

# 6 MARITIME PILOTAGE

This chapter is closely based on the *International Best Practices for Maritime Pilotage* guidelines jointly published by ICS, OCIMF and Intertanko and which should prove a useful supplement to sections 2.7 and 3.3.3 of this Guide. The kind permission of the co-authors is acknowledged for the reproduction of these guidelines. Recommendations are offered to ship masters, bridge supporting staff and pilots on the minimum standards of pilotage service that the shipping industry should expect on board ships in pilotage waters worldwide.

The aim of this chapter is to clarify the roles of the master, the ship's crew and the pilot, and the working relationship between them. However, the recommendations are designed to complement, and not replace, existing regulations and standard references by giving detailed guidance on the interaction between parties involved in pilotage operations.

## 6.1 PRINCIPLES FOR THE SAFE CONDUCT OF PILOTAGE

Efficient pilotage is chiefly dependent upon the effectiveness of the communications and information exchanges between the pilot, the master and other bridge personnel and upon the mutual understanding each has for the functions and duties of the others. Ship's personnel, shore-based ship management and the relevant port and pilotage authorities should utilise the proven concept of Bridge Resource Management.

Establishment of effective co-ordination between the pilot, master and other ship's personnel, taking due account of the ship's systems and the equipment available to the pilot, is a prerequisite for the safe conduct of the ship through pilotage waters.

The presence of a pilot on the ship does not relieve the master or officer in charge of the navigational watch from their duties and obligations for the safe conduct of the ship.

## 6.2 PROVISION OF INFORMATION FOR BERTH-TO-BERTH PASSAGE PLANNING

Ships should provide the relevant port or pilotage authority with basic information regarding their arrival intentions and ship characteristics, such as draught and dimensions, as required by the port or other statutory obligations. This should be completed well in advance of the planned arrival and in accordance with local requirements.

In acknowledging receipt of this information, relevant information should be provided to the ship (either directly or via agents) as soon as it becomes available. Such information should include as a minimum: the pilot boarding point; reporting and communications procedures; and sufficient details of the prospective berth, anchorage and routeing information to enable the master to prepare a provisional passage plan to the berth prior to his arrival. Whilst charts, pilot books and port guidelines provide much of this information directly, masters should recognise that not all of this information may be available in sufficient detail to complete the passage plan until the pilot has boarded the ship.

## 6.3 MASTER/PILOT INFORMATION EXCHANGE

The pilot and the master should exchange information regarding the pilot's intentions, the ship's characteristics and operational parameters as soon as possible after the pilot has boarded the ship. The ICS Master/Pilot Exchange Forms (annexes A1 and A2) or the equivalent company format, should be completed by both the master and pilot to help ensure ready availability of the information and that nothing is omitted in error.

The exchange of information regarding pilotage and the passage plan should include clarification of:

- roles and responsibilities of the master, pilot and other members of the bridge management team;
- navigational intentions;
- local conditions including navigational or traffic constraints;
- tidal and current information;
- berthing plan and mooring boat use;
- proposed use of tugs;
- expected weather conditions.

After taking this information into account and comparing the pilot's suggested plan with that initially developed on board, the pilot and master should agree an overall final plan early in the passage before the ship is committed. The master should not commit his ship to the passage until satisfied with the plan. All parties should be aware that elements of the plan may change.

Contingency plans should also be made which should be followed in the event of a malfunction or a shipboard emergency, identifying possible abort points and safe grounding areas. These should be discussed and agreed between pilot and master.

## 6.4 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The pilot, master and bridge personnel share a responsibility for good communications and mutual understanding of the others' role for the safe conduct of the vessel in pilotage waters. They should also clarify their respective roles and responsibilities so that the pilot can work easily and successfully with the normal bridge management team.

The pilot's primary duty is to provide accurate information to ensure the safe navigation of the ship. In practice, the pilot will often con the ship on the master's behalf.

The master retains the ultimate responsibility for the safety of his ship. He and his bridge personnel have a duty to support the pilot and to monitor his actions. This should include querying any actions or omissions by the pilot (or any other member of the bridge management team) if inconsistent with the passage plan or if the safety of the ship is in any doubt.



## 6.5 PREPARATION FOR PILOTAGE

The pilot and Pilotage Authority should:

- ensure that the pilot is adequately rested prior to an act of pilotage, in good physical and mental fitness and not under the influence of drugs or alcohol;
- establish communication with the ship to make arrangements for boarding;
- maintain current information relevant to navigational, hydrographic and meteorological information as well as traffic movements within the pilotage area;
- facilitate communication with the ship to make arrangements for boarding.

