



**OP NOTICE TO SHIPPING No. N-2-2009**

**Harbor Operations**





January 1, 2009

## **OP NOTICE TO SHIPPING No. N-2-2009**

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To: Steamship Agents, Owners and Operators

Subject: Harbor Operations

### **1. Effective Date and Cancellation**

This Notice is effective on the date of issue and cancels OP Notice to Shipping No. N-2-2008. The content of this Notice remains the same as in the previous year, except for updates in Table 1 (Depths and Drafts in Balboa) and Table II (Rodman Piers Draft Limitations) and in the navigation charts featured on the attachment to this Notice.

A revised Notice will be issued in January of each year or when otherwise required.

### **2. Purpose and Scope**

These harbor operation rules and regulations are used to control the movement of vessels in the Canal operating waters of Cristobal, Balboa and the Canal entrances to reduce the risk of accidents.

### **ORIGINAL SIGNED**

Manuel E. Benítez  
Executive Vice President of Operations

# HARBOR OPERATIONS

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# HARBOR OPERATIONS

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## 1. Arriving and Departing the Anchorages

Vessels arriving or departing the Atlantic or Pacific Anchorages are required to contact the Port Entry Coordinator (PEC) in Cristobal or Flamenco Signal Stations on Channel 12 (VHF) prior to this evolution.

## 2. Harbor Tug Services

The harbor tug operation in Balboa and Cristobal is a contracted service by the vessel's agency. The following rules shall be followed regarding this service:

a. Only the Panama Canal Authority Marine Traffic Control (MTC) has the authority to dispatch the required tugs for harbor service. This will be done via the harbor radio.

b. All docking and undocking jobs are to be performed by PPC contracted tugs with the following exceptions:

(1) Dead tows from the piers to the Canal. Panama Canal Authority (ACP) tugs will continue to make up at the pier before proceeding to the Canal.

(2) All dead tows proceeding from the Canal to the piers will be taken to the piers by ACP tugs.

(3) All dead tows proceeding to sea, either northbound or southbound, will be taken to the usual "cast off points" where ocean-towing tugs usually make up to the tow. From the dock at Cristobal or Balboa, PPC contracted tugs will be used. If coming from transit, ACP tugs will be employed. The Balboa "cast off point" is in the area south of Buoys 1 and 2 and in Cristobal, it is in the area between the Mole Buoy and Cristobal Breakwater Entrance.

(4) The turning around of large "supers" in Cristobal Harbor will be accomplished using ACP tugs when available.

(5) ACP tugs will be used, when available, in the harbor and anchorages for primary response to emergency situations.

c. These operational guidelines do not cover unusual circumstances or emergencies that may arise requiring special tug assignments. The Transit Operations Division executive manager, or his designee, will decide on a case-by-case basis what

constitutes an unusual circumstance or emergency, whereby a substitution or exchange of tugboats between port and transit functions may be made.

### 3. Docking and Mooring Restrictions

a. Vessels classified as Precaution Designator-1 (PD-1) or PD-2 will not be allowed to berth at Dock 6, Balboa. Vessels that must go to the dock to discharge such cargo, which resulted in their being classified as PD-1 or PD-2, will do so at Dock 7, 14 or 15.

(1) The Authority takes precautionary measures for vessels carrying dangerous cargo, which vary depending on the ship and other factors. The specific characteristics of the cargo, and whether in bulk or packaged, are the primary factors which determine what, if any, precautionary measures shall be taken.

(2) Information about dangerous cargo on board shall be provided by the vessel no less than 48 hours in advance of arrival, and verified by the Authority boarding officer upon arrival.

(3) Based on this information, a Precaution Designator (**PD**) is assigned to the vessel. "**PDs**" are numbers (**1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7**) or letters ("**N**" or "**H**"), where "**PD-1**" is the most hazardous and "**PD- 7**," the least. "**PD-N**" means no dangerous cargo is aboard.

(4) When a vessel does not provide the necessary information as required by the regulation, an "**H**" or "**HOLD**" is assigned. This means that the vessel will not be scheduled for transit or docking until the cargo information is made available.

(5) The "**PD**" assigned to each vessel sets forth the imposed precautionary measures due to the cargo that is being transported on that vessel while in Canal waters. This includes actions such as the qualifying level and number of pilots that will be assigned to that vessel; docking; clear cut or channel restrictions; special precautions while at the locks, or whether or not a fire truck will stand by at the locks during the lockage.

(6) While the precautionary measures required to be taken by the Authority are internal actions to ensure a safe transit or docking to every vessel, it is essential that masters provide exact and timely information, as there is a direct relationship between the type of cargo and how the vessel is scheduled for transit or for docking at Cristobal or Balboa.

(7) **Failure to provide proper information could result in delays to the vessel.**

b. Vessels over 700 feet (213.4 m) L.O.A. are not allowed to berth at Dock 6, Balboa. Docking vessels that are more than 600 feet (183 m) L.O.A. and have a beam of 100 feet (30.5 m) or more will require prior approval from Transit Operations Division.

c. The routine docking of a second vessel at Docks 7 and 8, Balboa, with a vessel already docked at the opposite pier may be accomplished with the following restrictions:

(1) For movements occurring during daylight hours, the combined beam of both vessels will not exceed 150 feet (45.7 m).

(2) Movements of vessels with a combined beam exceeding 110 feet (33.5 m) will be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Canal port captain on duty.

(3) Movements occurring during darkness will be approved on a case-by-case basis; however, in these instances, the combined beam of both vessels will not exceed 110 feet (33.5 m).

(4) An omni-directional tug will be used when available.

(5) The tidal current is approximately slack.

(6) The tidal level provides sufficient water for deeper vessels, which is critical for Dock 8.

(7) Dry dock entries and exits will be accomplished only during daylight hours.

d. A large vessel mooring alongside a smaller vessel that is being used as a fender at any dock is not considered by ACP to be a safe procedure in waters under Canal control. Should the mooring require an ACP pilot, both vessels will be requested to sign ACP Form 4323 "Undertaking to Release and Indemnify" before proceeding.

#### **4. Periodic Surveys at Balboa and Cristobal Harbors**

The ACP Engineering Division Surveys Branch periodically conducts routine hydrographic surveys of the channel, the pier areas adjacent to Rodman, and the general and inner harbor areas of the ports of Balboa and Cristobal. When these surveys reveal that the general and inner harbor areas of the ports have significantly silted, pilots and customers will be notified of the conditions of the areas and of the approved procedures to be followed.

