

NAVIGATIONAL ADVISORY PANEL REPORT

NAP Date:	2 July 2008	Owner:	HM(SMS)	NAP Ref:	26	NAP Title:	Pilot Cutter Management
------------------	-------------	---------------	---------	-----------------	----	-------------------	-------------------------

Panel Members:

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Stephen Gobbi	Peel / Medway Ports	Ian McDonald	ESL	Craig McArthur	PLA
Cathryn Spain	Peel / Medway Ports	David Snelson	PLA	Bernard Pluck	PLA
John Gurton	Peel / Medway Ports	Barry Goldman	PLA	Chris Young	PLA
Andrew Thompson	ESL	Andy Wallace	PLA	Gordon Price	PLA
Kevin Gregory	PLA	Julian Parkes	PLA	Roy Stanbrook	PLA
John Pinder	PLA - CHAIR				

Detail / Terms of Reference	Observation/Recommendation
<p>The need for improved management and oversight of pilot cutter scheduling by London VTS</p> <p>The existing trial software to assess its suitability for further trials and associated operational procedures.</p> <p>Consideration of the extension of the provision of Pilot Cutter Scheduling to NE Spit in addition to Sheerness</p>	<p>Un-piloted vessels approaching the Warps boarding area are not always clear as to their exact boarding times and can cause congestion in the Oaze. Presently the Sheerness cutter crews produce a schedule based on eta's provided independently by PCC London and Medway. In general discussion it was felt that the disadvantage of the current system is that PCC London was not sighted of the cutter schedule nor the Medway bids and even if they were, it is subjected to changes by the cutter during operations. Any system would need to work on the cutter as the crews did not have regular access to the office.</p> <p>While a software solution could help communication, the Sheerness crew were not always present in their office so could not keep it updated on a regular enough basis. The software would need to be able to react to weather constraints, late pilots and inaccurate ETA's. Any technical solution would need to be relatively simple to use and also operable with very few key-strokes on account of difficulties caused by vessel motion. The existing system was considered to be too complex. However, if the status quo was retained for the bidding process, then a Task List based software application as in the trial version could be adapted for monitoring purposes. Further technical issues relating to the delivery of such a system were discussed but the panel agreed that the detail should be considered by a small working group. PLA DVTSM to head up a technical working group of himself, CM, AT and representatives of Medway VTS, IS and Pilotage as appropriate.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action DVTSM</p> <p>The panel agreed that, in the light of a recent MAIB report, whilst the pilot cutter schedule for NE Spit should continue to be managed by ESL at Ramsgate, the schedule should also be available to London VTS for information. As ESL Ramsgate is operational 24/7 they might be in a good position to coordinate both NE Spit and Warps, the latter cutter sending their proposed schedule by fax / digitally then updating Ramsgate by radio / phone of any changes. Ramsgate coordination could then keep an electronic schedule updated, which could be fed back to the Thames and Medway port controls.</p>

<p>The manning and staffing implications for ESL resulting from the introduction of a scheduling system for Pilot Cutter Operations linked to PCC London at Sheerness and NE Spit if this is considered necessary</p>	<p>The above idea was generally well received though ESL panel members would need to consult with their colleagues and Medway would need to discuss any IR issues at the ESL management level</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action SG / ESL</p> <p>CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All concerned should work towards ESL Ramsgate duty coordinator acting as the main line of communication for both NE Spit and Sheerness cutters. The Sheerness crews will provide Ramsgate with their proposed schedule and any changes during the shift, with Ramsgate transmitting the latest plan to PCC's London and Medway. 2. A technical working group, headed by PLA DVTSM, will continue to work towards a software solution to aid the above, with particular consideration to ease of use and availability to the cutter.
---	---

Panel Chairman:	J Pinder, Port Hydrographer PLA	Signature:		Date:	7 th July 2008
-----------------	---------------------------------	------------	--	-------	---------------------------