (DDI) which was expected to be submitted to the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) for clearance together with the DDI on the establishment of principal fairways north of Lantau Island by late 2015. THB would then arrange to introduce the legislative amendments into the Legislative Council.

Token of Thanks

13. The Chairman informed the meeting that the term of current office of the PAC would end on 31.12.2014. He expressed gratitude to all members, particularly those out-going members, for their valuable contributions and support to the work of the Committee and its Working Group.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

14. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:30 p.m. The date of the next meeting would be announced in due course.