#### **5. Balboa and Cristobal Harbor Conditions**

a. *Depths and Drafts:* The depths in Tables I, II and III refer to the amount of water available at Mean Low Water Springs (MLWS) in the ports of Balboa, Rodman and Cristobal. The attendant draft figures are the allowable drafts at the respective docks at any stage of the tide. Pilots or boarding officers are requested to have the master of the vessel sign Form 4323, "Undertaking to Release and Indemnify," prior to docking vessels that arrive with a draft in excess of the respective dock or that expect to load to a draft in excess of that amount. In addition, the master will also be required to sign Form 4323 when a vessel is to be berthed on a pier deemed to have inadequate or no lighting or fendering at Balboa or Cristobal Harbors. (See copy of this form on page 15.)

b. *Docking in Dock 6, Port of Balboa:* When a vessel is moored at Dock 6, Balboa, the master should be reminded to have his crew tend the mooring lines and keep the lines tight, especially during the ebb tide when the lines may go slack. Maintaining mooring lines tight will help prevent a surge of the vessel when ship traffic moving in the Canal channel

passes close to Dock 6. Pilots are instructed to proceed with caution and at a safe minimum speed when passing Dock 6.

DOCK	BERTH	USABLE LENGTH	DEPTH	MAXIMUM WATER DRAFT	MAXIMUM LENGTH OF SHIP	REMARKS
6	AB	742 ft 226.21 m	32' 08" 10.00 m	31' 08" 9.64 m	600 ft 182.92 m	F / M / L OIL / WATER / DRY & LIQUID BULK / PASSENGER / CAR CARRIER
7	ABCD	1,050 ft 320.12 m	AB: 33' 01" 10.08 m CD: 32' 06" 9.90 m	AB: 32' 01" 9.78 m CD: 31' 06" 9.60 m	850 ft 259.14 m	F / M / L OIL / WATER / DRY & LIQUID BULK / PASSENGER / CAR CARRIER
8		470 ft 143.29 m	30' 02" 9.19 m	29' 02" 8.89 m	530 ft 161.59 m	DRY DOCK EXCLUSIVE USE
13		280 ft 85.37 m	20' 00" 6.10 m	19' 00" 5.80 m	220 ft 67.07 m	REPAIRS
14	AB	1,054 ft 321.22 m	42' 06" 13.00 m	41' 06" 12.70 m	954 ft 290.85 m	CARGO CONTAINER
15	AB	900 ft 274.32 m	42' 06" 13.00 m	41' 06" 12.70 m	800 ft 243.90 m	CARGO CONTAINER
16		1,100 ft 335.37 m	52' 05" 16.00 m	51' 05" 15.70 m	1,000 ft 304.88 m	CARGO CONTAINER
17		1,100 ft 335.37 m	52' 05" 16.00 m	51' 05" 15.70 m	1,000 ft 304.88 m	CARGO CONTAINER

**TABLE I - Depths and Drafts in Balboa**



Area No.	True Heading	Berth	Pier Length				Depth (MLWS)		Max. S. W. Draft (MLWS)		Maximum Length of Ship at Maximum Draft		Height Above Low Water Spring (MLWS)		Beam Limit.	Remarks
			Total Pier Length		Usable Length											
			Ft	Mts	Ft	Mts	Ft	Mts	Ft	Mts	Ft	Mts	Ft	Mts		
1		Appr. to Pier 1					40'00"	12.19	39'00"	11.89						
2	232°	Pier 1 North C	704	215	400	122	30'06"	9.29	29'06"	8.99	550	168	25'4"	7.72	NONE	FUEL LOAD/DISCH. STORES
2	232°	Pier 1 North D	704	215	562	171	30'06"	9.29	29'06"	8.99	712	217	25'4"	7.72	NONE	FUEL LOAD/DISCH. STORES
3	232°	Pier 1 South A&B	704	215	625	191	34'06"	10.51	33'06"	10.21	775	236	25'4"	7.72	NONE	FUEL LOAD/DISCH. STORES
4-5	232°	Appr. to Pier 2					35'00"	10.67	34'00"	10.36						
6	232°	Pier 2 North C&D	704	215	630	192	29'06"	8.98	28'06"	8.68	775	230	25'4"	7.72	NONE	FUEL LOAD/DISCH. STORES
7	232°	Pier 2 South A	704	215	450	137	26'00"	7.91	25'00"	7.61	550	168	25'4"	7.72	NONE	FUEL LOAD/DISCH. STORES
7	232°	Pier 2 South B	704	215	650	198	26'00"	7.91	25'00"	7.61	750	229	25'4"	7.72	NONE	FUEL LOAD/DISCH. STORES

**TABLE II: Rodman Piers Draft Limitations**

**Notes:**

1. ACP under keel clearance is 1 foot.
2. Table I information provided by Panama Ports Company on June 17, 2007.
3. Table III information provided by Parque Industrial Marítimo de Panamá, S.A., on April 20, 2008.
4. Piers on Areas No. 2, 3, 6 and 7 have no beam limitations and can be used for loading or discharging fuel or stores.

DOCK	BERTH	USABLE LENGTH	DEPTH	MAXIMUM WATER DRAFT	MAXIMUM LENGTH OF VESSEL	REMARKS
6	AB	1030 ft 313.94 m	41 ft 12.50 m	A: 40 ft 12.19 m B: 36 ft 10.97 m	970 ft 295.66 m	PASSENGERS / RO-RO CARGO
6	CD	1030 ft 313.94 m	41 ft 12.50 m	40 ft 12.19 m	1030 ft 313.94 m	PASSENGERS
6	E	240 ft 73.20m	41 ft 12.50 m	33 ft 10.06 m	240 ft 73.15 m	WATER
7	AB	977 ft 297.78 m	41 ft 12.50 m	A: 40 ft 12.19 m B: 39 ft 11.88 m	920 ft 280.42 m	F / M / L OIL / WATER / ALL TYPE OF CARGO
7	CD	1000 ft 304.80 m	41 ft 12.50 m	C: 40 ft 12.19 m D: 37 ft 11.27 m	1000 ft 304.80 m	ALL TYPE OF CARGO
7	E	240 ft 73.15 m	41 ft 12.50 m	40 ft 12.19 m	240 ft 73.15 m	WATER
8	AB	990 ft 301.75 m	41 ft 12.50 m	A: 40 ft 12.19 m B: 36 ft 10.97 m	942 ft 287.12 m	F / M / L OIL / WATER / ALL TYPE OF CARGO
8	CD	1010 ft 307.84 m	41 ft 12.50 m	C: 40 ft 12.19 m D: 38 ft 11.58 m	955 ft 291.08 m	WATER
8	E	250 ft 76.20 m	41 ft 12.50 m	40 ft 12.19 m	250 ft 76.20 m	WATER
9	AB	1068 ft 325.53 m	41 ft 12.50 m	A: 39 ft 11.88 m B: 37 ft 11.27 m	1036 ft 315.77 m	F / M / L OIL / WATER / ALL TYPE OF CARGO
10		423 ft 128.93 m	41 ft 12.50 m	30 ft 9.14 m	600 ft 182.88 m	F / M / L OIL / WATER / ALL TYPE OF CARGO
14		460 ft 140.20 m	35 ft 10.36 m	28 ft 8.53 m	500 ft 152.40 m	REPAIRS
15		900 ft 274.32 m	35 ft 8.84 m	29 ft 8.84 m	700 ft 213.36 m	REPAIRS
16	AB	1070 ft 326.13 m	41 ft 12.50 m	A: 39' 08" 12.08 m B: 39' 04" 11.98 m	1000 ft 304.80 m	F / M / L OIL / WATER / DRY & LIQUID BULK
16	CD	1070 ft 326.13 m	41 ft 12.50 m	C: 40 ft 12.19 m D: 38 ft 11.58 m	1000 ft 304.80 m	F / M / L OIL / WATER / DRY & LIQUID BULK
16	E	458 ft 139.60 m	41 ft 12.50 m	40 ft 12.19 m	300 ft 91.44 m	F / M / L OIL / WATER
MINDI		275 ft 83.52 m	29 ft 8.83 m	26 ft 7.92 m	300 ft 91.62 m	EXPLOSIVE CARGO

