

EMPA Recommendation on Pilot Transfer Arrangements

Introduction

The transfer of a Pilot, between a Pilot boat and ship, presents significant risks to the Pilot and Pilot boat crew. To bring these risks to an acceptable level, International Regulations have been adopted in the way of SOLAS Chapter V Regulation 23, IMO Resolution A.1045(27), ISO 799 and the ISM code in which the vessel will have prescribed procedures under the vessel's Safety Management System.

This recommendation aims to advise Pilots, Port Authorities, Ship Owners, Ship Operators, Masters, Officers and Crew on where to find the current regulations and offer practical advice on the rigging and use of Pilot Transfer Arrangements.

While amending Recommendation No 5. Recommendations on Pilot Ladders, this recommendation replaces EMPA (European Maritime Pilots Association) recommendations:

- No 4. Recommendations on accommodation ladders;
- No 7. Recommendations on side ports used for the embarkation or disembarkation of Pilots;
- No 9. Recommendations on Pilot Ladders - use of tripping and heaving lines;
- No 10. Recommendations on 9 metre line;

Consideration

Taking into account:

- The number of accidents and incidents involving the transfer of Pilots to and from vessels.
- The risks involved in Pilot Transfer where in the past years Pilots either lose their life or are seriously injured while using non compliant Pilot Transfer Arrangements.
- The safety of maritime pilots and crews;
- The protection of the marine environment, the ship and its cargo and port infrastructureshe safety and efficiency of the flow of marine traffic;
- IMO Resolution A.960(23) – Recommendations on Training and Certification and on Operational Procedures for Maritime Pilots other than Deep-Sea Pilots;
- SOLAS Chapter V Regulation 23, IMO Resolution A.1045(27) and ISO 799:2004 and 799-1:2019;



- Port State Control Directive (2009/16/EC);
- EMPA's Recommendation on Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing for the Marine Pilot as guidance;
- The annual IMPA (International Maritime Pilots' Association) - International Maritime Pilots' Association Safety Surveys consistently show a large and unacceptable rate of non compliance with Pilot Transfer Arrangements;
- The safety of Pilots and Pilot boat crew;
- The ship's own safety management system;
- Local and national requirements regarding Pilot transfer to and from vessels, such as the UK MCA Boarding and Landing Code;
- Local Pilot requests and advice from the Pilot boat.

Policy

- The role of EMPA is to facilitate the exchange of information between its members to continuously improve the professional and technical proficiency of Maritime Pilots in its Member Associations, Pilots within the EU, and in neighboring countries.
- EMPA aims to assure the safety of all Maritime Pilots in the EU and neighboring countries by increasing the safety and efficiency of navigation, thereby enhancing environmental protection from ship-borne pollutants.
- EMPA strongly defends and advocates that Pilotage as an essential and unique service to the shipping industry, can only be performed in an environment free from competition.
- EMPA aims to work at the forefront of our profession and collaborate with all stakeholders.
- EMPA recommendations offer practical advice, drawing from its members' collective knowledge and experience, to be read in addition to local, national, and international regulations. These recommendations provide information to Pilots, shipowners, and Captains, advising also, stakeholders that directly or indirectly impact the maritime industry.
- EMPA recommendations should be read in conjunction with equipment instructions and manuals. These recommendations are to support training, not replace training and are not to be interpreted as conflicting with local, national, or international regulations.
- Pilot Transfer Arrangements are part of the ships' safety equipment and are regulated by the IMO. As the International Maritime Pilots' Association are permanently represented at the IMO, in the interests of Members we aim to cooperate with IMPA on a regular basis on any necessary amendments that may be required to SOLAS Chapter V Regulation 23, and IMO Resolution A.1045(27).
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- Vessels are required by SOLAS Chapter V Regulation 23, 2.1 to provide a safe means of embarkation and disembarkation for the Pilot.

SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 23, 2.1 states: *"All arrangements used for pilot transfer shall efficiently fulfil their purpose of enabling pilots to embark and disembark safely. The appliances shall be kept clean, properly maintained and stowed and shall be regularly inspected to ensure that they are safe to use. They shall be used solely for the embarkation and disembarkation of personnel."*

EMPA Recommends

In the interest of the safety of Pilots, the safety and efficiency of navigation, and the protection of the marine environment, the European Maritime Pilots' Association asks that Masters, crews, and shipowners fully comply with current legislation regarding Pilot Transfer Arrangements.

- Pilots shall refuse to use any non-compliant Pilot Transfer Arrangement, and as soon as practicable, report any deficiency to the relevant Port State Control and Harbour Authority
- Particular care and attention must be paid to the maintenance and inspection of Pilot Transfer Arrangements. ISO 799 requires that Pilot ladders be load tested, and certified after 30 months. Ships' planned maintenance systems should provide for regular inspection of Pilot Transfer Arrangements by a competent person at regular intervals. Pilot ladders are worn out long before the 30 month inspection and load test in vessels that use the services of Pilots regularly.
- Flag States and Classification Societies as regulatory and enforcement authorities are obliged to ensure that their vessels comply with the above mentioned legislation, and are required to take action on reported deficiencies;
- Port State Control, in compliance with Port State Control Directive (2009/16/EC) and taking into consideration national legislation on implementing the Port State Control Directive, shall ensure that the Pilot Transfer Arrangements comply with SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 23 and the Unified interpretation of SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 23 (MSC.1/Circ.1375/Rev.1);
- Member Associations and Pilotage Authorities are strongly advised to develop a training programme that includes Pilot Transfer Arrangements and boarding techniques for Pilots and Pilot boat crew members.



- Member Associations and Pilotage Authorities shall ensure that Pilots and Pilot boat crews are competent and trained to ensure the safe transfer of Pilots.
- A risk assessment involving the Pilot boat crew and Pilots shall be undertaken to determine that the transfer of the Pilot will be carried in as safe conditions as possible
- Pilots must be aware that safety awareness plays a key role on their personal safety, especially when using Pilot Transfer Arrangements. EMPA recommends that prior to transferring to or from a vessel the following aspects are looked at :
 - Pilots should never wear devices which they cannot discard when falling into the sea or prevent lifejackets from inflating.
 - Guarantee that the methods used for transfer are suitable and in proper working condition
 - Assure with coxswain that :
 - The rescue equipment and crew are ready and adequate in the event of an emergency
 - Pilots should make sure, that the pilot boat is thoroughly manned (crewed) and in good condition.
 - Prior boarding the vessel, the pilot should clarify the positions of the pilot boat with the helmsman (i.e., remaining under the ladder / casting off).
 - Guarantee that the methods used for transfer are suitable and in proper working condition.
- Boarding arrangement , including safety equipments and communications, must be thoroughly inspected and rejected if not in safe condition as per local, national and IMO / ISO regulations.
- Hands should always be free and proper communications must be maintained at alle times with the pilot boat and vessel.
- The fit for purpose PPE – Personal Protective Equipment must always be used. Pilots should refer to EMPa’s Recommendation on Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing for the Marine Pilots as guidance.
- Pilotage Authorities and Member Associations shall ensure Pilots report deficiencies (as is required by Port State Control Directive 2009/16/EC) in the rigging of Pilot Transfer Arrangements to their relevant Port State Authority.
- EMPA recommends that Member Associations meet with Port State Control Authorities to raise awareness of the high level of non-compliant Pilot Transfer Arrangements that Pilots experience as opposed to the number of deficiencies found by Port State Control.
- Member Associations are urged to send Notice to Mariners on Pilot Transfer Arrangements prior to ship’s arrival that should include general recommendations, but specially the more specific local



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requirements. An example on NtM can be found attached to this recommendation.

For further information, please visit www.pilotladdersafety.com. The aim of this website is to improve Pilot ladder safety by sharing knowledge and information, showing how it is done right, the first time. This is an independent website. All views expressed on this website are those of the autor(s) of posted articles and pages.

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