



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF PILOTS
OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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24 September 1992
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Sandy Hook Pilots' Association

Hudson River Pilots' Association

Sound Pilots' Association

ADVISORY
SPECIAL PILOTAGE SITUATIONS

All State licensed pilots are reminded of the policy of the Board that the safe navigation of vessels is important to the protection of life, property and the environment. It is the extensive experience, training and knowledge of the waters of New York ports which makes State pilots uniquely qualified to determine if a particular passage can be conducted safely.

Pilots are reminded that prior to accepting the conn they should ascertain the location of the vessel, the position and status of other vessels in the area, and the existence or non-existence of any dangerous situation.

Upon boarding for the purpose of piloting a vessel from its berth, anchorage, from sea or to another location within the port, if the pilot has a reasonable basis to believe that the vessel's intended passage cannot be conducted safely, the pilot should not undertake the piloting of the vessel and thereupon should immediately:

(a) Advise the master that the pilot will not pilot the vessel and the rationale for the decision;

(b) Request the master to enter the refusal to pilot into the ship's log book, together with the rationale for the decision.

In the event the master, despite the pilot's advice to the contrary, commences the passage or states his intention to commence the passage, the pilot should:

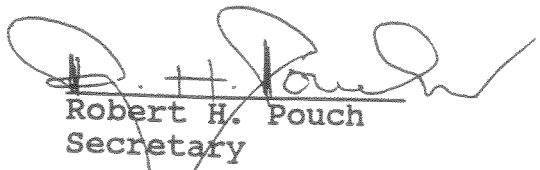
(a) Immediately report the fact and the circumstances which cause you to believe that the vessel's intended voyage cannot be conducted safely to the Vessel Traffic Service on the appropriate sector frequency or by landline at (212) 668-7722/7724. The VTS watch officer may, depending on the situation, direct the vessel's master to minimize the risk of that passage by slowing the vessel; stopping the vessel; remaining at, returning to or proceeding to the nearest safe berth or anchorage; or some other action. The recommendations of the pilot aboard, or a pilot ashore, may be solicited. Your report and any directions given to the vessel will be promptly forwarded to the Coast Guard Captain of the Port in New York. As soon as practical thereafter, report the situation to the appropriate State Pilot Commission.

(b) Advise the master that the pilot will remain on the bridge but only as an observer and not as a pilot;

(c) Advise the master he may be in violation of the State Pilotage Laws and Regulations if he undertakes the passage without a State pilot piloting the vessel.

Any time a pilot remains on the bridge under the above-described circumstances, the pilot should inform the master that the pilot is there simply as an observer and that he is not piloting the vessel. However, if while the pilot is acting as an observer he notes that the vessel is falling into danger, the pilot should so advise the master and to the extent he is able, give the master such advice as the master may require in a cooperative effort to extradite the vessel from the impending danger.

The purpose of these procedures is to bring as much pressure to bear as possible to dissuade a master from conducting an unsafe passage and at the same time have a pilot on the bridge to help out if the ship is falling into danger. The Commissioners appreciate the fact that a pilot who has to start giving advice to the master after the ship has started to fall into danger is going to be placed in a difficult circumstance. However, if there is an incident or accident, the Commissioners will take the special circumstances of the case into account when judging the performance of the pilot.


Robert H. Pouch
Secretary