TABLE III - Depths and Drafts in Cristobal

**Note:** Between Docks 6 CD – 7 AB, 7 CD – 8 AB and 8 CD – 9 there is a 105 ft beam restriction.



## **6. Bunkering/Fueling Vessels at the Docks in Balboa or Cristobal Harbors**

Bunkering/fueling a vessel at any dock from a tank vessel moored alongside the offshore side of that vessel is not considered to be a recommended practice in waters that are under ACP operational control. The Transit Operations Division executive manager may allow exceptions on a case-by-case basis; however, before proceeding with mooring that requires an ACP pilot, both vessels will be required to sign Form 4323, "Undertaking to Release and Indemnify."

## **7. Vessel Movements in Balboa and Cristobal Harbors**

a. No movement either into or out of dry dock 1 will be authorized if there are vessels moored to both Dock 7 and Dock 8.

b. The Canal port captain on duty will review and authorize in advance any docking of a vessel that involves the use of tugs at either Docks 7 or 8, specifically, when there is already a vessel berthed at one of these docks. Docking that involves vessels with a combined beam exceeding 110 feet (33.5 m) will only be authorized on a case-by-case basis.

c. *Lighting on Piers 9/10 Cristobal Harbor:* A quick-flashing green light is available at the corner of Cristobal Piers 9/10 to assist vessels docking at Pier 16. Should this light be extinguished or should additional lighting be required for a particular job, the dock master from the *Autoridad Marítima de Panamá (Panama Maritime Authority)* will provide the additional lighting requested. The dock master may be contacted through the Cristobal Harbor controller located at MTC, Balboa.

d. *Inadequate Lighting or Fendering:* When a vessel is to be berthed on a pier deemed to have inadequate or no lighting or fendering, either at Balboa or Cristobal Harbors, it will be required to sign Form 4323 "Undertaking to Release and Indemnify."

## **8. Vessel Movement Control for Small Vessels in the Ports of Balboa and Cristobal**

On certain small vessels, such as those involved in local bunkering operations, specially designated by the Transit Operations Division executive manager, the master and crew may be allowed to complete docking maneuvers after the first mooring line is made fast ashore. In these cases, the pilot may yield control of and responsibility for the vessel to the vessel's master once the vessel is no longer piloted or navigated by an ACP pilot. This would occur after the first mooring line is made fast, at the pilot's direction, provided that any assisting harbor tugs have been dismissed. At this point, the pilot may

allow the vessel's master to assume control. The pilot will retain control of the vessel if the master so desires or as long as harbor tugs are still made fast or on stand by to assist.

## 9. Vessel Movement In and Out of the Dry Dock

a. Movement to and from the dry dock will normally be made from the wet dock adjacent to that facility. Panama Canal pilots will pilot a vessel destined to enter the dry dock from sea to the wet berth associated with that dock. If no wet berth is available, then the pilot will continue to exercise his authority until the first part of the vessel crosses the dry dock sill. At that point, the pilot's responsibility will terminate and he will relinquish control. The pilot will assume control of the vessel from the wet dock to sea when departing the dry dock. If there is no wet dock available, the pilot will assume control when the last part of the vessel crosses the sill departing the dry dock. When arriving from sea, a vessel will be considered docked at the wet berth when the first mooring line is made fast ashore under the pilot's direction.

b. When docking at the wet berth and preparing to enter the dry dock, the pilot will yield control of and responsibility for the vessel at a time mutually agreed upon with the vessel's master. When proceeding directly in or out of the dry dock, the pilot will yield or accept control of the vessel at a time mutually agreed upon with the appropriate *Astilleros Braswell* employee. Normally, this will occur when the first line is made fast ashore or the last line is cast off and the vessel is in a safe condition. If a mutual agreement cannot be reached, the evolution will be terminated and the vessel returned to its starting location or to safe anchorage at no cost to the Canal.

c. The pilot is responsible for determining the number of tugs required for calling tugs and for directing their activities. Two tugs are normally assigned.

d. A step-7 pilot will be assigned to any vessel moving directly to a dry dock. Vessels that are bound for the dry dock, but will be warped into that facility at a later time, will be assigned a pilot qualified for that size vessel.

e. The direct movement of vessels into or out of the dry dock will be made only during daylight. Warping the vessel into or out of the dry dock from the adjacent wet dock without ACP assistance or support may be performed anytime it is safe and efficient to do so.

f. If the vessel is simply going to or from the wet dock, and not immediately involving the dry dock, then the docking will take place in the normal manner.

g. Good radio communications should exist between the vessel, dock master and tugs during the docking operation. Working Channel is 4B.

h. Shipyard line handlers should be positioned to receive and shift lines as soon as the vessel is within heaving line range of the dock entrance. If required, and if the berth is clear, the vessel could be positioned alongside Pier 8.

i. The vessel should provide lines and line handlers, and should operate winches as directed by the pilot or dock master.

j. When making the approach, the state of the tide, currents and wind should be considered. The wind generally blows from the north or north-northwest at variable speed.

## **10. Vessel Coordination and Procedures at the Atlantic Entrance**

a. *Purpose:* To direct the attention of the shipping community to improve vessel coordination and procedures implemented to reduce the risk of accidents at the Atlantic entrance.

b. *Responsibility and Authority:* The Transit Operations Division and the Traffic Management Unit are the Operations Department units responsible for coordination of vessel movements at the Atlantic entrance. The Atlantic Canal port captain is the senior representative of the Transit Operations Division at the Atlantic terminal and has authority to direct Signal Station personnel to meet the requirements of this notice.

c. *Communications.*

(1) As provided by *ACP Navigation Regulations, Article 29*, all vessels of 300 gross tons or over, or of 100 gross tons or over when carrying one or more passengers for hire, and every commercial towing vessel of 26 feet (8 m) in length or more shall be equipped with a radiotelephone, which can be operated from the navigation bridge and shall maintain a continuous watch on Channel 12 (VHF) until the ACP pilot assumes control.

