

PACIFIC PILOTAGE AUTHORITY

1000 – 1130 West Pender Street
Vancouver, B.C
V6E 4A4



NOTICE TO INDUSTRY

Date Issued: 9 April 2020

Notice Number: 06/2020

Subject: Pilot Transfers at Outer Anchorages in Prince Rupert

Geographic Area: Prince Rupert, BC

Background: The Prince Rupert outer anchorages in Chatham Sound are exposed to the environmental elements such as wind, sea, and swell. Transferring pilots to or from anchored vessels is challenging in inclement weather conditions. In order to transfer pilots safely to or from anchored ships in heavy weather, tugs have been used to push the vessels around to create a lee and facilitate the pilot transfer.

A tug is not considered a passenger vessel or pilot launch and is therefore not suitably equipped to retrieve a pilot from the water should a pilot fall from a ladder or should the ladder fail. The likelihood of not retrieving the pilot in ample time with the equipment onboard the tugs is high. This is due to the lines of visibility from the tug's wheelhouse, the extended fenders from the hull, and the high freeboard of the tugs. There is also a risk the pilot may become entrapped under the fendering of the tug should he fall into the water.

Guideline:

In order to facilitate a safe transfer and have the ability to recover the pilot from the water, transfers will be conducted using a pilot launch. All pilot transfers to or from anchored ships will require the ship's pilot ladder to be rigged.

For some of the outer anchorages this will mean that a tug may still be required to create a lee in inclement weather conditions. Pilots will note on the source card the reason for requiring a tug for a pilot transfer at the outer anchorages. The present operational limits for the pilot launch to transfer pilots to or from stationary (anchored) ships is set at 20 knots of wind and/or a sea of up to 2 meters. The particular conditions of each anchorage will be reviewed between the launch master and the pilot. For example, for the anchorages near Lucy Islands which are highly exposed to the elements, a tug may be required even if conditions are within the above prescribed limitations.

Priority service for the pilot launch is conducting pilot transfers at the Triple Island pilot station. As such, orders for ships to and from the outer anchorages must be arranged through Vancouver dispatch. Dispatchers will liaise with the launch master on the tug requirement and the time when the pilot launch will be available to transfer the pilot.

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Please be advised that the Authority will invoice for the use of the pilot launch for all transfers at the outer anchorages.

Please contact PPA at marineops@ppa.gc.ca for queries or concerns.