

NAVIGATIONAL ADVISORY PANEL REPORT

NAP Date: 16 August 2012	Owner:	Director of Marine Operations	NAP Ref: 43	NAP Title: Review of Towing and Pushing Operations – Post CHIEFTON
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Panel Members:

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Peter Steen	PLA - Chair	Mark Townens	PLA – Deputy HMU	Neil Caborn	Cory Environmental
Chris McQueen	PLA - HML	Tim Prior	PLA–Marine Surveyor	Roy Goatham	Palmer Marine Services
Julian Parkes	PLA – HM (SMS)	Graham Slack	Red 7 Marine	Lynne Goatham	Palmer Services
Cerwyn Phillips	PLA – POM & Pilot	Richard Lukes	Svitzer Tugs	Chris Livett	Livett's Launches
Richard Flynn	PLA – PRM & Pilot	Capt. Paul Baskerville	British Tugowners' Association		

Detail / Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference
 The NAP is to be convened as soon as possible and is to:

- Review the interim procedures for the assessment and approval of 'non-routine towing operation' developed since the CHIEFTON incident; in particular to:
 - Re-affirm or propose amendment to the definition of a 'non-routine towing operation' as being 'a tow, which is not a ship towing operation, involving two or more tugs and includes push/pull

Observation/Recommendation

The Marine Accident Investigation Branch Report (No 12/2012) into the loss of the Chiefton was published on 23 May 2012. Further action needs to be undertaken to consolidate actions to date, identify any further lessons learned, and to confirm the revised procedures and systems now in place for non-standard towage operations in the Port of London.

The main objective is to reduce risk as low as possible, making it as safe as practical.

It was agreed that the interim procedures developed since the CHIEFTON incident were appropriate. It was noted that several examples of passage plans and transit plans had been submitted and reviewed by the Harbour Master in the Upper District.

The panel discussed the proposed amendment to the suggested definition of a 'non-routine' towing operation to be inserted into The Code of Practice for Craft Towing Operations on the Thames 2011.

Following discussion the Panel agreed the following amendment:

- The definition of a "non-routine" towing operation will be "any towage operation involving or likely to include a

<p>towing combinations and dead ship tows', as it applies in different areas of the port;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the requirements for a detailed Method Statement and Risk Assessment to be provided well in advance of the operation; • Review the requirements and associated procedure for the appointment of a Tow Master for every such 'non-routine towage operation'; and • Review the procedure through which the district Harbour Master gives formal approval before the 'non-routine towing operation' is allowed to proceed. <p>2. Undertake a review of the relevant parts of the PLA's Code of Practice for Craft Towage Operations in order to identify any areas of amendment or development.</p> <p>3. Review the effectiveness of the enhanced pilot simulator training introduced in 2011 for all grades of pilot with particular regard to the combined push/pull configuration; making any further recommendations to improve that training provision.</p> <p>4. Review the MAIB report and its findings in order to identify any further lessons learned or improvements that could be made to the PLA's navigational safety management system.</p> <p>5. Taking all the above into</p>	<p>combination of two or more towing/pushing vessels in an arrangement not previously risked assessed and reviewed by the Harbour Master."</p> <p>Recommendation 1 – (a) That the above definition is added to the Port Entry Guide and to the Code of Practice for Craft Towage Operations on the Thames.</p> <p>(b) That a section to be added to the Code of Practice for Craft Towage Operations on the Thames 2011 showing a sample format for a risk assessment and passage/transit plan. A notice of this change can be promulgated via letter to local craft towage operators and via a Notice to Mariners.</p> <p><i>It was agreed that a Tow Master must be appointed for all such Non-Routine Towage Operations. The role and responsibilities of the Tow Master were discussed and it was agreed that it should be defined as someone suitably qualified and experienced to take on the role. The appropriate person must be identified and appointed by the principal towage contractor before the operation commences and undertake the following role and responsibilities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall responsibility for the safety and conduct of the towage operation and the passage. • Developing a comprehensive operational risk assessment for the operation, and presenting it to the Harbour Master. • Preparing and submitting a passage plan and details of the towing configuration to the Harbour Master. • Determining the proposed manning and competency requirements for the operation. • Ensuring that a proper record and audit trail of the planning and approval process, and the operation itself is maintained. <p>Recommendation 2 – The Tow Master appointed for "non-routine" tows should be a person who is suitably qualified and experienced to undertake the role. Once appointed the Tow Master would then be responsible for the overall safety of the operation, developing a risk assessment, preparing the passage plan and implementing the tow.</p> <p><i>The procedure requiring the Harbour Master to give approval was reviewed. It was agreed that a letter/communication from the Harbour Master confirming he has reviewed a "non-routine" towing operation and that it is allowed to proceed would be acceptable.</i></p> <p>Recommendation 3 – The Harbour Master should issue a written confirmation to the Tow Master that he has reviewed the "non-routine" operation and that it is allowed to proceed.</p> <p>2. <i>The panel considered key points for inclusion in the new section of the Code of Practice for Craft Towage Operations. It was suggested that these could include -</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Role and responsibility of the Tow Master</i> <i>Role and responsibility of the Pilot (when required)</i> <i>Process for planning for and undertaking 'non-routine' tows, including application for approval to the Harbour Master</i> <i>Passage plan examples</i> <i>The undertaking of rehearsals for unusual tows (e.g. Skyline 19 trials off Broadness)</i>
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account, propose a revised and updated set of procedures and guidance for the identification, assessment, approval and management of 'non-routine towage operations' in the Port of London.