(2) As provided by *ACP Navigation Regulations, Article 35*, the above vessels must, when arriving and before entering the breakwater, communicate with the Signal Station on Channel 12 (VHF). The Port Entry Coordinator (PEC) shall contact vessels when they are five miles off the breakwater, if they have not previously called, to state their intentions. Channel 12 will be used to notify vessels of their transit times and for harbor coordination communication between vessels and the ACP Signal Station.

(3) A vessel of a type described in paragraph 10.c(1) of this section shall maintain a continuous watch on Channel 13 when under way in Panama Canal waters for bridge-to-bridge navigational communications only. One-watt maximum power shall be used on that frequency, except in emergencies or unusual circumstances more power may be used. When such vessels have a Panama Canal pilot aboard, Channel 13 may be used only by the pilot or at his direction for navigational communications.

(4) All communications between the Signal Station and vessels shall be in English.

d. *Procedures.*

(1) Atlantic anchorage entry/exit and harbor movements will be coordinated.

(2) Only vessels having valid reasons, such as listed below in paragraph 10.d(5), will be authorized to enter the breakwater.

(3) Vessels inside the inner anchorage may be required to return to the outer anchorage after their business is completed if the space is needed for other vessels.

(4) Large vessels of over 700 feet (213.4 m) in length or over 100 feet (30.5 m) in beam and vessels assigned a dangerous cargo PD as listed below in paragraph 10.e(1) of this notice, will normally be required to anchor in the outer anchorage.

(5) Priority for use of inner anchorages will normally be granted to vessels in the following order:

(a) Vessels requiring stores, crew changes, bunkering or other matters shortly before commencing southbound or immediately following northbound transit.

(b) Transiting vessels, in order of scheduled transit.

(c) Other vessels.

(6) Transiting vessels anchored in the outer anchorage must enter the breakwater in sufficient time to complete the boarding process without incurring a delay at the locks. After confirming that arrangements have been made for a pilot to meet the vessel just inside the breakwater, the PEC will inform the vessel when they are to enter.

(7) Normally, vessels shall not meet at the Cristobal breakwater entrance. Every effort shall be made to maintain one-way traffic. The PEC shall arrange the order in which vessels will be authorized to enter/exit the breakwater.

(8) When a northbound vessel is required to slow or hold for a southbound in accordance with paragraph 10.d(7), the following procedures shall be followed:

(a) Cristobal Signal Station shall, to the extent possible, give the pilot of the northbound vessel ample advance notice of delays due to southbound transits. Normally, this information will be provided when the northbound has cleared Gatun Locks.

(b) The northbound vessel shall remain south of the Mole Buoy until an ACP pilot takes control of the southbound.

(c) The ACP pilot aboard the northbound shall retain control until an ACP pilot takes control of the southbound and a satisfactory meeting is arranged.

(d) Necessary tug assistance will be provided to the northbound at no charge.

(e) Normally, a harbor pilot will relieve the transit pilot one hour after clearing Gatun when greater delays are anticipated due to this rule.

(9) The order of entry/exit shall be communicated by the PEC to affected vessels in such a manner as to ensure that each vessel knows which vessel it will follow, or which vessel must clear before it proceeds. For example:

- "PACIFIC STAR, two vessels will depart the breakwater before you may enter. You may enter when the TOYAMA and EAGLE have departed."

- "RAINBOW LEADER, the SEA BREEZE will enter the breakwater before you may depart."

(10) Pilotage is required for vessels departing Anchorage Area C until the vessel is safely in the Channel clear of oncoming traffic.

(11) Other specific vessels, such as dead tows and vessels anchoring for bunker, may require pilotage when deemed necessary by the Cristobal Canal port captain or, in his absence, the Canal port captain on duty.

(12) Vessels should not enter, depart or move within Limon Bay and the inner harbor without a pilot unless they have first contacted the Signal Station and obtained authorization. Authorization shall be given by the PEC only for a specific time. If the vessel does not proceed at the appointed time, she may not proceed without first obtaining authorization for another under way time from the PEC.

(13) Vessels authorized to move in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 10.d(12) will be given a detailed account by the PEC of vessel movements, imminent or in progress. Similarly, all other vessels under way or preparing to get under way will be advised of the intended movement of non-piloted vessel.

(14) Bunkering may be permitted for light-draft vessels near the east breakwater and for deep-draft vessels at the inner explosive anchorage. Bunkering operations require approval of the Cristobal Canal port captain or, in his absence, the Canal port captain on duty. Bunkering operations will not be permitted in other anchorage areas. Pilots are required to anchor all vessels, either arriving from sea or departing the Canal that will be taking on bunkers within the confines of Limon Bay. Exceptions to this rule may be made by the Cristobal Canal port captain or, in his absence, the Canal port captain on duty.

e. *Special Procedures for Vessels with Certain Dangerous Cargoes.*

(1) *Applicability:* This paragraph applies to all vessels assigned dangerous cargo **PD 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5**.

(2) *Procedures.*

(a) The PEC will arrange the entry of vessels in accordance with the provisions of this notice.



(b) Vessels authorized to enter in accordance with this Paragraph require pilots who shall embark as near the breakwater as practicable.

(c) Vessels assigned a PD listed in paragraph 10.e(1), whether from sea, the Canal or dock, may anchor inside the Cristobal Breakwater only when specifically authorized by the Cristobal Canal port captain or, in his absence, the Canal port captain on duty, and then only in the designated explosive anchorage.

(d) Vessels arriving for transit on the Atlantic side and assigned a PD listed in paragraph 10.e(1) will anchor in the outside anchorage. These vessels shall not enter the breakwater until authorized to do so. Authorization will be radioed to the ship by the Signal Station only after a pilot is at the boathouse, available to board the vessel, and there will be no outbound traffic at the time of entry.

(e) Outbound vessels assigned a PD listed in paragraph 10.e(1) and any vessel leaving Anchorage Area C must be piloted.

f. *Dead Tows*: Requirements for dead tows vary greatly depending on size and configuration of the tow, time of arrival, traffic conditions and other circumstances. For these reasons the Cristobal Canal port captain will exercise direct control and coordination over the movement of dead tows. **Pilots are required for all arriving dead tows.**

g. *Vessel Responsibility to Abide by Navigational Rules*: Due to the volume of ship vessel traffic and the confined navigational area, vessels must navigate with extreme caution. The master retains full responsibility for the safe navigation of his vessel until a Panama Canal pilot assumes control. The master shall insure full compliance with all applicable Navigation Rules. All vessels must maintain a proper lookout, proceed at a safe speed, use all available means to determine if risk of collision exists, and take timely positive action to avoid collision as required by Navigation Rules 5 through 8. The Navigation Rules are mandatory and may not be relaxed to meet the coordination measures set forth in this directive. When the master of a vessel determines he cannot comply with the coordination advice received from the Signal Station, and still meet the requirements for safe navigation set forth in the Navigation Rules, he shall immediately advise the Signal Station of the circumstances and his intended course of action.

