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## **SAFETY CIRCULAR**

***05<sup>th</sup> Feb 2019***

TO: Fleet

### **SUBJECT: BRIDGE TEAM FAILURE**

Dear Master,

This circular is being issued in view of one of our fleet vessel being involved in a incident when under pilotage.

#### **Brief incident details**

Vessel was proceeding under pilotage inbound for berthing. Due to some miscommunication between the Pilot & the Tug Master, there was delayed response by the forward Tug & the vessel's bow came nearly in contact with the Breakwater on the Portside. However due to timely action by the ship's staff the vessel did not sustain any structural damage. But due to vessel's close proximity to the Breakwater she touched bottom in the forward section while taking avoiding action.

During under water inspection it was confirmed that the vessel had touched bottom in the forward section (Bow to Aft section of Forepeak tank) on the Portside. Apart from some damaged paint there was no permanent structural damage or breach in water tight integrity.

The above incident however had the potential to cause serious consequences such as:

- Placing at risk the safety of the crew and vessel
- Structural damage, breach of water tight integrity
- Damage to Breakwater. Third party claims
- High expenditure.
- Loss of hire.
- Severe loss of company reputation
- Pollution hazard

The result of our investigation into the cause of above incident can be summarized to below:

- Lack of situational awareness of the Bridge Team.
- Lack in monitoring of execution of Passage plan
- There was communication gap between the Pilot and Tug Master.
- Language of communication was not agreed upon. Instructions given by Pilot to Tug Master were in local language and Master was not fully aware of the Pilot's intentions.
- Over reliance on the Pilot

Despite the duties and obligations of a Pilot, his presence on board does not relieve the Master or Officer-in-charge of the watch from their duties or obligations for the safety of the vessel.

Clearly, the Master and Pilot have their own strongpoint and it is the best possible option to utilize both of their expertise for the safe passage of the ship. Thus a synergy between the Master and the Pilot is necessary to avoid any hazard. The relationship, naturally, will have to be of mutual respect and mutual trust. The Master is however at liberty to interfere at any point of time if he sees his vessel is in danger. But it is expected that he informs the Pilot about the perceived danger and then takes appropriate corrective measure or even take over the control of his vessel if so required, but well in time.

For your guidance the following list of actions are to be taken by the vessel to avoid any further repetition of related incidents:

- Compliance with Company SMS chapter 4 & in particular section 4.9.3
- Effective Master / Pilot information exchange

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.

- Clarity on the duties and responsibilities of the team members
- It is essential that a face-to-face Master/Pilot exchange (MPX) described in above section 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 any perceived errors or omissions by other team members, for clarification.

**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, maneuvering 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**

- Communicate with the Master and keep him apprised of his intentions at all times.

Kindly discuss the above Circular during the next Safety meeting and with the Bridge Team.

**QHSE**  
**Maritec Tanker Management Pvt. Ltd.**