



Maritec Tanker Management Pvt Ltd

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GENERAL CIRCULAR

07/2022

Date: 26th Jul 2022

Kindly note that this circular will replace General Circular 12/2021 dated 25th Oct 2021

SUBJECT: General Guidance to Masters on Navigation from Escravos to Sapele Berth

Preparation:

1. Bosun or other responsible ship's personnel to be assigned at Anchor Station during the entire passage.
2. Increase Bridge watch to Pilotage level.
3. Duty Officer instructed to monitor that Pilot's Helm Orders are being followed.
4. Check with Escravos and Warri signal station for any cross-traffic enroute to Sapele.
5. Check with Engine Room that Main Sea Suction Filters have been cleaned, and that the High Sea Suction Filter has been put in use.
6. Calculate the times of high tide for the following areas - Escravos Bar, Rugged Point, Nana Creek, Jones Creek, Deli Creek, Alajiko Creek, Holy Creek, Young Town, Orobi Creek, Crocodile bank, NPA Koko, and Sapele. Hourly tidal calculations shall be carried out by the vessel before transit.
7. At least two Diesel Generators shall be in operation throughout the passage to ensure safe power in the event of an abnormal shut down of one Generator.
8. Both Steering Motors shall be kept in operation during the passage.
9. Reference shall be made to comments and observations raised in the previous 'Post Passage Plan -Review'.
10. Include Maximum Speeds during the pilotage, berthing, unberthing and around critical areas, in the Passage Plan - Points to Note.
11. Set the alarm warnings in ECDIS to sound 5 mins before approaching critical areas.

Signals:

1. When crossing narrow and sharp turns, the vessel shall give five long blasts on the whistle to attract the attention of on-coming traffic.

Escravos Channel:

- Vessel Shall
 - Transit only at high tide.
 - Not commence transit if visibility is poor – **fog**.
 - Ensure that draft does not exceed 5.80m in fresh water.
 - Due to the frequent groundings in the channel, vessel should try and be either the first or last in the convoy to start transit.
 - Be kept at the center of the channel (To avoid grounding).
 - Monitor positions continuously using visual / radar bearings / ranges and parallel indexing.
 - Record UKC for reference during future transits.



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- Vessel should use the last track as reference, when transiting Escravos Buoyed Channel.
- Master/Pilot information exchange must be carried out well before entering the Escravos Channel.

CAUTION

- Charted depths are not reliable.
- Strong currents are prevalent.
- Do not proceed into the channel if any vessel is aground in the channel.

At Buoy 23, Escravos:

- During anchorage at buoy 23:
 - Vessel shall keep well clear of Fishing nets - to avoid claims from villagers.
 - Vessel shall consider keeping Pilot on board if anchored for the night.

CAUTION

- Strong currents are prevalent – sufficient anchor chain to be paid out to prevent dragging of anchor.

Escravos to Sapele berth:

- Vessel shall
 - Transit **Nana Creek** shallow bank channel at **high tide**.
 - Keep clear of fishing stakes, nets and country boats at Nana creek.
- **Nana Creek to Young Town** – vessel to navigate with extreme caution while transiting this narrow channel consisting of **Several sharp turns and bends**.

CAUTION

- Strong tide current is prevalent throughout this narrow channel.

- **Young Town:**
 - Monitor the **state of tide at Young Town**, which has a **sharp turn of about 90 degrees**, as strong currents will be encountered. **Vessels have gone aground before at this location**.
 - Use the two beacons in line, at Windham Point, on the northern shore of Benin River opposite Young Town when making the turn.
 - **Bridge team shall be on high alert** and navigate with extreme caution when making this turn at Young Town.

CAUTION

- Strong currents are encountered. Turn to be executed with extreme caution.