**NOTE:** The Navigation Rules applicable upon the navigable waters of the Canal operating areas are set forth in *ACP Navigation Regulations, Chapter VIII*. These provisions incorporate most of the Rules of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972 (72 COLREGS) and the *Rules for the Prevention of Collisions in the Panama Canal, ACP Navigation Regulations, Article 108*, and shall be applicable to vessels and seaplanes upon the navigable waters of the Canal operating areas. The same are described as a continuous area generally following the course of the Panama Canal, and generally contiguous to it, running from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It includes the Atlantic entrance and its anchorage areas, the port of Cristobal, Gatun Locks, Gatun Dam, Gatun Spillway, Gatun Power Station, portions of Gatun Lake, Culebra (Gaillard) Cut, Pedro Miguel Locks, Miraflores Lake, Miraflores Locks, Miraflores Spillway, Miraflores Filtration Plant, Miraflores Power Station, the port of Balboa, the Pacific entrance and its anchorage areas, as well as the land and water areas encompassing them.

h. *Navigational Caution:*

(1) Many factors combined together make the Atlantic terminal of the Panama Canal a difficult area to navigate safely. Mariners must be alert for frequent vessel movement not only to and from the Canal, but also to and from anchorages inside and outside of the breakwaters.

(2) Traffic to and from the local port is to be expected. Recently, traffic to and from Manzanillo Bay began moving through a newly opened section of the Cristobal breakwater. Vessels that are either arriving or departing the Panama Canal should be aware that traffic to and from Manzanillo Bay may cross their path.

(3) Vessels calling at the Manzanillo Bay, which then wish to transit the Canal, are required to exit through the Manzanillo Bay breakwater entrance and proceed to the Panama Canal Atlantic Sea Buoy before proceeding to the Canal anchorage or entrance.

(4) Rain squalls, which suddenly reduce visibility may be encountered. An easterly set across the Channel outside the jetties is normally encountered. Shallow water effects frequently cause seagoing vessels to respond in ways not anticipated by the master. At night, background lights make it difficult to identify aids to navigation and the navigation lights of other vessels.

(5) To insure safe navigation, vessels navigating this region must exercise extreme caution. The mariner must be alert and expect the unexpected. **Masters who believe they will require assistance outside the Atlantic Breakwater, may request a pilot to meet the vessel outside in accordance with *ACP Navigation Regulations, Article 94.***

i. *Exceptions:* Special circumstances may arise for which it may be appropriate for ACP to apply more restrictive or less restrictive procedures than those established by this Notice to Shipping. Each situation must be well reasoned, appropriate to existing circumstances, and shall not result in significant unnecessary risk. The Cristobal Canal port captain shall exercise authority under this rule when appropriate; however, the Transit Operations Division executive manager shall be advised as soon as possible and, when practicable, beforehand.

j. *Compliance:* Non-compliance with any of the requirements set forth in this directive shall be reported to the Cristobal Canal port captain or, in his absence, the Canal port captain on duty.

## 11. Exemption from Compulsory Pilotage

a. *Purpose:* In order to standardize the application for exemption from compulsory pilotage for all locally operated commercial vessels, under *ACP Navigation Regulations, Articles 98 to 105*, the following policy is established.

b. *Application for Exemption:* Vessel owners/operators desiring to operate their vessels without ACP pilots in the Canal operating waters of the approaches and harbors of

Cristobal and Balboa shall submit a request for this exemption to the Transit Operations Division executive manager, following the policy guidelines below. Owners/operators with previous exemptions must reapply under this policy in order to continue to operate without a pilot. All exemptions issued under this policy will remain valid for one year and, if a continuation of the pilot exemption is desired, a new request shall be submitted within one month before expiration of the exemption.

c. *Vessel Categories*: Exemption from compulsory pilotage may be requested for commercial vessels within the following categories, provided such vessels comply with requirements specified in the *Panama Canal Authority Maritime Regulations for the Operation of the Panama Canal* and the current version of the MR Notice to Shipping No. 1 (Vessel Requirements). **Specific mechanical engineering and safety requirements will also be established by the Transit Operations Division.**

(1) Self-propelled vessels not more than 1000 Panama Canal (PC) gross tons, other than (2) and (3).

(2) Self-propelled hazardous cargo vessels (bulk or package) not more than 500 PC gross tons.

(3) Self-propelled passenger vessels not more than 500 PC gross tons.

(4) Towboats without tows.

d. *Operating Requirements*: The following are operating requirements for pilot exempted vessels:

(1) *Permission to Move*: The vessel must obtain permission from the Canal port captain prior to any movement in or out of the harbor, including arrival or departure, and when shifting berths. The vessel is also required to contact MTC watch supervisor through the appropriate Signal Stations or by telephone at 272-4201, prior to initiating any authorized movement. The vessel must obey any instructions that the watch supervisor may give at the time contact is made and will maintain a watch on Channel 12 (VHF) to receive any further instructions while maneuvering.

(2) *Licensed Master/Operator Experience*: A person seeking permission to navigate in Canal Operating Area waters without a pilot must possess a valid document, issued by a competent authority of the Republic of Panama, which authorizes the holder to navigate a vessel of the size for which this permission is being requested. He must have at least ten voyages/trips with an ACP pilot. This will be a self-certification program and owners will be held responsible to ensure that their masters/operators receive the required trips prior to operating the vessels without a pilot. Owners must maintain records of these masters/operators qualification trips and be able to produce these records upon request. The Board of Inspectors should validate this license. To comply with this requirement the operator should pay a charge of \$15.00 based on the Non-Commercial Vessel Tariff. This payment is made at the Citibank (Balboa), Account No.0-550305-054 through a Speed Collect Form. The non-licensed masters or operators will not be exempted from pilotage. Vessel's owners shall make their request for a pilot to the Traffic Management and

Admeasurement Branch manager, by fax, at 272-3630. This office will apply the pilotage charges such as: Port Pilotage Tariff, Channel Fee Tariff and Launch Service Tariff (if used) according to vessel's gross tons. After the operator complies with all the above-mentioned requirements, he should request authorization to validate the license to the Transit Operations Division executive manager, Building 910, La Boca.