The BTA's towage checklist could usefully be considered and cross-referenced as additional guidance.

Recommendation 4 – The PLA's Code of Practice for Craft Towage Operations should be reviewed and a new section addressing unusual / non-routine tows should be developed and included.

3. *It is recognised as good practice to record or log key decisions. This can be done through the working channel, tug channel or logged on a pro forma template. For further development it was agreed to insert "it is advisable to record key decisions" into the Code of Practice for Craft Towage Operations on the Thames 2011.*

Recommendation 5 – Ensure that the words "It is advisable to record key decisions" is inserted into the relevant section of the Code of Practice for Craft Towage Operations on the Thames 2011. A list of tug channels recorded by London VTS to be included in the same section.

The current training for pilots which involves familiarisation trips on craft towage tugs and simulator exercises was reviewed. It was noted that Cory Environmental had provided excellent support in this respect and that with their help pilots training had been expanded to include a basic understanding of practical problems facing craft towage tugs. It was also recognised that inviting Tow Masters and other tug masters to simulator sessions (whilst recognising the limitations of the simulator) could be a useful preparation for a tow.

Recommendations 6 :

- (a) Continue the use of the practical and simulator sessions for pilot craft towage awareness
- (b) Consider extending simulator training/tow planning opportunities to other craft towage Tugmasters and future Tow Masters working on the river (while recognising the limitations of the simulator)
- (c) Encourage and invite other craft towage Tugmasters and Tow Masters to a simulator trial and ask for feedback to improve realism of the exercise

4. *The Panel were asked if they had any further comments or lessons specific to the CHIEFTON towage operation to add to those contained in the MAIB report.*

The following additional recommendations were raised by the panel:

Recommendation 7 - It was suggested and agreed by the panel that a local forum be established to meet annually or biannually to consider and review Non-Routine towage operations undertaken in the preceding period, and any associated issues or matters arising.

Recommendation 8 - It was suggested and agreed by the panel that any relevant lessons and issues arising from this Navigational Advisory Panel and the future forum should be fed back in to the training/syllabus for the Boatmaster's Licence towage/pushing endorsement. This action should take the form of a specific recommendation to the Maritime & Coastguard Agency.

The members of the panel were thanked for their contributions and it was recognised that the additional measures and improvements identified in this meeting with observations/recommendations made will help improve the PLA's navigational safety management system and therefore the overall safety of those working on the river.

5. Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1 –

(a) That the definition of a non-routine towing operation is added to the Port Entry Guide. (The definition of a “non-routine” towing operation will be “any towage operation involving or likely to include a combination of two or more towing/pushing vessels in an arrangement not previously risked assessed and reviewed by the Harbour Master.”)

(b) That a section to be added to the Code of Practice for Craft Towing Operations on the Thames 2011 showing a sample format for a risk assessment and passage/transit plan. A notice of this change can be promulgated via letter to local craft towage operators and via a Notice to Mariners.

Recommendation 2 – The Tow Master appointed for “non-routine” tows should be a person who is suitably qualified and experienced to undertake the role. Once appointed the Tow Master would then be responsible for the overall safety of the operation, developing a risk assessment, preparing the passage plan and implementing the tow.

Recommendation 3 – The Harbour Master should issue a written confirmation to the Tow Master that he has reviewed the “non-routine” operation and that it is allowed to proceed.

Recommendation 4 – The PLA's Code of Practice for Craft Towing Operations should be reviewed and a new section addressing unusual / non-routine tows should be developed and included.

Recommendation 5 – Ensure that the words “it is advisable to record key decisions” is inserted into the relevant section of the Code of Practice for Craft Towing Operations on the Thames 2011. A list of tug channels recorded by London VTS to be included in the same section.

Recommendations 6 -

(a) Continue the use of the practical and simulator sessions for pilot craft towage awareness

(b) Consider extending simulator training/tow planning opportunities to other craft towage Tugmasters and future Tow Masters working on the river (while recognising the limitations of the simulator)

(c) Encourage and invite other craft towage Tugmasters and Tow Masters to a simulator trial and ask for feedback to improve realism of the exercise

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annually or bi-annually to consider and review Non-Routine towage operations undertaken in the preceding period, and any associated issues or matters arising.

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This report will be circulated to all attendees by 31 August for any comments to be returned by 7 September 2012.

This NAP report will be submitted for approval at the NMT meeting on the 25 September.

Panel
Chairman:

A. D. STEED

Signature:



Date:

7/10/12

