



June 13, 2002

MR'S ADVISORY TO SHIPPING No. A-17-2002

TO : All Steamship Agents, Owners, and Operators

SUBJECT: Monthly Canal Operations Summary – MAY 2002

1. Statistical Summary:

- a. Transit Pilot Force 283
- b. Pilots in Training 0
- c. Tugs 22
- d. Locomotives 93
- e. Traffic Statistics (Preliminary):

	<u>Average Daily</u>	<u>High Daily</u>	<u>Low Daily</u>
Arrivals	32.1	51.0	22.0
Oceangoing Transits (Includes Handlines)	33.3	39.0	25.0
Canal Waters Time (Hrs.)	25.9	40.6	15.7
In-Transit Time (Hrs.)	9.9	14.2	7.4
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Supers</u>	<u>Regulars</u>
Bookings	503	280	223

2. Scheduled Locks Outages

SCHEDULED LOCKS OUTAGES							
Dates	No. of Lane Outage Days	No. of Culvert Outage Days	Miraflores	Pedro Miguel	Gatun	Transit Capacity	Status
Jul 8 – 18, 2002	11		Lane Outage (11d)	Lane Outage (10d)		28 – 30	Confirmed
Aug 12 – 22, 2002	11				Lane Outage (11d)	26 – 28	Tentative
Sept 16 – 26, 2002	11		Lane Outage		Lane Outage	26 – 28	Tentative
Oct 21 – 31, 2002	11		Lane Outage			30 – 32	Tentative

Note: Whenever a set of locks requires a major outage of one of its two lanes for dry chamber inspection, miter gate repairs, tow track work or other major maintenance/improvement projects, advantage may be taken of this requirement to perform simultaneous single lane outages for additional maintenance at other locks.

- 3. See reverse for items of interest to the shipping community.
- 4. This advisory will be canceled for record purposes on June 30, 2002.

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Jorge L. Quijano
Maritime Operations Director

ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR THE SHIPPING COMMUNITY

Canal Performance

In May, oceangoing transits totaled 1033 or a daily average of 33.3. Transits by wide-beam vessels, 30.48 meters (100 feet) and over, totaled 383, or 36.9 percent of all oceangoing transits. The average Canal Waters Time (CWT) was 25.9 hours.

PANAMA CANAL TO USE AIS TO TRACK TRANSITING SHIPS

In January 2000 the Panama Canal inaugurated a system for tracking transiting ships as well as its own floating equipment. The system assists pilots navigating the Canal, makes it easier to coordinate shore support and to manage Canal resources in real time. Portable carry-on boxes are used by pilots in order to transmit the position of transiting vessels. The system was designed for the Panama Canal and assembled by Panama Canal technicians.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO), has been developing a similar tracking system, known as the Universal Shipborne Automatic Identification System, or AIS for short, which will be used all over the world. AIS boxes will be fitted in all SOLAS ships under the requirement of IMO, starting with new builds July 1, 2002 and continuing with tankers and other ships according to size in subsequent years.

AIS boxes are designed to transmit more information than is possible with the Panama Canal's portable boxes that the pilots currently carry on board. The AIS system is capable of providing ship's static information, voyage information and dynamic information. Once transiting ships are fitted with AIS, the pilot will simply have to carry a laptop computer and plug it into the available ship's AIS pilot plug. The Canal's VTS, however, will not depend on the pilot unit to track vessels and will be tracking the ships much before the pilots board.

The Panama Canal is currently designing a system of AIS shoreside radio base stations that will communicate with the AIS boxes on board ships. These radio bases will be interconnected with the existing system that tracks the Canal's own floating equipment, therefore allowing the pilot to see tugboats, launches and dredges on his screen and vice versa. Preliminary tests with AIS equipment are currently under way, and the plan is to have the AIS system fully operational by July 2003. Tentatively, consideration is being made to implement a requirement for all transiting vessels to be fitted with operational AIS equipment by July 2003. Vessels not fitted with working AIS will be rented a portable system by the Panama Canal.

The technical requirements for the on-board AIS equipment to be fitted on ships transiting the Panama Canal are as follows:

1. The ship shall have a Class A AIS shipborne transponder according to IMO MSC 74 (69) Annex 3.
2. The AIS shipborne transponder shall be type-approved according to standard IEC 61993-2.
3. The AIS shipborne transponder shall be installed according to IMO Guidelines for Installation of Shipborne Automatic Identification System (AIS).

In addition, following IMO Guidelines for Installation of Shipborne Automatic Identification System (AIS), the Panama Canal will require the installation of a pilot plug close to conning position No. 1 in the navigation bridge. This plug shall be labeled "AIS PILOT PLUG" and shall have nearby a USA standard 120VAC, 3-prong power receptacle to provide power to the pilot laptop. This laptop will be provided by the Panama Canal.

FLOATING CRANE "GRULLA"

The "Grulla," a working crane barge assigned to Gatun Locks to transport materials between the chamber walls, arrived at the Panama Canal on May 23. The barge was manufactured in Puerto Mont, Chile, by Detroit Shipyard, at a cost of \$635,000. Built under ABS classification, it has a length of 17 meters, a beam of 6.8 meters, a depth of 2.2 meters, and a dead weight of 86 tons. The crane barge is equipped with a bow thruster, a two-level superstructure, a right hand standard propeller, two Detroit Diesel motors of 360 hp each, a 65KW generator, a 17.6 ton hydraulic crane with a 10- meter reach, and an EIS electric capstan with a capacity of 9,000 pounds.

This type of crane barge has proven to be very effective in the transfer of materials used for maintenance, especially to the locks center walls, and during locks overhauls and other major projects, such as reconstruction of the tow tracks, installation of the locks hydraulic strut arms and lockwall fender maintenance. The barge will be operated by Gatun Locks personnel, who will be fully trained on its navigation and operation.