(3) *Canal Channel from Entrance to Harbor and Return*: Pilots must be utilized if available. If the Canal port captain authorizes movement without a pilot, the vessel shall establish communications on Channel 12 with the appropriate Signal Station and maintain watch on the channel throughout the movement.

(4) *Crossing Canal Channel*: A pilot is not required; however, the vessel shall establish communications on Channel 12 with the appropriate Signal Station and maintain watch on Channel 12 throughout the crossing.

(5) *Harbor Movements or Movements Not Involving the Canal Channel*: A pilot is normally not required. In these instances the vessel shall establish communications on Channel 12 with the appropriate Signal Station and maintain watch on Channel 12 throughout the movement; however, pilots are required for bunkering operations in the harbor or for moving dead tows in or out and within the harbor.

e. *Boarding for Inspection*: All pilot-exempted vessels are subject to boarding and inspection by personnel from the Transit Operations Division at any time in compliance with this policy. Any vessel owner or operator found not in compliance will have their exemption revoked and will not be reconsidered for a period of one year after the noncompliance was discovered.

## 12. Arrival and Departure Times for Manzanillo Bay

The following operational procedures apply for vessels proceeding to or departing from Manzanillo Bay to determine the arrival and departure times for scheduling purposes:

a. Traffic coordination through the Manzanillo Bay Breakwater will be the entire responsibility of the *Panama Maritime Authority*.

b. All vessels proceeding to or from Manzanillo Bay must utilize the Manzanillo Bay Breakwater entrance. However, the Canal Operations Captain can authorize vessel movement through the East Inner Anchorage in Limon Bay on a case-by-case basis. Small local coastal vessels can utilize this passageway as long as they move outside the anchorage limits.

c. All vessels, **BOOKED** or **NON-BOOKED**, proceeding to Manzanillo Bay for a later Canal transit, will be considered as **ARRIVED** by the ACP Cristobal Signal Station when:

(1) They report their arrival at the East Breakwater entrance on an inbound course; and

(2) The ACP Port Entry Coordinator confirms this visually or by radar.

Arrival time will be used to determine the order in which **NON-BOOKED VESSELS** will be scheduled. It will also determine **BOOKED VESSELS** compliance with **BOOKING ARRIVAL REQUIREMENTS**.

d. All vessels proceeding from Manzanillo Bay on the planned day for Canal transit must arrive at the Panama Canal outer anchorage in sufficient time to ensure that they will be at the ACP breakwater entrance at the time set for transit. Any vessel that fails to adhere to this requirement will lose the scheduled transit turn. In case of **BOOKED VESSELS**, it will forfeit its booking.

e. ETA's and Transit Read Times must be provided by agents on the estimated times established in paragraph 7.d above.

f. Northbound vessels proceeding to Manzanillo Bay after a Canal transit, and later returning for a southbound Canal transit, must comply with the same requirements as provided above. Such vessels will require ACP boarding as any other vessel proceeding from sea for Canal transit.

### 13. Changes to Cargo Declaration Forms for Container Vessels

a. The Panama Canal Authority has analyzed the way in which the containership industry measures movements of cargo and the standards utilized in ports and international trade statistics. Therefore, in an attempt to incorporate the foregoing, we have made changes to the Cargo Declaration Form. These changes will also assist us in developing a system to capture data electronically, which will expedite and facilitate the boarding, as well as the data collection process in the future. This information will enable us to perform a more precise analysis of cargo movements, as well as providing a means to gauge the value of service that we offer to our customers.

b. In order to expedite and facilitate the boarding process, **container vessels** cleared for transit will be authorized to provide the Cargo Declaration Form, signed by the Master, along with an attachment of the vessel's computer report, as long as all of the required information has been provided. The cargo shall be divided based on number of 20 foot units (TEU), 40 foot units (FEU), loaded, empties and reefer above or below deck. This information shall also indicate number of units and tons of cargo. Submission of the above is required for each transit.

c. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in unnecessary delays, to include the possibility of removal from that day's transit schedule, loss of booking, and other applicable charges or penalties.

## 14. Handling of Cargo Declaration Forms for Container Vessels

a. Due to the short distance that exists between the ports located in Manzanillo Bay and the Canal entrance, container vessels proceeding from that area for Canal transit often do not have the required Cargo Declaration Form in order prior to transit. As a result, this creates unnecessary delays to the boarding officers and may very well affect the clearance of this vessel.

b. In order to expedite and facilitate the boarding activity, **container vessels** proceeding from this area will be allowed to provide the Cargo Declaration Form without the loaded/discharged cargo information that took place at that location, with the complete understanding that the vessel's agent must deliver the required documentation prior to the vessel's departure from the last set of locks, to either the Admeasurement Office at Balboa or Cristobal. These same procedures will apply to **container vessels** calling the Balboa or Cristobal Ports prior to Canal transit.

c. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in the vessel's exclusion from participating in this special arrangement until such time as the vessel can demonstrate that corrective measures have been taken. Therefore, on future transits, these vessels will be required to submit the completed cargo declaration papers prior to transit or docking. Consequently, this may result in unnecessary delays, including the possibility of removal from that day's transit schedule, loss of booking, and other applicable charges or penalties.

## 15. Attachments

The following form and charts are provided for reference:

- a. Form 4323, "Undertaking to Release and Indemnify" (page 18).
- b. Pacific Anchorage (page 19).
- c. Balboa Harbor (page 20).
- d. Atlantic Anchorage (page 21).
- e. Cristobal Inner Harbor (page 22).



PANAMA CANAL AUTHORITY

4323 (OPT)

Ship Identification No.

TO: EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS

UNDERTAKING TO RELEASE AND INDEMNIFY
(Ship dry-docked, docked, or berthed by Canal pilot)

I, \_\_\_\_\_ Master of the \_\_\_\_\_
for and in consideration of the \_\_\_\_\_ being dry-docked, docked or
(Name of vessel)

berthed by a pilot employed by the Panama Canal Authority under the following circumstances: (Check the applicable item(s) and
delete others.)

- (a) Main engine is not fully operational.
(b) Deck machinery is not functioning properly.
(c) Vessel subject to damage if operation requires landing alongside dock with inadequate fendering.
(d) Vessel is not fully manned for maneuver.
(e) No visibility forward due to vessel's excessive drag.
(f) The vessel's draft may exceed available depth of water at the assigned dock.
(g) Other deficiency(ies) or condition(s). (Specify).

do hereby undertake, for the said vessel, her owners, operators, charterers, crew, or any other persons having any interest in her, and
for myself, to release the Panama Canal Authority and the Republic of Panama from, and to indemnify it against, any loss or
damage, or any liability incurred by the Panama Canal Authority or the Republic of Panama under, or in respect to:

- (a) Articles 63 to 74 of the Panama Canal Authority Organic Law (Law No. 19 of June 11, 1997),
(b) Property of the Panama Canal Authority, or the Republic of Panama; and
(c) Panama Canal Authority employees to the extent and in the proportion that the above-described circumstances
may proximately cause or contribute to a casualty and resulting damages.