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- **Benin River:**
 - Strong currents are experienced.
 - Keep clear of fishing traffic with fishing nets and logs trail.
- **NPA KOKO: Change of Pilot:**
 - Community Pilot will disembark and NPA Pilot will board the vessel for berthing.
 - The state of tide for berthing (Flood / Ebb tide) to be discussed with the NPA Pilot.
- **From Old Salt Factory up to Rian Oil Jetty**, vessel shall proceed on reduced speed due to Oil jetties and terminals in the vicinity.
- **Munro Island to Gas Power Plant at Sapele near Ringardas Jetty** Strong currents will be experienced by the vessel.

Berthing

- **Speed shall not to be greater than 0.1 knot while berthing at Ringardas Jetty – sign is posted on the jetty.**
- Vessel shall berth by stemming the tide. During Flood Tide, vessel shall steam to Sapele Navy Base turning Circle/Basin, to turn vessel around and berth Port side alongside heading downriver. On Ebb Tide vessel shall berth starboard side alongside.
- If the NPA Pilot upon boarding at KOKO confirms that vessel will be assisted by tugs in berthing, then the vessel may plan to berth starboard alongside, regardless of flood or ebb tide. A standard Risk Assessment should be prepared and kept in the ship's files. This should be referred to when berthing with assistance of tugs, with any changes as required for that day.

Unberthing from Ringardas Jetty

CAUTION

- **At the forward end of Dolphins Jetty facing towards EWA Flour Mill, there is an old jetty which lies submerged at High Water and is visible at Low Water. It is off set with Forward Dolphins. Vessels Bow should not come inwards towards the Dolphins. This Old jetty is approximately 30 meters inwards of Forward Dolphin, facing EWA Flour Mill jetty. NPA Pilots are aware of this submerged jetty.**

Unberthing

- Pilot must try to board the vessel at the first morning light hours so that entire passage could be completed during daylight period.
- Ideally unberthing operation should be planned while vessel is stemming the tide to avoid fouling of ship's propeller from mooring ropes.
- If unmooring operation is planned with a stern tide, then mooring boat MUST be provided to cast off the stern line & breast line. Mooring boat must carry the eye of stern line & breast line all the way from shore dolphin to the vessel to ensure that ropes should not get entangled with propeller. Vessel to be ready to always maneuver under its' own power.
- Availability of tugs during berthing/unberthing operation will provide greater safety.



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- If vessel is berthed starboard side alongside then vessel shall proceed to Sapele Navy base to turn around in the turning basin and then head out to NPA KOKO.

Remarks:

- The entire Bridge Team shall be always alert, maintaining all round situational awareness. **Beware of Complacency.**
- All available tools of navigation shall be utilized by the Bridge Team for keeping the vessel in safe waters at all times.
- During the Ballast transit the max draft should not exceed 5.0 mtrs.
- Past voyage records must be referred to in the subsequent passages to check for safe water depths and position of buoys.
- Vessel's position must be verified using visual bearings and radar ranges. Parallel Indexing must be used continuously to keep track of vessel's set and drift.
- Prepare a chart with actual UKC. It must include the time, UKC, vessel's speed, charted depth, height of tide. This chart shall cover the full passage from pilot boarding ground to alongside berth. Keep this chart attached to the passage plan of the next voyage for reference.
- Master should be ready to take over command anytime and immediately, in case of any imminent threat to the vessel safety.
- As per many local pilots silting is very often experienced in these areas. Positions of the buoys must also be verified, as they may also shift temporarily at times under the influence of high swell and currents.
- The use of Mobile Phones by the pilots whilst on the Bridge are forbidden unless explicit permission is taken from the Master.
- The Master can subject the Pilot to an Alcohol test should he deem it necessary, for the Safety of the Crew and Vessel.

Signals:

2. When crossing narrow and sharp bends, the vessel gives shall give five long blasts on the whistle to attract the attention oncoming traffic.

THE MASTER MUST REMAIN IN COMPLETE CONTROL AND RESPONSIBLE AT ALL TIMES AND HIS DECISION WILL REMAIN FINAL.

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