

NAVIGATIONAL ADVISORY PANEL REPORT

NAP Date:	31 January 2013	Owner:	HM(L)	NAP Ref:	45	NAP Title:	London Container Terminal – Ebb Tide Sailing Review
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Panel Members:

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Chris McQueen	PLA – Chair	Julian Parkes	PLA – HM(SMS)	R Finch	Hamburg Sud
Tom Southall	PLA - DVTSM	R Finch	Hamburg Sud		
Dudley Curtiss	PLA- DPC/Pilot	G Chandler	LCT		
Cerwyn Phillips	PLA- PoM / Pilot	S Williams	LCT		

Detail / Terms of Reference	Observation/Recommendation
<p style="text-align: center;">Terms of Reference</p> <p>Background</p> <p>The programming of large containerhips (300m LOA) to depart two or more hours into the ebb tide from London Container Terminal (LCT) is becoming more common. As the deepening of Sea Reach channel to 14.5 metres is due to complete mid 2013 the remaining limiting factor will be the depths at Diver shoal and Lower Hope; typically around 8.8m.</p> <p>Over recent years two serious incidents have occurred involving containerhips sailing from LCT and rounding Tilburyness, which cannot be considered to be 'one-</p>	<p>The issue of sailing the larger container vessel well into the ebb had not previously arisen as they were naturally constrained by limiting depths and falling tide in Sea Reach and Oaze area, but with the deepening of Sea Reach Channel and Oaze this restriction no longer applies and constraining point for programming is now shallower ruling depths in Lower hope Reach. This means potentially there is a larger sailing window for ships to sail later in ebb tide.</p> <p>The process of how London Container terminal plan there cargo operation and interaction of the Agent and Duty Port Controller were explored. It was clear that the terminal would like certainty in planning the “tidal window” which is broadly agreed by agent with input from DPC. The key difficulty identified being its not just matter of length and draft of vessel but other environmental issues come into play which may mean affect departure time.</p> <p>Pilots perspective</p> <p>Ebb tide sailing on the upper berth involving a swing, once vessel has cleared the berth is very challenging as during the turn vessel is setting downstream rapidly towards Tilburyness and once swung vessel has to have water passing over the rudder and be making headway so it has steerage so it can make the 70 degree turn at Tilburyness.</p> <p>Similarly, in an ebb tide sailing for a vessel head down on the lower berth, it has to clear the berth, be manoeuvred well into the river and backed up before coming ahead. So it has sufficient distance from Tilburyness to get sufficient headway for steerage so it can make the turn.</p>

off' or coincidental incidents. Incident data between Sea Reach 1 to Margaretness over the past several years shows an overall significantly positive improvement in accident periodicity, except in the vicinity of Tilburyness which to date shows little improvement. Concern has been raised by some pilots that sailing large containerships well into the ebb is a risky operation particularly when the vessel has to swing leaving the berth or when sailing from lower berth head down before entering the turn at Tilburyness. There are currently no defined procedures in place for programming these vessels for an ebb tide departure. The Duty Port Controllers use the passage planning aid and their professional experience as Class 1 practising pilots to determine whether the intended passage is viable.. It is possible that the pilot assigned to the vessel may decide passage margins are too tight and seek to change the passage plan potentially causing delays and additional cost to the ship. The purpose of this NAP is to determine whether a defined procedure for programming of large containerships for departure on an ebb tide from LCT should be put into place, and if so what that procedure should be.

Terms of Reference

It was explained that there is little margin for error and the greater the length of the vessel the more difficult manoeuvre is. As the ebb tidal rate increased later into the ebb the 300m+ container ships sails it becomes the more difficult and challenging the manoeuvres becomes and safety margins reduced.

Recommendations

1. For vessels 275 metres LOA and above irrespective of draft, the latest sailing programmed time on an ebb tide should be:

- NHCTU berth, Head up on the upper - ½ hour into the ebb. This will allow for vessel to clear berth swing and head outwards.
- NHCTU berth, head down ½ hour into the ebb.
- NHCTL berth, berthed head up – ½ hour into ebb. This will allow for vessel to clear berth swing and head outwards.
- NHCTL berth, Berthed head down - ½ hour into ebb. This allows time to clear berth back up into Northfleet Hope before coming ahead.

It was agreed that above recommendations will be put to the PLA's pilot forum for further canvas comment before being reviewed and ratified at the PLA's Pilotage Operational Advisory Panel and the Navigational Management Team.

2. For vessels less than 275m LOA no specific latest ebb tide sailing time was required, other than draft restrictions in accordance with minimum under keel clearance requirements being met.

In the event the recommendations is not agreed and cannot be resolved internally it was agreed the NAP would be reconvened.

Given the above, this Navigational Advisory Panel (NAP) is asked to:

1. Consider whether any limit on programming of departing containerships at the passage planning stage should be put in place.

2. If limits are to be imposed, identify what they should be:
 - a, Specific to vessel in terms of LOA and draught.
 - b, When limitations should apply.
 - c, What limitations should be.

3. Consider issuing instructions and/or guidance for the Duty Port Controller in the form of procedures for sailing containerships on the ebb.

The NAP is requested to report its findings and any recommendations to the Navigational Management Team by 28th February 2013.

Panel Chairman:	Chris McQueen	Signature:		Date:	2013
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