By accepting the vessel in the above-described circumstances for dry-docking, docking or berthing, the Panama Canal
Authority does not, and shall not be deemed to, waive any rights against the vessel, her owner, operators, charterers, or any other
persons having interest in her.

It is understood that the obligations assumed by the undersigned, on behalf of himself, the \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. (hereinafter referred to as "the vessel"), her owners, operators, charterers, crew, or any
(Name of the vessel)

other persons having and interest in the said vessel, as stated in this undertaking to release and indemnify, shall continue in effect for
all dry-docking, docking or berthing with the assistance of a Canal pilot by the vessel on and after \_\_\_\_\_
until such time as the Authority is satisfied that condition(s) noted above has (have) been rectified. (Date)

It is further understood that this document does not, of itself, grant continuing permission for the vessel to dry-dock, dock or berth
with the services of a pilot in the above-stated condition. Such permission must be obtained from the Executive Vice President of
Operations or his designee for each intended dry-docking, docking or berthing until such time as the condition(s) noted above has
(have) been rectified.

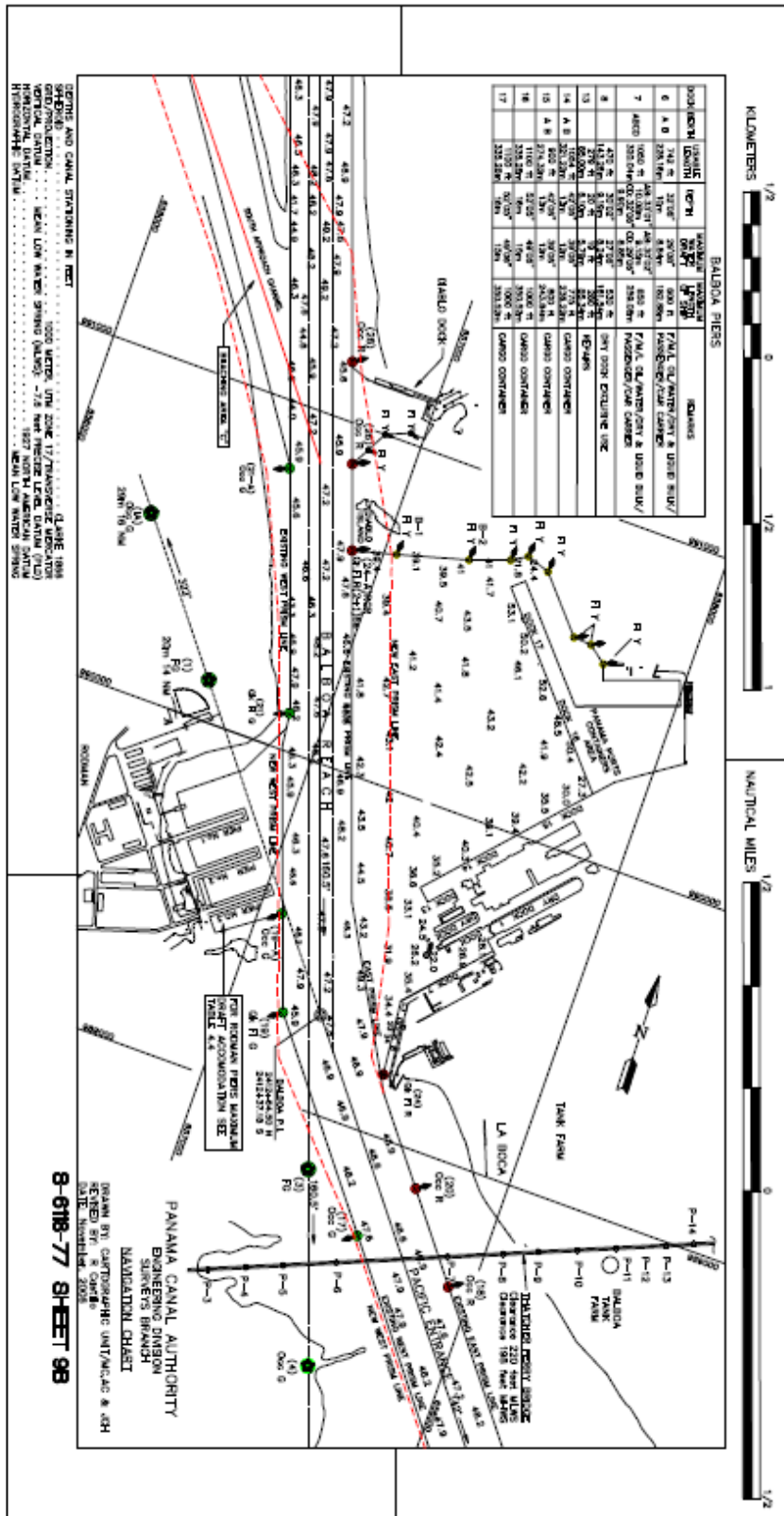
WITNESSED:

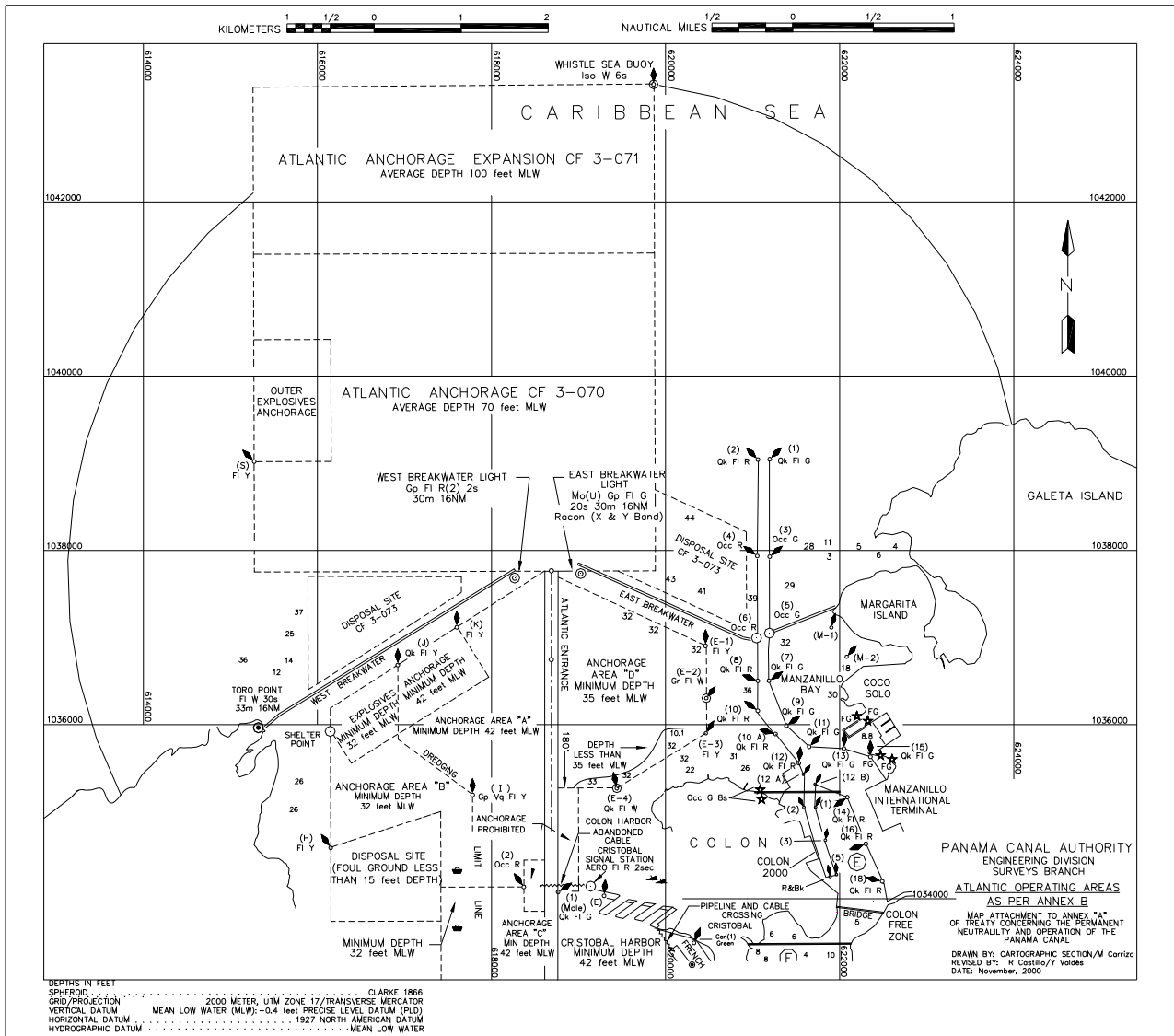
\_\_\_\_\_.
(Authorized ACP Official)
\_\_\_\_\_.
(Title)
\_\_\_\_\_.
(Date)

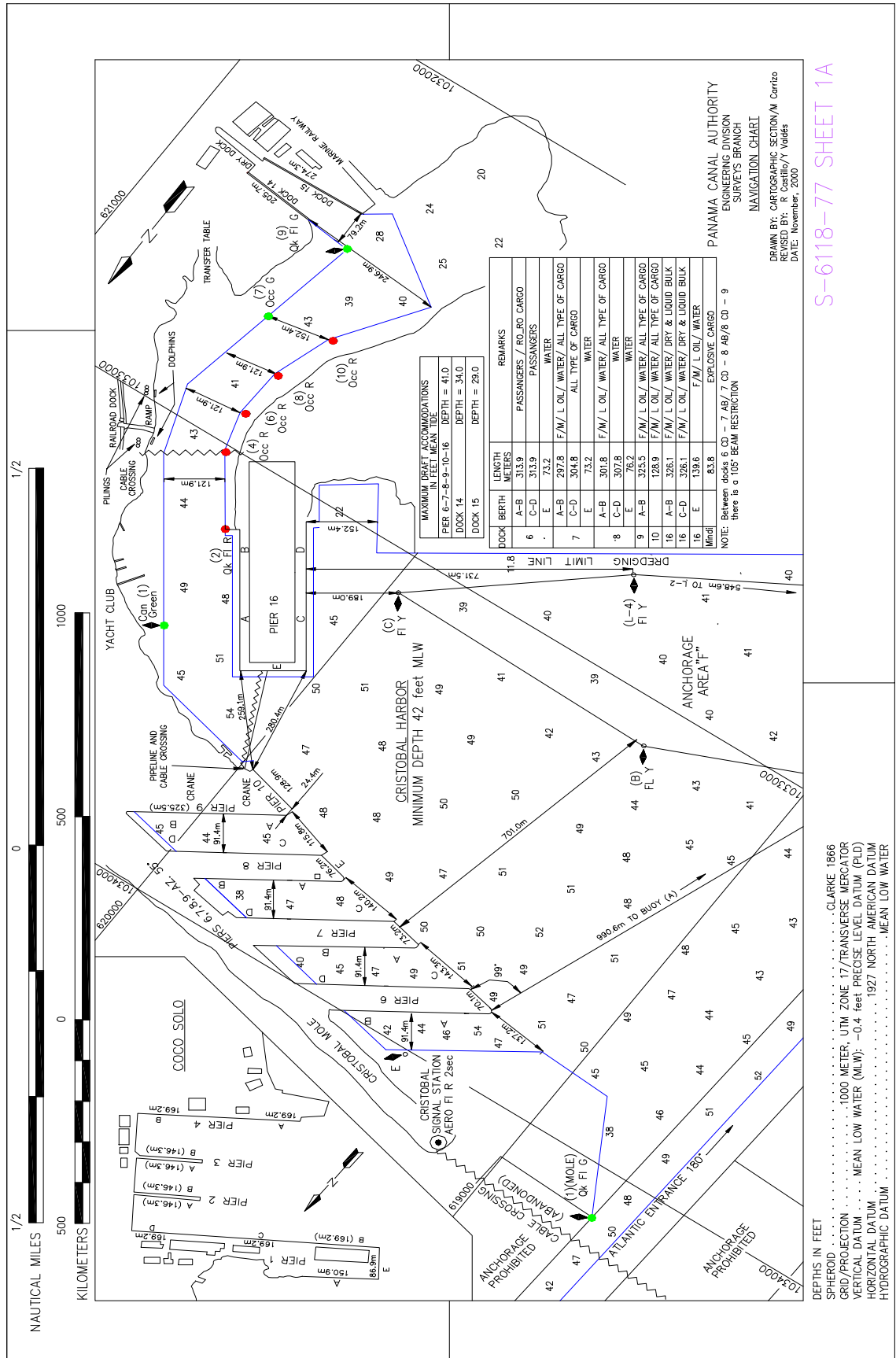
\_\_\_\_\_.
(Owner/Master/Agent)
\_\_\_\_\_.
(Vessel)











S-6118-77 SHEET 1A

PANAMA CANAL AUTHORITY  
 ENGINEERING DIVISION  
 SURVEYS BRANCH  
 NAVIGATION CHART  
 DRAWN BY: CARTOGRAPHIC SECTION/M Carrizo  
 REVISED BY: R Castillo/V Valdes  
 DATE: November, 2009