In supporting the pilot, the master and bridge personnel should:

- ensure they are adequately rested prior to an act of pilotage, in good physical and mental fitness and not under the influence of drugs or alcohol;
- draw upon the preliminary information supplied by the relevant port or pilotage authority along with published data (e.g. charts, tide tables, light lists, Sailing Directions and radio lists) in order to develop a provisional passage plan prior to the ship's arrival;
- prepare suitable equipment and provide sufficient personnel for embarking the pilot in a safe and expedient manner;
- establish communications with the pilot station to confirm boarding details.

## 6.6 PILOT BOARDING

The boarding position for pilots should be located, where practicable, at a great enough distance from the port so as to allow sufficient time for a comprehensive face-to-face exchange of information and agreement of the final pilotage passage plan. The position chosen should allow sufficient searoom to ensure that the ship's safety is not put in danger, before, during or directly after such discussions, neither should it impede the passage of other ships.

The pilot or Pilotage Authority should:

- take all necessary personal safety precautions, including using or wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment and ensuring items are properly maintained;
- take any appropriate measures available to check that boarding equipment appears properly rigged and manned;
- liaise with the master so that the ship is positioned and manoeuvred to permit safe boarding.

In supporting the pilot:

- the master and ship's personnel should ensure that the means of pilot embarkation and disembarkation are properly positioned, rigged, maintained and manned in accordance with IMO recommendations and, where applicable, other port requirements;
- the master should liaise with the pilot station/transfer craft so that the ship is positioned and manoeuvred to ensure safe boarding.

## 6.7 CONDUCT OF PASSAGE IN PILOTAGE WATERS

It is essential that a face-to-face master/pilot exchange (MPX) results in clear and effective communication and the willingness of the pilot, master and bridge personnel to work together as part of a bridge management team. English language, or a mutually agreed common language or the IMO Standard Marine Communication Phrases, should be used, and all members of the team share a responsibility to highlight for clarification any perceived errors or omissions by other team members.

The master and bridge personnel should:

- within the bridge management team, interact with the pilot providing confirmation of his directions and feedback when they have been complied with;
- monitor at all times the ship's speed and position as well as dynamic factors affecting the ship (e.g. weather conditions, manoeuvring responses and density of traffic);
- confirm on the chart at appropriate intervals the ship's position and the positions of navigational aids, alerting the pilot to any perceived inconsistencies.

The pilot should:

- ensure that the master is able to participate in any discussions when one pilot relinquishes his duty to another pilot;
- report to the relevant authority any irregularity within the passage, including deficiencies concerning the operation, manning, or equipment of the ship.

## 6.8 BERTHING AND UNBERTHING

The necessity of co-operation and a close working relationship between the master and pilot during berthing and unberthing operations is extremely important to the safety of the ship. In particular, both the pilot and the master should discuss and agree which one of them will be responsible for operating key equipment and controls (such as main engine, helm and thrusters).

The pilot should co-ordinate the efforts of all parties engaged in the berthing or unberthing operation (e.g. tug crews, linesmen, ship's crew). His intentions and actions should be explained as soon as practicable to the bridge management team, in the previously agreed appropriate language.

In supporting the pilot, the master and bridge personnel should:

- ensure that the pilot's directions are conveyed to the ship's crew and are correctly implemented;
- ensure that the ship's crew provide the bridge management team with relevant feedback information;
- advise the pilot once his directions have been complied with, or where an omission has occurred or if a potential problem exists.



## 6.9 OTHER MATTERS

The pilot should:

- assist interested parties such as port authorities, national authorities and flag administrations in reporting and investigating incidents involving vessels whilst under pilotage, subject to the laws and regulations of the relevant authorities;
- observe the recommendations within this chapter and meet or exceed the requirements set down in IMO Assembly Resolution A.960(23) and its annexes;
- report to the appropriate authority anything observed which may affect safety of navigation or pollution prevention, including any incident that may have occurred to the piloted ship;
- refuse pilotage when the ship to be piloted is believed to pose a danger to the safety of navigation or to the environment. Any such refusal, together with the reason, should immediately be reported to the appropriate authority for further action.

The master, having the ultimate responsibility for the safe navigation of the ship, has a responsibility to request replacement of the pilot should he deem it necessary.

## 6.10 STANDARD REFERENCES

IMO Resolution A.960(23), Annexes I and II and subsequent amendments "Recommendations on Training, Qualifications and Operational Procedures for Maritime Pilots other than Deep Sea Pilots"

IMO Resolution A.893(21) "Guidelines for Voyage Planning"

IMO Resolution A.889(21) "Pilot Transfer Arrangements"

SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 23 "Pilot Transfer Arrangements"